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GREETING AND EXHORTATION FOR THE NEW YEAR

—1899—

Dear Friends of the WATCH TOWER family, accept, please, our editorial greetings and good wishes, as we cross the threshold of another year. We trust that each of us can truthfully sing with the poet,—

"Looking back, we praise the way,
God has led us, day by day."

And let us remember that the great Watchman of Spiritual Israel, the Lord, changes not; his exceeding great and precious promises are all yea and amen to those who obey him—to all who by faith abide in him, trusting in the merit of his atonement—who, possessing his spirit of love, are seeking to walk circumspectly in his footsteps. To all such, if they continue thus and abound, we guarantee that the year, 1899, will be a happy year, basing our guarantee upon the Lord's promises.

But how many, who *know* this full well, are disposed to be fearful, doubtful, unbelieving: and thereby are paving the way for troubles! How long it requires for some of the pupils in the school of Christ to find out *why* they are in this school and under the Teacher! Surely, the object should be to be taught—to learn of him whom God has appointed to be the Teacher of all his justified and consecrated sons, adopted into his family. We do not come to this Teacher to obtain his certificate that we need none of his instruction; but that from his Word in conjunction with the daily experiences in life (his "providences" to all his pupils) we may grow daily in his likeness;—in grace and in knowledge.

If at first we, as pupils, get confused and mistake self-will for God's-will, and our Teacher points this out to us by some failure of our projects, we are not (1) to be rebellious and resentful of the lesson; nor (2) to be discouraged and disheartened. On the contrary, we are to *profit* by every experience; seeking that the lessons of one day shall be put into practice and become our aids on following days.

The most important lesson of this school-term is Faith: the faith with which we become the Lord's and entered his school must grow. And our faith can only grow by knowledge (We do not refer to worldly knowledge, worldly learning), knowledge of the Lord—of his methods, his plan, his character. Hence we must study well our Teacher's words and general conduct and as well his providence or private instructions to us individually—interpreting these always by his words. Much of what we accepted at first by *faith* (respecting the Lord's goodness and wisdom) will gradually become *knowledge*: giving basis for still greater lengths and breadths of faith as well as for greater love and appreciation of our Redeemer.

As in other schools, so in this, different degrees of learning are represented in the students;—some are in the primary stage of development; some in the intermediate, and some in the graduating class. The graduating degree of discipleship in the school of Christ is the one that all are to strive for: it is absolutely essential that we reach this degree, if we would pass examination—finish our course with joy and be granted the Master's "Well done!" and the prize of our high calling at the end.

We want to outline this course of *"study"* and to ask all the dear brethren and sisters of the WATCH TOWER family, who have not already started in this course, to take it up for the year 1899. Blessed are sure to be the results. You will find as you progress in it the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, ruling in your hearts: this will transmute the trials of faith and of patience into blessings, and the sorrows and disappointments of earthly hopes into channels of God's grace, and the perplexities of life into full assurances of faith. This graduating degree of faith, hope and love is attained by—

A FULL SUBMISSION OF OUR WILLS TO THE LORD'S WILL

Do you answer,—Why, that is what I have been wanting to do ever since I consecrated myself to the Lord; but I have not attained it;—What more can I do? Ah yes! so it has been with all fully consecrated children of God; for a long time we all made the same mistake of *wanting to* fully submit our wills to God's will, instead of *doing so.*

A good *wish* is an excellent thing, very important indeed, but if the wish does not lead to performance it is valueless. Some people never get beyond the wishing point in any of life's affairs: they wish to rise at a certain hour in the morning, or to attend to certain recognized duties, or render some service, or speak some words of kindness or encouragement in the name of the Lord—but they never fulfil their good wishes in deeds. The good wish should be followed by a good and determined *will,* which is sure to be favored by a way in matters fully in accord with the divine will. Now, without dropping a single good *wish,* let us begin immediately to make this a successful year, by throwing the entire strength of our wills into *doing.*

But now take care—you are on treacherous ground: a strong will is as dangerous as it is valuable. If mis-directed, you have started a force, an energy, which may lead far astray. And conscientious people are in danger along this line especially: for when their wills get hold of a matter which their consciences approve they may make as much of a blunder as did Saul of Tarsus under similar circumstances.

There is but one safe course; and to prepare the Lord's people to know, to realize this, is the object of all the preliminary courses in the School of Christ, leading up to this graduating course. This final lesson to be learned is that the *wills* that are to be exercised in good deeds and good words are not our own wills, except as by adoption we have taken the Lord's will to be ours. When we became the Lord's pupils it was by and as a consequence of the surrender of our own wills; and our first lesson in this school were in keeping our wills *dead.* We can see as we look backward that by the Great Teacher's aid we won some victories over self-will, and have come to the place where our real desires are, as expressed by the poet,—

"Lord, at length thy love hath conquered,
None of self, and all of thee."

But even after we have adopted the Lord's will (as instead of our own natural preferences) and made it ours; and after we have resolved to *do* the Lord's will;—still we are in danger and need to walk carefully, lest we misapprehend the Lord's will and adopt the will and plans of fellow men or of a church, instead of the Lord's will. Consequently, without despising human aid in the ascertainment of the Lord's will, while remembering that God still, as in times past, makes use of human agencies in instructing his people, it must not be forgotten that Satan also uses human agents to mislead and to deceive, and that God permits this, in order to teach us that he is the real Teacher. Hence he puts his Word, the Bible, as the test by which his people are to distinguish between true and false teachers, saying, "If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isa. 8:20.

Coming to the Scriptures to ascertain *God's will*, we find that the great *work* which God asks of us is not work for others, but work in ourselves; subduing, conquering, ruling self. "This is the *will of God* [*concerning you*], even your sanctification!" (1 Thes. 4:3) Everything else, therefore,—our service of the household of faith, and our doing good unto all men, by home and foreign missions, etc., etc., is subservient to this most important work within. For, as the Apostle by inspiration declares, Tho we should preach the gospel eloquently to others, and tho we should give all our goods to feed the poor, or become martyrs for a good cause, *without love*, the spirit of Christ and the Father, developed in us as the ruling principle of life, we would be *nothing*, from the divine standpoint.

On the contrary, if we be sanctified to God by the truth—if our wills be dead, and the Lord's will be fully accepted as ours, in thought, word and act, we have attained the will of God and will win the prize as "overcomers"—even if, opportunities being denied us, we never preached, never gave to the poor and never suffered as martyrs for the truth's sake. Let us all note well this point,—"This is the will of God [concerning you], even *your sanctification.*" Let nothing becloud or obscure this truth;—neither other truths nor errors. Let it dominate our course in life, and then, if God's will is really our will, we have a clearly marked pathway before us, which is very important.

But without doubt, God will open before all such opportunities to serve the truth to others,—to let their light shine to the glory of the Father and the blessing of fellow creatures; for this is his command to us: and we may be sure he gives no commands impossible to be obeyed. If you have been seeking opportunities of service and finding none, there must be something wrong: you may have been seeking some *special* service of your own preference (your old will meddling with your newly adopted will—the Lord's). Possibly the great Teacher sees pride remaining—pride which you would have been prompt to crush, had you recognized it, but which hid itself from you under the cloak of "self-respect." Possibly the great Teacher by his providence and his Word is saying to you. "Do with thy might what thy hand *findeth to do.*" Possibly he sees that *you* would be spoiled by giving you a more important service for others, before you have learned the lesson of humility—all important in the Lord's sight. Act quickly, therefore, the time is short. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God [to do whatever service his providence has made possible to you], that he may exalt you in due time."—1 Pet. 5:6.

"THINK IT NOT STRANGE CONCERNING THE FIERY TRIALS"

Have you never suffered for righteousness' sake—a martyr to principle? Strange, when the Master so plainly declared that "*Whosoever* will live godly shall suffer persecution." Can it be that the Lord erred? Is not the danger rather that you have not been living godly? You say that is your highest *wish*, to live godly: but do not forget the distinction already drawn between wishing and doing. Resign your own will entirely, put it all away and begin to *do* the Lord's, item by item, just as you are able to find and prove it in his Word—using the best human help you can obtain, in this seeking and proving. Soon the persecutions will come: and from most unexpected quarters.

And when the persecutions come, be prepared for them—forearmed by God's Word; for they will be temptations to your flesh: through them the Adversary will seek to embitter your soul and to stir up in you the elements of the old nature reckoned dead—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. If this be the effect of persecutions in you, the Adversary is gaining the victory—you are not overcoming evil, but being overcome by it. The old nature will even call upon its best qualities to fight against persecution—it will call upon your natural sense of Justice to come, help and resist; it will call upon Conscientiousness to agree that the persecution is unmerited; it will call upon Benevolence and Spirituality, your love of family and friends, and every other good quality of your being—all will be appealed to either to fight the persecution or to abandon the course of godliness which led to it.

Then you will be in the thick of the fight, and unless previously armed with the panoply supplied in the divine Word, you are almost sure to lose faith, become terrified and flee. And whoever does this is sure to be wounded, if not captured by the enemy: for our armor is a front armor, not a back armor. It is invulnerable so long as we stand firm for the right, the truth, in our great Captain's name and strength—It is a hindrance to those who draw back.

But why should we flee terrified? Is not this the very *test* of our loyalty and devotion to the Lord and his Word, for which all of our previous experiences and instructions were but preparations? Is not this the very test the Lord declares indispensable to all who would be accounted victors and be made his joint-heirs in the kingdom? Is not this the very opportunity for which we prayed, and are not the incidental persecutions exactly what our Lord forewarned us would be part of the cost of faithful discipleship? And are not those the very persecutions whose absence earlier in our Christian experiences made us wonder whether or not we were acceptable sons of God?—Heb. 12:8.

Surely, our answer to these questions must be, Yea, Lord! even though because of weakness of the flesh the answer be not joyous as it should be, but through unbidden tears. And with this answer on our part the Lord is pleased; and angels of his mercy—his promises exceeding great and precious—minister unto us and strengthen us.

That is the time to "fight the good fight"—and, triumphing over self-will completely, to accept the buffetings and slanders and misrepresentations of good intentions and good deeds with meekness and patience. That is the time when the Lord's spirit of love, dwelling in us richly, will manifest itself in the control not only of our words and actions, but of our inmost thoughts. If even so much as a bitter feeling against our traducers and maligners arises, it is to be fought, and so complete a victory gained over it that every fiber of our beings will be in sweet accord with our Great Teacher's instructions, "Love your enemies. Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. Bless and injure not."

Your earliest definition of "injure not" will probably have been that you should not kill or wound your enemies physically: but as you look to the Teacher and heed his word you will hear him say, "Learn of me," and you will note with the Apostle, that though he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, yet, "When he was reviled he reviled not in return; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed his cause to him that judgeth righteously." (1 Pet. 2:22, 23) If you are a faithful pupil it will not be long until you see that the perfect law of liberty, the law of Christ, is a discerner of the very thoughts and intents of the heart, and that while you must hate all sin, you cannot hate any sinner and yet have the love of God perfected in your heart. You see that this means that you not only must not retaliate and revile your foes, but must not even *wish* to do so. The evil wish must be conquered and the selfish conditions which gave birth must be utterly destroyed and replaced with love—the spirit of Christ.—Compare 1 Cor. 4:12 with 1 Cor. 6:10.

Are you tempted to repine, to feel disappointed at your lot in life or your experiences by the way? That is the time to remember that all repining, discontent and disappointments indicate that self-will in you is not so dead as you had hoped. For he who has buried his own will completely in the will of the Lord can know no disappointment; but in every affair of his life he sees by faith divine appointment or supervision, and hears the Word of the Lord in all of life's affairs assuring him: "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28) It is one of the evidences of reaching the graduating condition of heart, when we are able to take the oppositions of the great Adversary and of the world and of our own flesh *patiently*, uncomplainingly, unmurmuringly, "joyfully"—as a part of the disciplinary experience meted out to us by our all-wise and all-loving Lord.

Such is the "good fight." The first battle is the severest, and each subsequent victory is easier; for with each victory the new will (the Lord's will in us) grows stronger, and Hope's sight of the things God has in reservation for the faithful grow keener, and Faith's strength and endurance greater. And with the very first victory come blessings, which are added to after every victory: blessing of rest, peace, joy in the holy Spirit and full assurance of faith, as our Teacher promised.—"*Blessed are ye* when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. *Rejoice and be exceedingly glad!*"

From this standpoint and no other, is it possible to accept with fortitude and resignation whatever tests of patience, perseverance, faith, hope and love the Lord may see fit to permit to come upon you. In this condition all our experiences will result in blessings, however unpropitious they may appear on the surface.

It is from this standpoint (of victory over self-will—unto sanctification of spirit through obedience to the truth) that all the blessings and promises of the divine Word are ours in the fullest sense—"All things are yours, ... whether things present, or things to come; . . . . [for] ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." This is the graduating degree of the School of Christ, dearly beloved, in which we all seek to be approved during the year just begun. Let us unite our hearts and prayers, and above all our new wills, with each other's and with our Master's, to this end that we may be wholly sanctified and for the Master's use, present and prospective, made meet. "And the very God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."—Rom. 16:20.

Let our prayers every morning ascend to God,—"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength, and my Redeemer." (Psa. 19:14) And every evening let us review the day, judging our hearts (wills) by the Lord's law of perfect love—praying his forgiveness of shortcomings, and thanking our Lord for the strength and grace which brought its victories.

* * *

"Come, let us anew our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year,
And never stand still till the Master appear.
His adorable will let us gladly fulfil,
And our talents improve,
By the patience of hope, and the labor of love."

THE CHURCH'S DIVINELY APPOINTED MISSION

"Seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not."—2 Cor. 4:1.

What is the mission of the church?—What ministry or service has the Lord appointed to his consecrated people? This question is one that should be prominent and clear before the mind of every consecrated child of God. It is of the utmost importance that the servant know what is expected of him before proceeding far in rendering service; otherwise he will be more than likely to waste his energies in wrong directions—leaving undone those things which ought to be done, and giving attention to matters which would better be attended to otherwise according to the plan and arrangement of the great Supervisor of the plan of salvation—the Lord.

The answers to this question throughout Christendom would probably divide themselves into three groups—two of them quite unscriptural, and the third, altho Scriptural, by reason of other errors generally associated with it, is made unreasonable, and held in its purity and consistently by but few. We will examine these as follows:—

(1) THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW of the church's mission is that she is the ruler of the world, appointed to be such by the Almighty, and duly empowered and authorized to rule over kings and nations, to order all the affairs of earth, moral, political, financial, social and ecclesiastical,—the pope and his hierarchy constituting this spiritual kingdom. This spiritual kingdom, it claims, reigned gloriously in the past,—during the period which the remainder of mankind denominate "the dark ages." They claim that now this kingdom is suffering a reverse at the hands of infidelity, Protestantism, etc., and is deprived of its proper, God-given and God-intended rights, as the supreme government of the earth. It claims that very shortly there will be a grand change in earth's affairs, which will put back again, into its possessions and under its control absolutely, all peoples, nations, kindreds and tongues, so that again, as of yore, the pope shall be the recognized head of the world, all other religions be overthrown and effectually stamped out, and that thus the world shall be blessed—by a return to medieval conditions.

We dispute this theory, and hold that the Scriptures teach to the contrary: that the reign of the church as the kingdom of God to rule and bless the world is declared to be not during this "present evil world" or age, but in one to follow this, to be inaugurated by our Lord Jesus with power from on high, as his second advent. The Scriptures point out, in harmony with sound reason, that the *sufferings* of the church are not coïncident with her *reign*, but precede it. The sufferings of this present time, they assure us, are not worthy to be compared with the glories which shall be (future) revealed in us. (Rom. 8:18) These sufferings, tho they are to be unto death, are to be esteemed light afflictions and to be rejoiced in, because of the divine assurance that they are *working out for us* (preparing us for) a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory, as yet unseen.—2 Cor. 4:17.

(2) THE COMMON VIEW AMONGST PROTESTANTS respecting the mission of the church resembles the foregoing considerably, except that the pope and his associates are rejected as respects their claims to special divine authority to rule the world. The claim of the Protestants, however, is that religion should undertake to rule the world, and to place its representatives in power amongst the nations; and that higher and better forms of religious sentiment should be cultivated, the religion of the world growing with its politics and its social conditions, and thus leading the world onward and lifting the degraded masses up to good citizenship. In other words, this claim, growingly prevalent amongst Protestants, is what may be termed the worldly idea of the church's mission; *viz.*, to engage in merciful, philanthropic, educational, moral and benevolent works, in the interest of mankind. In other words, this view recognizes the church as the moral influence which God has placed in the world *for the world's uplift* and regeneration.

We hold that this view is wrong, wholly unscriptural; that it is a mistake to suppose that the church is placed in the world as a reformatory institution. But if we are asked, Should Christians not take a deep interest in all reforms—in temperance reform, for instance, in social purity, in political reform, in good citizenship, in anti-tobacco crusades, in socialistic developments, in financial reforms, etc.? we answer, Yes, indeed; no one could be a true Christian and yet be without sympathy as respects all these and every other possible efforts for the mental, moral and physical uplift of our race. And yet you say that this is not the mission of the church? Yes, we answer; altho our sympathies are with every good work, we are at the same time to inquire of the Lord respecting how, where, what, we may do in his service, if we would be colaborers together with him: "Lord, what wouldst *thou* have me to do?" Our query should not be addressed to fellow-men, nor should we accept the burdens and duties and obligations which their judgments and consciences would lay upon us. Rather we are to hearken to the voice of the Lord (the Scriptures), and are to follow his directions, regardless of our own and other people's conjectures as to what would be the most expedient.

Nowhere in the Scriptures are God's people directed to spend their time in efforts at morally reforming the world. Our Lord did not engage in this work, neither did the apostles, nor did they offer any suggestion to the effect that the work of the church should ever differ from the work which they performed and directed us to continue. On the contrary, they declare that we have the apostles for ensamples of how we ought to walk. They declare that our Lord's course was in full, perfect harmony with the divine will and plan, and that the apostles faithfully followed his example: and we are exhorted to simply become coworkers together with God in his work, already instituted,—not to alter or attempt to improve on them. There were moralists and moral reformers in our Lord's day; some along the line of total abstinence, some along the line of asceticism, inculcating rigid self-denials in food, clothing, etc., as essential to a moral uplift of the people. There were also political reformers, who sought the establishment of republican institutions, in his day; and social reformers, who sought to establish forms of communism. There were also dress reformers at that time, who advocated certain peculiar styles of clothing, beneficial to health, morals and religious sanctity. Do we find that our Lord or his apostles ever associated with any of these, or that they ever in any word or act gave sanction or encouragement to any of these theories or reforms? No, not once.

It may, indeed, be claimed that a kind of Christian communism at the beginning went without rebuke, even if it were not commended by the apostles. We answer that the short-lived communism of the early church was to some extent the result of the new doctrines promulgated by Christ, the central feature of which was love to God and love to fellow-men, as opposed to the selfish sentiments of fallen man: so that without divine instruction there was a disposition on the part of believers to have "all things in common." But if the holy spirit sanctioned and permitted this, in the beginning, it was evidently only as a lesson, as an experience to the church. to show that union and communion of this kind is not practicable under present conditions, while all are troubled by imperfections of the flesh—their own and that of other men. At all events we do know that the Lord did not permit that communism to last long, but, as we are told, permitted instead a great persecution to arise against the church, which scattered the would-be communists everywhere to preach the Gospel.

Nor did the apostles ever recommend such procedure, or attempt such an arrangement amongst the Christians elsewhere. If, then, the teaching and example of our Lord and his apostles are our criterion of the will of the Lord, the church's commission is not to morally reform the world. But perhaps someone will say, Times are changed from what they were, and the church's work should change accordingly. We answer, that the Apostle Paul declares in so many words, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20:27) Whatsoever, therefore, is additional to that which was stated by the Apostle is not the counsel of God. And any counsel from any other quarter is not to be received by Christians, and is sure to be misleading. Again, the Apostle says to Timothy, respecting the Word of God, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, *thoroughly furnished* unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) If, therefore, it was God's design that the church's mission should change at some future time we should be able to find in the Scriptures some intimation of this kind, and some authority for the change. And if we find no authority for a change in her mission, we should make no change.

But some one inquires, Did not our Lord especially go after the publicans and sinners, and specially welcome them; and was not this an indication to us that the church's work is to be largely amongst the lower, depraved classes of mankind? We answer that the publicans and harlots were not made the subjects of special missionary efforts on the part of our Lord and his apostles: it was when these classes *came to his ministry*, to his preaching, manifested interest therein and signs of repentance and reformation, that he received them cordially; he did not refuse to recognize them, as did the Pharisees. The record is not that he went on slumming missions, after the publicans and harlots, but, he "receiveth [publicans and] sinners," and that many of these lower classes heard him gladly. (Luke 15:2; Mark 12:37) Furthermore, be it noticed, these publicans and sinners were members of the Jewish church—for that entire nation was accepted of God as his people, and they were all included under the typical sacrifices for sin, on the Day of Atonement; and they were all reckoned as under the Law Covenant—covenanters. These lower classes had slipped away from the outward observance of the Jewish law, but our Lord testified that many of them were in far better condition of heart to receive his message than were many of the outwardly pious Pharisees.

(3) THE CORRECT VIEW OF THE CHURCH'S MISSION

The question then arises, If the church is not to rule the world in this present age, and if she is not to be the world's instructor, uplifter, by moral reforms, what is her mission—what other mission can she have? And this brings us to the third view, which quite a number hold in a more or less confused way—their commingled errors beclouding and vitiating the truth.

(*a*) Her chief mission is toward herself. She is to lift up the light in the world, the True Light,—not with the expectation of enlightening the world, not with the thought that her feeble lamp shall scatter earth's night of sin and darkness of superstition; for that can be accomplished only by the coming of the morning, the Millennial morning, when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams. She holds up the light of the truth, the light of the Gospel, during this night, to attract *some*—"a peculiar people"—not to attract and gather *all*, but "even as many as the Lord our God shall *call*." (Acts 2:39) Her message respecting the love of God and the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, as it rings out into the world, is not expected to awaken the *world* and to lead the world to the Lord. No, she is merely bearing "witness"—a witness which will have to do also with a future knowledge and opportunity to be granted to the *world* during the Millennium.

She is instructed by the Word of the Lord not to expect that any but a comparatively small number will appreciate her light or her message: as the Prophet foretold, so she has found it, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. 53:1; John 12:38) As the Scriptures declare, so she finds it, that the vast majority of mankind are blind, so that they cannot see the light: some are stone blind, so as to see nothing: while others are partially blind and can get a little glimmer of it by which they can discern some things indistinctly. In hearing, likewise, the world's ears are dull of hearing—"deaf," say the Scriptures. Some hear nothing, others hear very imperfectly, few hear the message of divine love and mercy clearly and distinctly. The church is to realize that her mission is not to these, the blind and deaf, but to him "that hath an ear [to hear,]—*let him hear!*"—Rev. 2:7; 3:6, 13, 22.

Our Lord remarked this condition to his followers, when present with them in the world, saying, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear," and he declared that his parables and teachings were not uttered with the intention of making the blind see and the deaf hear, but purposely so that the deaf might not hear, and so that the blind might not see. When the disciples inquired respecting the interpretation of a parable, he said, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand." (Luke 8:10) They had indeed the natural sight, and the natural hearing, but they lacked the mental sight and hearing. And the message that our dear Master preached, and that he commissioned his apostles and his church to preach throughout this age, is the same—not for the blind, not for the deaf, but for those "blessed," favored ones who have eyes and ears.

As our Lord did not expect many to respond to his preaching, and particularly implied that only a small number would be able to do so, saying, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him," so his church throughout this age is to realize that when she lifts up the light and lifts up her voice no man will come in response except as the Father draws him. And as the Father drew only a comparatively small remnant of the Jewish nation to our Lord, so the church should not be surprised that he has drawn only a comparatively small proportion of Gentiles throughout this age.

Following our text the Apostle points out why this is the case: why the majority of mankind are not in a condition of heart to see and appreciate the light, to hear and to rejoice in the Gospel, not in the condition to be drawn by the Father. He declares that it is because "the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded their minds" (vs. 4), and thus hindered the light of divine truth from shining unto them. He points out that all such are in a lost condition, without God and without hope in the world. Not, however, they that are any more lost now than they have been all along for six thousand years; for whoever is not in Christ, whoever is out of relationship to God, is a member of that large class, servants of sin, still under condemnation, still strangers from God. still lost in the wilderness of sin. They have not yet been *found* by the great Shepherd who promises that in due time all the true sheep shall be found;—that all the Satan and prejudice-blinded eyes shall be opened to see the light of divine goodness and truth; and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped to hear the message of the grace of God.—Isa. 35:5.

(*b*) It is another part of the mission of the church to care for those who do see the light which she holds up, and who are attracted by that light, and who come unto the Lord. She is to teach and instruct such, and to introduce them to the full *fellowship of the high calling* by making clear to them, as the Lord's mouthpiece, "what is the hope of our calling," present and future—now to suffer with Christ for righteousness' sake, to cultivate his spirit, his disposition, to bear much fruit of the spirit in our own hearts and lives, and thus, under divine supervision, to be fitted, polished and prepared for a place in the glorious temple of the future for a share in the glorious work of the incoming age,—the blessing of the world.—1 Cor. 1:26; Eph. 1:18; 2 Thes. 1:11.

The church is supplied by her glorious Head, Christ Jesus, with certain gifts of the spirit, amongst her members of the earth; and these coworking together in their various offices are to strengthen, establish, upbuild, develop, one another, growing in grace and in the knowledge and spirit of the Head, until the whole church shall eventually, by the close of this age, be brought to the stature of the fulness of perfection as the body of Christ, under the Lord Jesus as the Head. (Eph. 4:13) But she is not to expect that all, even of those who see her light, and who hear her proclamation, and who draw near in harmony with her message, will eventually come into full membership in this glorious body of Christ. On the contrary, she is assured of the Lord in advance that, while only a few, comparatively, will hear her message, the call, a still smaller number will accept the call —for many are called proportionately, to the few who are chosen—who make their calling and election sure by faithfulness to the conditions imposed.—2 Pet. 1:10.

(*c*) The conditions imposed upon the church are designed of the Lord to be crucial tests of *her loyalty* to him, and to the law of the New Covenant* under which she was received by him. Trials, difficulties, persecutions, are useful in proving whether or not her covenant of consecration is from the heart: those who have merely made a lip covenant will be sifted out, manifested, separated from the true ones whom the Lord designates his jewels, and his sins; and whom he purposes to make joint-heirs in the kingdom with his well-beloved Son, our Lord Jesus. It is for this reason that this call and election or selection of the church takes place during this present age, while evil is still permitted to reign in the world, and while the majority of mankind are under the blinding influences of the great Adversary, not yet bound.—Rev. 20:1-3.

As our Lord explained, the darkness of sin and error is in direct antagonism with the light of truth, and consequently when his people lift up the light,—"let their light so shine as to glorify the Father in heaven" who has called them "out of darkness into his marvelous light,"—the effect upon the darkened world will be to awaken opposition, antagonism; because the effect of the light is to make manifest the evils of darkness which would not otherwise appear; and thus to disturb and make uncomfortable those in sympathy with darkness. Consequently those who love darkness, those who love evil, those who love sin, in its varied forms, hate the light, neither come to the light; but either publicly or secretly oppose the children of the light, the enlightened ones, the light-bearers. And even those who have gotten out of the extreme darkness of moral pollution into a kind of twilight of civilized reformation and moral reform cannot endure the clear, searching light of the true Gospel; they much prefer a measure of darkness.—John 3:20.

It is in consequence of this conflict between light and darkness that our Lord suffered at the hands of those who professed to be children of the light, children of God, and who had at least a little light. Our Lord was not maltreated by the Roman governor and the Roman soldiers of their own volition, for they were so totally blind as not to appreciate anything of the light which he displayed. His persecutors were those who had some light, but who hated the brilliancy of the great light which shone upon them. Similarly all the way down through this Gospel age those who have been burning and shining lights in the world have been hated and persecuted, largely, we might say chiefly, almost exclusively, by those who had some light, but whose light was darkness in comparison to the great light of the holy spirit shining in and through the Lord's fully consecrated ones. Thus was fulfilled our Lord's testimony, "If they have hated me, they will also hate you." "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The Lord's followers in the present time are called upon to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, not because it is either reasonable or proper, but because the Lord, wishing to test, prove and polish his people, is willing to permit the evil, opposing influences to prosper, and persecute and oppose his "members," and thus to serve his cause in the preparation of his elect for a future work of service. Thus the persecutors of the "body," like the persecutors of the Head, are coöperating to fulfil the divine plan in a manner they little suspect.—John 15:18; 1 John 3:13; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Thes. 2:14, 15; 2 Thes. 3:4.

We might multiply the Scriptural declarations that this is the call of the church in the present time—to let the light shine and thus to attract persecution, and to endure the persecution for righteousness' sake, and to be rightly exercised by it in patience, brotherly-kindness, pity and love—toward the persecutors and toward all men.

As it was the mission of our Lord not to rule the world, nor to judge the world, at his first advent, but to lay down his life for the world, so it is the mission of the church, the body of Christ, not to rule the world, nor to judge the world now, but to "lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16) Our Lord declares, "I came not to judge the world." (John 12:47) The Son of Man came to lay down his life for the world. (John 6:51; 10:15) "My kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36) And so the Apostle assures us that we are not to reign now, but on the contrary to suffer with Christ, if we would reign with him and by and by: that we are not to judge the world now, but on the contrary to judge nothing before the time; but he assures us that in God's due time the saints shall judge the world, and that to the world's blessing. He assures us that it is our mission "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his body's sake, which is the church." (Col. 1:24) He tells us, along the same line, that while we are to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, our service is to be specially to the household of faith. Our efforts that will go toward the world of mankind in general are to be only the side-glances, as it were, the overflow of our efforts expended chiefly and directly upon the members of the body of Christ, the consecrated church,—expended in building one another up in the most holy faith.—Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 4:5; 6:2; Gal. 6:10.

(*d*) Quite a goodly number of Protestant Christians theoretically take more or less of the position which we have herein stated, especially our Presbyterian and Baptist friends. But when we come to consider God's object in thus specially dealing with the church we find that very few indeed even of these have any comprehension of it. The general thought is that God merely wishes to elect the church, and that he is thoroughly indifferent as respects the poor world, that for six thousand years has lain in a lost condition under the blinding influence of Satan, and deaf to the Gospel call. Here we must differ, for we find the Scriptures to teach a much more wonderful, much more benevolent, much more grand plan of God than that.

We find it to teach that this church, now being selected or elected, is merely a first-fruit unto God of his creatures, and that a great work is to be done for the world of mankind, through this church, after she shall have been glorified and associated with her Lord in the heavenly kingdom. The same Scriptures which tell us that now the world is blind and deaf, and that Satan, "the prince of this world," "the god of this age," has directly and indirectly had much to do with this blindness, tell us also that the time is to come when all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and when Satan, the great deceiver, shall be bound, restrained, permitted no longer to deceive humanity. These Scriptures assure us that the church now being selected and proved, and thus made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, is to be God's *channel* of blessing to mankind; and that Head and body, Jesus and his church, shall constitute in the full sense the promised "seed of Abraham," or Spiritual Israel, through which all mankind shall be blessed with a knowledge of God's true character, and with an opportunity for gaining eternal life in the Millennial judgment day which God has appointed.—Gal. 3:16, 29.

One of the particular trials with many of the Lord's people is that they are frequently upbraided by less consecrated, worldly-wise professors, with the suggestion that they are selfish, and neglectful of the true work of the church, because they do not join with others in the various political, social, financial and moral reforms of the world; or in "revival" efforts to drive and scare the worldly, whom God has not "called" by the truth along Scriptural lines. If we are obliged to endure something on this score for Christ's sake, it is only a part of "the sufferings of Christ" in which we should rejoice; realizing that the Lord knows our faithfulness to him and to his Word. We may realize also, that in due time others shall see the divine plan actually fulfilling, as we are now permitted to see it by the eye of faith; and they will then see that the "wise virgins" were *wise* in that they hearkened to and obeyed the Lord's Word, and made themselves ready for the future work of service for the world.—Rev. 19:7; Eph. 4:12.

We can sympathize with those who see nothing; we can sympathize also with those who see a little, and who strive toward moral and other reforms, and in various ways for the sectarian prosperity rather than for the upbuilding of the saints, the church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven. We should have patience, particularly with those who give evidence that they are laboring in harmony with their convictions. If they are engaging in good works of any kind they deserve our sympathy, and undoubtedly will obtain a blessing as a result. The true church is laboring not merely for *a* blessing, but for *the* blessing—"*the prize* of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14) Let all, then, who see the prize, and who see the light of God's glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, be faithful to the Father's terms, conditions, calling, service. Let all such give attention to this ministry (service) which we have received, and faint not; be not discouraged, whether men hear or whether they forbear, whether they think ill of us or whether they speak ill of us; let us remember that our report at the end of the trial is to be rendered to the Lord himself, when he is making up his jewels. Let us remember that the first condition of acceptance with him is loyal *obedience* to his

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* See June 15, 1919, for critical examination of Covenants.

Word, the evidence of love for him and faith in him. (2 Cor. 10:5, 6) Let us remember, also, that the second qualification he will look for in us is love for the brethren, readiness to be, to do and to suffer, to die on behalf of those who are really, truly consecrated children of God, seeking to walk in his ways.

All thus following in the ministry (the service) which we have received of God, find themselves today walking in the footsteps of Jesus and the apostles, and find the various predictions made respecting the entire church applicable to its living members also, as, for instance, following our text, the Apostle declares of this class who have this ministry:—

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants [the church's servants, not the world's servants] for Jesus' sake. . . . . We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus [always representing Christ and his sacrifice as dying members of his body] that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live [as new creatures in Christ Jesus] are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake [our consecration at the beginning was a consecration to death; it changes not; it will always so continue, until we have finished our course and have actually died], that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."—Verses 5-11.

In other words, the truly consecrated church of Christ, all "whose names are written in heaven," are his representative members upon the earth, throughout this Gospel age. The Head suffered eighteen hundred years ago, the members of the body have since been suffering with him, and have been learning the same lessons of obedience to the divine will, and trust and confidence in the divine wisdom, and love for the brethren; and by and by the entire body of Christ will have finished its course, and will have been received by the Head into his glory, and then will begin God's great work for the world, for which all his dealings with the church are but the divine preparation. In the church the Lord will give to the world kings, to rule in righteousness,—in love, instead of in selfishness and pride; but the church will also be priests, to bless with the knowledge of the truth, and with help out of the mire of sin, back to full harmony with God, all who desire to return to him. It will then be true, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."—Rev. 5:10.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

WILL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH BE RE-ESTABLISHED?

Question.—If the saints and the Lord are not visible to the world during the Millennium, how will their loved friends, who did not have the same hope of union in Christ, have fellowship with them?

Answer.—In the present life the "saints" themselves do the most of the loving: true, they also are beloved to some extent by some who are not now the Lord's people, and not called to the high calling, but the loving of the latter is usually more of the selfish order of love, and less fervent.

The saints will be as able to love their kindred and the world in general as at present, and, we might say more able, because of their perfected powers. Now, their chiefest love is for the Lord himself, their secondary love is for the household of faith, and as they love not the world, neither the things of the world, their love for the worldly is more of a benevolent *hope*—a wish for the welfare of mankind in general, and in particular of all to whom they are attached by earthly ties. The prophet, speaking for these, declares: "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness;" with our perfected powers received in resurrection change we will comprehend the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of the divine provision for our friends and for all men;—secured by God's love and wisdom, through the great sacrifice of atonement finished at Calvary.

As for the worldly: they will have little difficulty generally in assuaging their sorrows. This is evident from the fact that partings caused by death so soon lose their poignancy. The chief cause of much of the grief manifested at the present time is the fear and uncertainty with which the majority of people regard the future of the present life, and of that which is to come. The latter fear is born of misinterpretations of Scripture, inspired by false human traditions. When they shall come to know that their erstwhile friends, the saints, are forever with the Lord, they will be as satisfied as we now are satisfied to think of our Lord Jesus, our best Friend, as being highly exalted and on a different plane of being from ourselves.

As for the method of communication between the glorified Church and the world undergoing the disciplines of the restitution: we need not suppose that much communication and personal attention and care for our loved ones of earth will be necessary. What would be good for one person would generally be good for all, and our heavenly Father's plan is so abundant in its provisions for the blessing of *all* that, understanding something of his character and plan, we already realize that he proposes to do for all mankind exceedingly abundantly more than all that we could have thought or asked for those we love most. So when the world has that which divine provision will make *general* during the Millennial age, there will be very little necessity, if any, for special interventions, or special communications by the saints to those for whom they now feel so solicitous.

And yet we can readily suppose that God has made some arrangement by which, eventually, there will be a communication between the (restored) earthly and the heavenly planes of being, as there was in Eden before sin entered,—when God either personally or through a representative talked with our first parents. Just how this communication will be established we are not informed, nor need it specially concern us, since we know that our Father is abundantly wise, and abundantly able, and abundantly loving, to do for his creatures all things needful to the comfort and happiness of those who love and obey him.

ARE GREAT SACRIFICES AND SUFFERINGS NECESSARY TO JOINT-HEIRSHIP?

Question.—What about the majority of Christians who, believing in Christ, are not yet called upon to make any great sacrifices for his sake?

Answer.—For a general answer, we refer to the article in our issue of May 1st, 1895, entitled, "Perfect Through Suffering." Everyone who seeks to walk carefully and honestly before the Lord, in the footsteps of Jesus, will surely find that it will cause something of self-sacrifice—the sacrifice of human aims or plans or preferences.

But this question may be viewed in another light. The questioner may mean to lay stress upon the word "great," and may have in mind the endurance of persecutions such as came upon our Lord, the apostles, and others of the faithful in the past—imprisonments, "cruel mockings and scourgings," and violent deaths. Our answer, from this standpoint, is that it is not for us to supervise the trials and difficulties which may beset us. It is for us to make an unreserved consecration of ourselves to the Lord, and then leave to him the decision of how great shall be our trials and besetments—how great our sacrifices in following his leadings. The Lord may see that some need special trials, more than others, and those things which to some would be great trials and imply great sacrifices, to others, because of greater love to the Lord and his cause, and greater zeal for service, the sacrifice might seem to be, as the Apostle expresses it of his own, "light afflictions, which are but for a moment, and which are working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." If we are doing our part faithfully—if we are faithful to the Lord and to his people, and to his truth, to the best of our knowledge and ability, God will surely oversee our affairs so that we shall have *just* the right experiences to develop us; just the proper opportunities of sacrifice which his wisdom sees to be appropriate and needful to us. He will leave no true son without chastisements, disciplines, neither will he forsake us in our trials, but will stand with us, so that we shall not be tempted above that we are able, having provided a way of escape.

In this enlightened day physical scourgings are not sanctioned by the *world*, nevertheless we may be called on to endure patiently and uncomplainingly "cruel mockings" of the *tongue*;—we may be imprisoned in the sense of being ostracized for the truth's sake;—as our Lord foretold, "They shall cast you out of the synagogue and *separate you from their company*: yea, whosoever shall kill you shall think that he doeth God service." Many today are *thus* imprisoned and killed in *influence* for the truth's sake. Thus the Apostle also declared, "I *die* daily." And all who will constitute the elect overcoming church, must die thus. In the symbolic language of Revelation this is termed *beheading*, and we are assured that all who will share the first resurrection and the kingdom will have been thus symbolically *beheaded.*—Rev. 20:4.

NOW HIS WILL IS MINE—1899

"Once I sought a blessing: now I've found my Lord;
Once I sought for feeling: now I've found his Word;
Once his gifts I wanted: now the Giver own;
Once I sought flesh-healing: now himself alone.

"Once it was my working: his it hence shall be;
Once I tried to use him: now he uses me;
Once the power I wanted: now the mighty One;
Once for self I labored: now for Christ alone.

"Once 'twas painful trying: now 'tis restful trust;
Once a half-salvation: now the uttermost;
Once 'twas ceaseless holding: now he holds me fast;
Once 'twas constant drifting: now my anchor's cast.

"Once 'twas busy planning: now 'tis trustful prayer;
Once 'twas anxious caring: now he has the care:
Once 'twas what I wanted: now what Jesus says;
Once 'twas constant asking: now 'tis ceaseless praise.

"Once I hoped in Jesus: now I know he's mine;
Once my lamps were dying: now they brightly shine;
Once for death I waited: now his presence hail,
And my hopes are anchored safe within the vail."

FOLLOW THE LAMB WHITHERSOEVER HE GOETH

JAN. 8.—JOHN 1:35-46.

"Behold the Lamb of God!"—John 1:36.

John's mission was to bear witness to Jesus. He knew him well from his infancy to manhood, and as cousins according to the flesh they doubtless had discussed various features of the divine law, and they were of one heart as respects service to the Lord. Neither could begin a public service until thirty years of age, since this was one feature of the law, but John being six months the elder was thus privileged to begin his ministry six months in advance of our Lord. During that brief period he had evidently made a considerable commotion as a reformer, his message being, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Matt. 3:2.

The Jews had been waiting for the kingdom for centuries; they realized that the kingdom given to Saul, David, Solomon, etc., had not fulfilled the promises, and that a kingdom in a larger sense, and under a greater than David and a greater than Solomon, was to be expected. The Apostle assures us that this thought was continually before their minds. (Acts 26:7) John's mission to that nation, therefore, was the announcement that the fulfilment of the divine promise was at hand, and that in order to be ready to receive the divine favor they should repent of sin and turn to the Lord. And as our Lord declared subsequently, if that nation had believed John and acted upon that belief they would have been ready to receive the Lord himself, and to have fulfilled to them all the gracious promises of the kingdom to which they were heirs, as the natural seed of Abraham.

It was because they were not in a right condition of heart that they were not fit to have the kingdom, the promise of which, therefore, was taken from them, to be given to a new nation, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood—which God has been selecting from amongst all peoples, kindreds and tongues, during this Gospel age, and which will now soon be completed, and be glorified, and begin the work of blessing all the families of the earth, as the spiritual seed of Abraham.—Gal. 3:29.

John did not preach to the people that they should believe on God, for he was addressing only the believing, covenanted people, Israel. His message was respecting things already known to them, and believed by them. He therefore exhorted merely repentance from their sins, and a return to their proper and covenanted relationship with God. In all this John's ministry is very different from the ministry of the apostles to the Gentiles, who not only had been without knowledge respecting God's purposes, kingdom, etc., but also without faith or any ground of hope. As the Apostle declares, they were "without God, and having no hope in the world." Nor did any hope reach them, nor was the Gospel message sent to them, until after Israel's rejection in consequence of their rejection of Messiah.

"The baptism of John" was to the Jews only, and was wholly different from the baptism appointed for those called from amongst the Gentiles. The Apostle makes this fact very clear in Acts 19:2-5. John's baptism was not a baptism into any *thing*, or into any *body*, whereas our baptism is a baptism into Christ, as members of his body. John's baptism merely signified the putting away of sins, and thus to return to a condition of holiness and consecration already enjoyed. Our baptism signifies something very different from this—not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the submission of our consciences, our wills, fully and unreservedly to the will of Christ, that we should henceforth have no will of our own, but be guided entirely by the will of our Head, as members of his body. Thus becoming dead to self-will we are reckoned alive as "new creatures," "members in particular" of the body of Christ.—1 Cor. 12:27.

The Jews as a nation had already been baptized *into Moses* (1 Cor. 10:2), the mediator of their Law Covenant, and to the Jew, Christ took the place of Moses and his New Covenant took the place of the Law Covenant, so that any Jew, already baptized into Moses, and already thus in covenant relationship, would, by merely accepting Christ as the Messiah, the antitype of Moses, and the Mediator of the [†]New Covenant (and in harmony with his faith, repenting of sin), be adopted, reckoned as a member in the body of Christ, instead of as a member of the body of Moses. All others, however, who were of the Gentiles, and not of the natural seed of Abraham, are not to come first to Moses and the Law, and then through John's baptism into Christ, but are to ignore the Law Covenant entirely, and avail themselves of the better covenant direct, and hence they are instructed to be baptized into Christ, by being immersed into his death, and to testify to *this* consecration outwardly, to their fellows and before God, by an immersion in water.[*]—Rom. 6:3, 4.

We have no record that John the Baptist was ever immersed himself—nor would we need to have, since he evidently was a godly man, living up, to the best of his ability, to the standard of the Law Covenant. His baptism, as he himself explained, was only for sinners,—those who had been living knowingly in violation of the principles of righteousness. Hence also John objected at first to the baptism of Jesus, assuring him that he was not a sinner, and that if Jesus needed to be baptized, much more appropriate would it be that John himself should be immersed. "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" But our Lord, while admitting the force of John's argument that a baptism of repentance and remission of sins would not be appropriate in his own case, requested him to proceed with the matter anyway, intimating that he had some other reason why it was right. The fact is that our Lord's baptism was the beginning of the Christian baptism: it symbolized the consecration which he had just made (at the first hour of manhood), his full consecration to do the Father's will, even unto death;—the giving up of his human life, a sacrifice on behalf of the world. It required all of the Lord's three and a half years' ministry to complete what was there symbolized, and he said just before his crucifixion, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." (Luke 12:50) And so with the baptism of consecration, "death," into which we are to be baptized: as members of his Body we are to become living sacrifices, dead to the world, alive toward God, as is particularly set forth in Rom. 6:3-5.

It was in connection with our Redeemer's symbolical baptism in water, which promptly followed his consecration to death at thirty years of age, and was the public declaration of that devotion unto death, that the heavenly Father bore witness to his adoption to the divine nature. We are not informed that any but John witnessed the descent of the holy spirit upon him, but John bore witness that he saw the spirit thus descend, and that the Lord, in sending him to preach, had previously testified that this was to be the sign by which he would surely know the Messiah (John 1:32, 33) It was in harmony with this that he declared to his disciples subsequently, as Jesus passed by, "Behold the Lamb of God." John doubtless knew and expected that some of his disciples would cease coöperation with him, to follow the Messiah. Indeed he declared to them, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

The two who heard John's testimony promptly followed Jesus with a view to getting as close to the fountain head of the truth as possible; and all must admit the propriety of their course. How this suggests to us our own proper course, to follow the Lord as nearly as possible, and to seek as much as possible to come into fellowship and communion with him. And the noble, self-ignoring course of John appeals to all who have the right mind upon the subject—that similarly all of the Lord's servants should call attention to the Lord and not to themselves. Let us each bend our energies to pointing men to the Lamb of God, and not to self-seeking. And let us remember that following Jesus, in the best sense, means that we walk in his paths, strive to do as nearly as we are able what he would do today, taking our lessons from what he did and said personally, and from the instructions which he has left for us, through the apostles, respecting the path of fellowship in his sufferings, the path to glory and joint-heirship in his kingdom. The Lord is found of all those who diligently seek him from right motives, and such are by and by to be granted full joint-heirship with him. "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."—John 15:14.

[†] See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

[*] Our friends of the Disciple denomination wholly misunderstand this matter, and are practising John's baptism of repentance and remission of sins, instead of the baptism of Christ. They should note the Apostle's words, and correct this matter, as he instructed others to do in his day—by a fresh baptism.—Acts 19:2-5.

The evangelist furnishes us the name of only one of the two who first heard John the Baptist speak of Jesus. It is possible that the Apostle John himself was the other one, and that through modesty he refrained from bringing himself into special prominence, in his own records, just as, in another place, he speaks of himself as "that disciple whom Jesus loved, who leaned on his bosom." Modesty is a gem wherever found, one of the graces of the spirit, which all of the Lord's consecrated ones should seek to have largely developed and well polished.

The narrative of how Andrew found Peter and how Philip found Nathaniel (supposed to be the disciple called Bartholemew) is interesting, and shows that true devotion to the Lord is unselfish—desires to confer upon others all blessings and truths enjoyed. This is still the spirit of true discipleship: having found the great Light of the world, and having seen thereby something of the lengths and breadths, heights and depths of the divine character and plan, we are and should be anxious to serve the same favor to others. And this desire to serve the Lord, and truth and our fellows should be so strong in us as to make it impossible for us to withhold the good tidings from any selfish consideration. Indeed, if we have the spirit of the Lord, which is the spirit of the truth, the spirit of true discipleship, we will be so anxious to make known the good tidings as to be willing to "lay down our lives for the brethren"—to help them "out of darkness into his marvelous light."

It will be noticed that these who found the Lord were full of faith respecting the Messiah, of whom Moses wrote in the first five books of the Old Testament, called the Law, and of whom all the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the reputed son of Joseph. They had not yet learned that Joseph was not the father of Jesus.

Nathaniel's answer, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" reminds us of the prejudice which now exists respecting certain quarters from which good things may or may not be expected. For instance, some of our English friends tell us that when the present truth was first brought to their attention they were inclined to disregard it, and consider it unworthy of special investigation, simply because it came from America; for though they might expect many useful things to come from America, the product of "Yankee skill," they had no expectation whatever that any new light upon the Scriptures would come from America, where they seemed to imagine every one given over to cheating and muck-raking for wealth, and that consequently it would be one of the last places in Christendom in which the Lord would cause the harvest light to shine out for the blessing of his people. This undoubtedly has hindered many foreigners from investigating the truths which are now meat in due season for the household of faith. America is Nazareth with them, and they expect nothing of the kind from this quarter.

Similarly, others will inquire, What denomination backs up these religious teachings? and when told that no sect or party has endorsed these things, and that not many great, or rich, or wise, have in any sense of the word become interested, they say to themselves, if not to others, What could you expect?—Can any good come out of Nazareth? Nevertheless, all who are of the Nathaniel type of character, "Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile," will find sufficient reason for investigating, and on investigation will find sufficient proofs to *satisfy them*, "as nothing else would do." Our answer to all such objections should be that of Philip, "Come and see;" test, examine, prove for yourself.

Another lesson here that should prove of value is found in the words respecting Andrew, "He first findeth his own brother Simon." So all who find the Lord, and who are anxious to make him known to others, should similarly begin in their own households, with their own brothers and sisters, father or mother, or husband or wife. There is frequently a diffidence about mentioning the Lord and the truth to those who are of the family and home circle which is surely much out of place. True love for our kin should lead us to make an extra and special effort on their behalf.

In conclusion, let us remember that those who follow the Lamb through evil as well as through good report—those who follow his teachings and example—are they who ultimately shall be with him and share his glory as members of his elect Zion.—Rev. 14:4.

* * *

"Cæsar's friends? or friends of Jesus?
  Solemn question for today!
Friends of Cæsar! Friends of Jesus!
  Take your sides without delay.
If ye pause for man's forbidding,
  Cæsar's friendship ye secure;
If ye do the Father's bidding,
  Scorn, reproach, ye shall endure.

"Free from Cæsar, friends of Jesus!
  Stand in phalanx! never fear!
Love, severely tried, increases;
  Courage yet! the Lord is near!
Onward still, his name confessing,
  Weaving crowns to grace his brow;
Lo! his hands are full of blessing,
  Lifted for your succor now."

WATER TURNED INTO WINE

JAN. 15.—JOHN 2:1-11.

"And his disciples believed on him."—John 2:11.

The third day from the calling of Nathaniel to discipleship found our Lord and his disciples invited guests at a wedding in Cana. Cana was near to Nazareth, for many years the home of Jesus, and quite probably those who invited him, his mother and his disciples was either relatives or old acquaintances. This is implied in the fact that Jesus' mother knew when the wine was exhausted; a matter which rather implied scarcity of provision, and which would be carefully kept from the knowledge of outsiders who might be guests. It is also implied in the statement that Mary gave commands to the servants to do whatsoever Jesus should direct, a matter which would have been quite improper in an ordinary guest.

The fact that our Lord was willing to attend the wedding implies a sympathy with the marriage institution. Indeed, we know that God himself instituted marriage as between our first parents, and we have the Apostle Paul's inspired explanation that this union between man and woman which God approved was designed to be an illustration of the union between Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, and the church, his bride.—Eph. 5:22-28.

Jesus' mother seems to have had some intimation of his power to help the friends out of the difficulty and ignominy of a feast in progress and the supplies run short: and yet she could not have known of the Lord's power to turn water into wine from any previous experiences during the thirty years of her acquaintance with him; for, contrary to all apocryphal stories, the boy Jesus did no miracles, nor did the young man Jesus do miracles, but, as here declared, the miracle at Cana was the beginning of his miracles. Nevertheless, his mother had considerable confidence of some sort, else she would not have instructed the servants to give heed to anything Jesus might command.

Our Lord's reply to his mother has rather the appearance of rudeness, but we may be sure that this was not the case. The sense of the Lord's words would seem to be to call his mother's attention to the fact that while he had, in every sense of the word, been a dutiful son for thirty years, he had now reached the period of manhood, according to the law, and was now devoted, consecrated, to the Lord. No doubt he and his mother had talked the matter over previously, and he was thus reminding her that his life being consecrated now, she could not expect him to be under her direction to the same extent as formerly—the time had fully come that he must now be about his Father's business.

The six water-pots mentioned as for purifying were probably intended for the use of the guests for washing their hands. Washing of hands had become an important part of the Jewish observance, and "unless they washed oft they ate not." (Mark 7:3) We nowhere find these washings and water-pots referred to in the law. They were, therefore, probably part of the tradition of the elders, to which our Lord so frequently referred as taking the place of the law of God. These water-pots had handles, permitting them to be tipped over, so as to pour water upon the hands of those who washed, and the six held about one hundred and twenty gallons of water for the supply of the many guests. Our Lord made use of these water-pots in the performance of his miracle for two reasons: (1) Such vessels were probably rarely or never used for wine, so there could be no misunderstanding of his miracle. (2) He probably intended a symbolical lesson in their use; for we are expressly told that this miracle was a manifestation of his glory beforehand (vs. 11)—a manifestation of his work in the kingdom. Water is a symbol of truth, both as respects its cleansing properties and also as respects its refreshment, one of the necessities of life, from which thought we have the expression, "water of life." Thus during the Millennial age the servants of the truth will fill up all of mankind who are suitable vessels, and all thus filled with the truth, and brought into harmony with it, under our Lord's direction, shall then, by supernatural power, find the truth transformed in them into the wine of joy—a joy superior to any other joy, as the wine in the miracle was superior to any other wine.

It cannot be claimed for our Lord Jesus that he was a total abstainer from alcoholic liquors, and the claim made by some that the word "wine" here mentioned signifies a non-intoxicating wine, is not true. It can, however, be said on the other side of the question, that many of the wines of that vicinity and time contained much less alcohol than do many of the wines of today. It may also be noted that changes have taken place in humanity, so that the inhabitants, particularly of the temperate zone, are more highly nervous than those of any other time. Hence, with stronger wines and with weaker nerves, there is a largely increased tendency to excess and to injury. It is our opinion, therefore, that if the Lord were living where we do, and now, he would be a total abstainer from alcoholic liquors, not only on his own account, but also as an example for others.

This miracle was evidently not only designed to establish faith in our Lord by his disciples, and amongst the people in the vicinity of his home, but also, as already suggested, was particularly designed to manifest in advance the still future glory of Messiah's great work.

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VIEW FROM THE WATCH TOWER

BLINDNESS BEGINNING TO RETURN FROM ISRAEL

A remarkable lecture was recently delivered before the "Council of Jewish Women" at Philadelphia by Rabbi K. Kohler on "The New Testament in the Light of Judaism." It illustrates the new attitude of Jewish thought toward Christianity, and indicates the first stage of fleshly Israel's recovery from the gross blindness of the past eighteen centuries.—Rom. 9:31-33; 11:7, 10-12, 20, 25-29.

The following extracts were the Doctor's most favorable references to Jesus and Christianity, and might be misleading did we not explain that, while making these remarkable admissions and concessions to Christianity, he attempted to offset them and neutralize their effect by claiming that our Lord's most forceful teachings were merely a fresh presentation of the sentiments and sometimes the very phraseology of the Jewish teachers who preceded him. His criticisms of the Epistles of Peter, James and John are in similar strain. These, he claims, were all Jews and merely restated or rehashed Jewish doctrines and precepts. All the seriously anti-Jewish and anti-Law teachings are charged to the Apostle Paul.

The Doctor fails to see the *point*. Biblical Christianity makes no claim of being in antagonism to ancient Judaism. Quite to the contrary, it claims that "holy men of old [Jews] spoke and wrote as they were moved by the holy spirit." It claims, however, that the real *force* and the true *meaning* of those inspired words were not appreciated, nor intended of God to be understood until, the antitypical sin-offering having been presented by "the Lamb of God," the holy spirit was granted to all consecrated believers. For instance, we heartily assent that the Golden Rule in "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—was delivered to Israel as a part of the Law sixteen centuries before our Lord repeated it (Lev. 19:18); and our Lord quoted it, not as an original saying of his own, but as a teaching of the Law. (Matt. 19:19) What we claim is that those words were never *understood*, never comprehended, until our Lord Jesus, the great Teacher, sent of God and illuminated with the holy spirit, expounded them by his example and teachings. More than this, we claim that the Jews and the majority of professed Christians do not understand these words now; that only such as have consecrated themselves to the Lord and have received the holy spirit are able to "*comprehend* the lengths and breadths and heights and depths" of this and other "deep things" of God's teaching. If any man will *do* my Father's will, *he shall understand the teaching.*—John 7:17; 1 Cor. 2:7-12.

Respecting the writings of the Apostle Paul, not only the Jews, but all others, in proportion as they come into close accord with both the letter and the spirit of the divine Word, will find in them the keys of the mystery of God—supplied to the church by the Lord that they may be "all taught of God"—"that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work;" revealings of "the whole counsel of God;" capable of *elaboration* under the spirit's guidance, but quite "sufficient" for such elaboration.—John 6:45; 2 Tim. 3:17; Acts 20:27.

The extracts referred to follow:

"There was a time when you and I were taught not even to mention the name of Jesus the Christ in order not to transgress the law, which says: 'Ye shall not mention the name of other gods, neither shall it be heard upon your mouth.' Nor need we wonder at that. It was little short of idolatry which a paganized church made herself guilty of in her worship of Jesus and his mother. Christianity has advanced since toward the light of Jewish monotheism. It is Jesus as a man, as an ideal of humanity, that is now held up for adoration and emulation by Christian theology, in spite of the Trinitarian dogma. Both art and literature portrays him no longer as a God, but as a wondrously gifted teacher and healer of men, who appeals to our human sympathy. Nay, more. His Apollo face gave way to the historically more correct type of the Jews. He is recognized as one of Israel's great sons, whatever the restriction in the flesh may amount to. Should we then, as Jews, not also gladly and proudly own him as one of our noblest of men and accord to him the proper position in our own history? . . . Ought we, notwithstanding all difficulties, not learn to appreciate the exquisite sayings and teachings contained in the New Testament, if only from a literary and humanitarian point of view?

"There is but one answer: Find the right focus, and the colors and shades of the object in view will lead you in the direction of the one light. We need no clear sky to see the sun rise on the Eastern horizon. The clouds reveal rather than hide the dawn of light. So do the myths or legends that gather round a popular hero disclose rather than obscure the existence of a personality impressing the people with its charm and power. It must not needs be exact historical truth what we are told concerning Jesus. Those beautiful and strange tales about the things that happened around the Lake of Galilee show that there was some spiritual daybreak in that dark corner of Judea of which official Judaism had not taken sufficient cognizance, that a movement was inaugurated then which did not receive its impulse or its sanction from the regular authorities or schools. It matters not whether we accord to Jesus the claim and title of Messiah or Christ or not, whether the people and authorities of Judea did or not, or whether he himself assumed it at any moment of his life. . . .

"It is one of the most interesting historical and psychological studies of Judaism to follow this movement through all its phases from the moment the cry of the coming—"the kingdom of heaven"—was heard on the shore of the Jordan among the humble Baptists until the fishermen of Galilee carried the good tidings or good spell (Gospel) as the watchword of a new faith triumphantly out into the wide world. All the written and unwritten records point in unison to John the Baptist as the starter of the movement, the prophet-like preacher of righteousness whom, according to Josephus (Ant. 18:52), Herod the Tertrach feared for the mighty power he wielded upon the multitudes following him to the Jordan to purify themselves of their sins. Of course Josephus, writing for the Romans, took heed not to allude to that Messianic message of his—the cry: "Repent, for the kingdom of God is near;" that is to say, The kingdom of Rome, the satanic power of Edom, has reached its end. All New Testament reports agree that Jesus was among those who received the consecration of baptism from that popular saint of the time. Still, between the simple Messianic hope and promise of John the Baptist, with his fasts and ablutions and prayers, and the bewildering faith of the Christians that the Messiah has appeared, and, though crucified, has risen from the tomb, now to sit at the right hand of God as his son—there yawns a wide chasm which no ordinary reasoning of either Jew or Gentile could easily bridge over. . . .

"Beneath the thick crust of the second century hatred which endeavored to malign the Jew in order to court the favor of Roman rulers, we can still read the true story of Jesus' tragic end from his own lips as he, on the road to Jerusalem, announces his fate to his disciples, saying that "He shall be delivered to the high priests and the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death and deliver him to the heathen to mock and to scourge and to crucify." (Mark 10:33; Matt. 20:18; Luke 18:32) The priestly Sadducees and not the people and their Pharisean leaders were interested in having Jesus brought to trial for his open attack on the priestly misrule, and from fear lest the Romans might hold them responsible, as Caiaphas, the high priest, actually says in the older record in John's gospel.

"All the anti-Jewish utterances are the work of the Pauline school. . . . Every word uttered by Jesus was the ring of Jewish sentiment and betrays the originality of a religious genius. . . .

"We cannot close our eyes to the one great fact that this man Jesus must have made a wonderful impression upon his hearers by the thousand and one sweet and beautiful things he said, no matter by whom they were uttered before or after, or else he could not have been made the author of all these a generation or two after he lived. . . .

"Suffice it to say that this greatness consisted in belonging to no school. He was a man of the people. . . . 'Christianity,' says Leroy Beaulieu, 'produced saints, Judaism, sages.' I say: Christianity gave us Sisters of Mercy; Judaism, noble types of wives and mothers."

* * *

That Doctor Kohler is not merely giving expression to views of his own far in advance of the general trend of Jewish thought, is evidenced by the following comments on his lecture by the editor of *The Jewish Exponent:*

"Dr. Berkowitz, in discussing the lecture, said that it could not have been delivered in other times, because the lecturer's life would have been imperiled thereby. There was another reason why this was true; which is, that there would have been no one to listen to it. Christians, of course, would have objected, and to the Jews the New Testament was forbidden fruit. Our ancestors regarded the reading of the New Testament books as next door to apostasy itself. That Jewish mothers should wish to be acquainted with its contents would have been unheard-of perversity.

"All this has largely changed. The Jews have gone out into the world; they meet Christians on equal terms. The dread of the Christian religion has disappeared with the effort to forcibly convert Jews. They have gone out into the full tide of Christianity, and behold, they have not been swept away. On the contrary, the love of their own faith has grown. It is an evidence of strength that leads the Jew to wish to ascertain the true character of that literature so intimately connected with his own and yet so widely different; so world-embracing in its influence; so potent in its effects upon his neighbors, so freighted with consequences for himself. When before would rabbis have been found who would have invited their people, and especially the women, under any circumstances or conditions, to read the New Testament? Yet here it was done. It need hardly be said, however, that such reading must be conducted with care, and, if possible, under conditions which, if not favorable to Judaism, will be at least not hostile thereto. . . .

"But, however the Bible is read, with whatever preconceptions, it is extremely difficult to escape the pervasive influence of its purity, its strength, its exaltation both of Deity and humanity, its powerful plea for righteousness. Its influence in the Christian world is incalculable; not so much in making Jews of Christians, as in refining and purifying Christianity of its dross and bringing it nearer to the pure stock whence it sprung. In every reformation of Christianity the testament of Israel has been the starting point and the great foundation for the religious enfranchisement. The trend of enlightened Christianity of today is towards a return to Israel's simple and pure religious conceptions. Not a little of the antagonism felt towards the Jews and their scriptures is due to the fears of Christian reactionaries, who would crush every attempt to elevate and purify the church under the opprobrious epithet, 'It's Jewish.'

"What, then, would be the effect of the study of the Christian Testament in the light of the Jewish scriptures as indicated by Dr. K. Kohler? Certainly it will have an important influence. It will not only disclose beauties of its own, but also open Jewish eyes to treasures in their own scriptures, to which, with the indifference of inherited spiritual wealth, they have been hitherto oblivious."

* * *

This means the opening of the New Testament to the Jews —not willingly upon the part of the rabbis, but by force of circumstances, the growth of intelligence and the fact that the best people of the world have drawn their inspirations from it. It was this same force of circumstances that *compelled* the Roman Catholic Council of Baltimore some years ago to grant Roman Catholics *residing in the United States* liberty to own and to read the Bible.

Surely this removal of the Jewish ban from the New Testament will mean the reading of it by the purest and best of that long blinded people. And the reading of the New Testament will mean the gradual turning away of their blindness. So far as our observation goes, nearly all the Jews who have ever gotten their eyes opened to see Christ as Messiah have been converted by reading the New Testament and not by tracts or other treatises—although other writings are as necessary to them as to others as helps in understanding the divine plan of the ages, after they have accepted Jesus as Messiah.

Is not this the beginning of the fulfillment of our Lord's words, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him [Compare John 5:45-47]: the word that I have spoken [directly and through the apostles] the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:48) Are we not entering the Millennial period—"the last day?"—and are not the blinded ones getting ready for the eye-salve? They are still proud, and their words are still stout against Jesus as the Messiah—it is merely their race-pride perhaps which now leads them to acknowledge the great Teacher's greatness, because he was a Jew. But in the great time of trouble near at hand, which will include "Jacob's trouble" as well as "Babylon's" fall, the honest and humble ones will *look* unto him with the eye of faith and shall *see* him thus, and then will be fulfilled Zechariah 12:10.

ZIONISM MAKING PROGRESS

Zionist Jews—those Jews who are identified with the recent movement for a resettlement of Palestine by the Jews—report that the cause so near their hearts is not languishing. Their leader, Doctor Herzl, has recently had interviews with the Sultan and the Pope, and with four prominent compatriots was present at Jerusalem at the time Emperor William visited that city and were kindly received by him. Dr. Herzl is reticent respecting the amount of encouragement given by these potentates; but as one result of his vist to the Sultan he bears a badge of the *Order of Mejidie*, which would seem to imply that the man and his plea were not disdained. That the door of Palestine will open to the Jew, and that shortly, we have no question; although it has been effectually closed for now nearly seven years—no Jew being permitted to enter it except as a *visitor*, whose period of stay is expressly defined and limited.

Respecting Doctor Herzl's efforts, etc., Rabbi S. Wise, Hon. Secy. Amer. Fed. Zionists, writes:

"The exact tenor of the Kaiser's courteous reply, spoken in the presence of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Von Bülow, has not been disclosed. Enough is known, however, to enable us to predicate that the Kaiser is prepared to vouchsafe his benevolent sanction to the Zionist movement, calculated as it is to foster the agricultural life of Palestine under the acknowledged sovereignty of the Sultan. The members of the deputation have since returned to Vienna and have practically made this declaration, although they have couched their interviews, which appeared in the official organ of the movement, in terms of becoming reserve. . . .

"We do not ask that the holy places be committed to our exclusive keeping; let these remain, as they are now, in the hands of those who guard and cherish them. Surely the Christian world requires no assurance on our part that every spot which Christians hold in reverence will be precious to us. The Jew shall not cease to honor true devotion to an ideal—least of all in the land which his past has hallowed for all time.

"Not in vain do we place our reliance upon Kaiser and Sultan. Help and deliverance have come to us before through the grace of 'stranger kings.' Two historic instances recur to us of Israel marvelously saved and prospered with the help of reigning kings. In the year 538 of the pre-Christian era Cyrus took Babylon and graciously permitted the Babylonian exiles to return to their fatherland.

"The momentous results which followed from the reëstablishment of the Judean Commonwealth are part of—and the largest part of—the world's history. A tree of two great branches flourished in time on the soil which the former captives by the rivers of Babylon began to cultivate with all the ardor and assiduity of their nature—two branches, the one the religion of Ezra and the latest prophets, of Hillel and the rabbis, the other, the faith of Jesus, later become the Christianity of his countless followers. And all this came to pass, as Dr. Max Nordau has aptly pointed out, owing to the hardihood of a handful of the earliest Zionists, who, availing themselves of the rights accorded to them by Cyrus, the noble, chose to give up their peaceful and secure residence in Babylon in order to live and labor in Zion and rebuild its waste places. The second exile is soon to end. In the words of Josephine Lazarus, 'once planted again upon native soil, "taking root downward," as Isaiah has it, who can tell what "upward flower and fruit" the immortal branch may bear—what new birth of the spirit, the undying spirit of Israel may give to the world?'

"Another king there was, greater even than Cyrus, who, like him, befriended the Jews. In the course of his victorious marches Alexander visited Jerusalem in the year 332. Legends in great number have been woven around this visit, picturing the manner in which this youthful Prince, who had come to scoff, remained to pray. Whether it be true, as rabbinic tale has it, that Alexander was so deeply impressed by the visage of the venerable high priest Jaddua and the priestly train that he was moved to bow in humility and adoration before these, whom he had set out to conquer, and that he even caused sacrifices to be offered up to the Most High in the Temple of Jerusalem, we cannot tell. We do know, however, that this Macedonian ruler, far from despoiling and violating the shrine, as had been and continued to be the custom of earlier and later invading princes, openly befriended the Jews and treated them with the utmost consideration and generosity."

THE DATE FOR THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

In the interest of readers in "the uttermost parts of the earth" (Australia, South Africa, Russia, China, Japan, etc.,) we give, thus early, notice that this year the date fixed by Roman Catholics and Episcopalians agrees with the true date for the anniversary of our Lord's death, as reckoned by the old Jewish method. Consequently, Thursday evening, March 30, after 6 p. m. (the beginning of the 14th of Nisan), will be the proper time for the celebration of the Memorial Supper. The next day ("Good Friday") will be the anniversary of our Lord's death, and the Jewish Passover week should begin that evening—in exact accord with the record in the Gospels. But for contrariness' sake, to keep away from the Christian date, or for some other reason unknown, the Jews this year depart from their proper mode of reckoning and begin the Passover week on March 26, which would really be the 9th of Nisan instead of the 15th, if properly reckoned.

TEMPT NOT THY NEIGHBOR

A brother recently mailed us a letter containing a donation to the Tract Fund in *money*. The letter was lost in transit—a person of weak conscience in the postoffice (by practice possessed of a keen sense of touch) recognized the nature of the contents and stole it. The brother wrote subsequently that, as the money was *for* the Lord's cause, he thought it proper to trust it to his care. This was a mistake of the head, not of the heart. We are to do all in our power before expecting divine interpositions. We are not to tempt Providence thus. See Scriptural illustration of this principle in Matt. 4:6, 7.

On the other hand, the command is that we shall love our neighbor as ourselves, and lay no snare for his weaknesses. Covetousness, we know, is a general weakness amongst men; and *we* should so far as possible guard and shield them from temptations of this and of every kind: besides, this is only business prudence. Postoffice money orders or express and bank drafts are *safe*, and we advise that these be used.

During the month of December we received 3,997 letters and cards, and have reason to think that about one hundred sent to us were stolen by some one tempted to dishonesty by reason of the touch of a bank bill or the bulky appearance of the letters.

By the way, last month's mail was our largest—exceeding any previous month in the history of this work.

"YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN"

Jan. 22.—John 3:1-16.

Nicodemus displayed both a noble and an ignoble disposition in coming to the Master. (1) He had a nobility of mind which was able to discern distinctly that Jesus was not an impostor, but a Teacher from God; and it was his desire for the truth which led him to seek it from the lips of one of no reputation amongst the worldly wise. (2) But he displayed the ignoble element of his disposition by coming privately, secretly, at night, whereas he should have acted up to his convictions fairly, and have come forward to inquire of the Lord, if not in public, at least in daylight and openly. There are a good many Christians of the Nicodemus type. They have a standing in the nominal church, and a great respect for the "honor of one another," so general in it.

Some today, for instance, see something of the light of present truth, and are convinced that the meat in due season now spread before the household of faith is from God's Word, and not human speculations. They will confess this much to themselves, and privately to some of the servants of present truth, and privately, secretly, so far as their denominations are concerned, they procure and read Millennial Dawn and Zion's Watch Tower—perhaps subscribing in the name of some one else, "for fear of the Jews." But although this is an ignoble course, the Lord does not refuse them the opportunity they seek and, like Nicodemus, they are made acquainted with the truth. But, as we hear little more respecting Nicodemus, so the Nicodemus class of today very rarely develop into true overcoming disciples, servants of the truth. Fear is good, caution is good, when properly exercised; but when these are allowed to have any voice in dictating our course after we have found the truth, their influence can only be evil, enslaving, demeaning. Those who are thus bound by love of human approbation, and fear of the consequences of a public, bold advocacy of the Lord and his truth, are not worthy of him, as he declared: "He that is ashamed of me and my word, of him will I also be ashamed." We urge that all who find in themselves the Nicodemus disposition seek immediately to overcome it, and to get their hearts so filled with the love of God and the love of his truth that it will make them free from bondage to sectarianism, and to fear of man, which bringeth a snare. "Perfect love casteth out fear." Whom the Son makes free is free indeed.—1 John 4:18; John 8:36.

Evidently but a small portion of this conference between Jesus and Nicodemus is furnished us—merely the leading features. Evidently the questions which Nicodemus asked related to the kingdom of God, which John the Baptist had declared was at hand, and which our Lord also declared to be at the door. As a teacher amongst the Jews, Nicodemus was surely imbued with this hope of Israel—that in due time God would send Messiah, who would establish the long-promised kingdom of Israel—superior to all the kingdoms of the world, and over them all—to bless all the families of the earth, according to the promise made to Abraham. Not only might we infer that his question pertained to the kingdom, but our Lord's answer plainly indicates this, for he began at once to talk about the promised kingdom.

The great Teacher's explanation respecting the kingdom-class must have struck Nicodemus as totally new. He had been accustomed to think of all the nation of Israel as being the children of the kingdom, or, if not the entire nation, at least their most intelligent classes, the scribes, the doctors of the law, and their holiness class, the Pharisees. But here was a new thought—none would be in this kingdom, sharers of its glory and of its work of blessing all the families of the earth, except they should be *"born again."* Nay, more, the intimation was that the kingdom would be an *invisible* kingdom, that none could even *see* it, except he would be born again. Failing to grasp the thought of begetting and birth to a higher nature, Nicodemus was puzzled to think how a person who had reached maturity could ever be born again according to the flesh: and of course he was right in considering that an impossibility.

The new birth is not to be a birth according to the flesh: as our Lord explains, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The Master's teaching was not that we should be born again of the flesh, but quite to the contrary, that those who would constitute the kingdom class must be begotten and born of the Spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of the truth.

There is a great lesson here for many pre-millennialists, who vainly think, as Nicodemus, that the kingdom of God will be a fleshly kingdom, that the kingdom-class will have what they are pleased to call "glorified flesh." Our Master's plain declarations thoroughly set aside all such expectations: and to us, as well as Nicodemus, he positively declares that none shall enter into the kingdom except he be born again. The statement that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," is so unqualifiedly plain, and proves so emphatically that the spirit-begotten and spirit-born class, the "little flock," which will inherit the kingdom, will not be flesh-beings in any sense of the word, but spirit-beings, that there is no room for controversy or for misunderstanding on the part of those who have no will of their own in the matter, but are seeking to be taught of the Lord.

All recognize the meaning of the expression, "born of the flesh," that it does not mean merely begotten of the flesh, but a birth into independent flesh-life as a result of the begetting and gestation. And precisely the same thought should attach to the expression, "born of the Spirit." It does not relate merely to the begetting of the Spirit through the word of truth, which occurs during the present life, and at the time of our consecration to the Lord, but on the contrary, it implies and includes a subsequent birth to perfected spirit conditions—the entrance of the spirit existence in the resurrection —*the result* of the present begetting of the truth, and the present period of gestation or development as "new creatures in Christ Jesus."

That this is the proper Scriptural thought to be attached to this word, "born," is manifest from other Scriptures which declare that our Lord Jesus was, at his resurrection, "the first-*born* from the dead," and "the first-*born* amongst many brethren." (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18) Our Lord was begotten of the Spirit at the time of his baptism, when the holy Spirit came upon him. The new nature there begun, in the flesh, developed during the three and a half years of his ministry in proportion as the flesh, the human nature, died Thus, as the Apostle expresses it, he was dying daily, as the man Christ Jesus, but was being renewed day by day in the inner man, the new creature, the spirit being.—2 Cor. 4:16.

The complete death of the flesh, with our Lord, was the victory of his new nature, which refused to draw back, refused to save the flesh, which had already been devoted to sacrifice, as our sin-offering. It was because of this faithfulness of our Lord, as the "new creature," in offering up his flesh as a sin-offering, that the heavenly Father was pleased to resurrect the "new creature"—not the flesh, which was man's ransom price. The resurrection of the "new creature" in a spirit body, glorious, powerful, immortal (1 Cor. 15:42-44), was our Lord's *birth of the spirit*, as the first-born amongst many brethren. As the Head of the kingdom was thus begotten of the Spirit, and in due time born of the Spirit, so likewise must it be with those who will be members of that kingdom. "Flesh and blood [human nature]" shall not inherit the kingdom of God—"cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 15:50) Hence, we who would be heirs of the kingdom must all be changed—made like our spirit-born Head, ere we can either see the kingdom or share its glorious work as members.

Not only did our Lord clearly state the matter thus, but he gave an illustration which is in absolute harmony with this understanding of his words, but meaningless from any other standpoint. He declared that as the wind comes and goes, but is invisible to men, so will all those be who will be members of the kingdom, born again. Our Lord illustrated this teaching in his own person, after his resurrection. Although he was present forty days, he appeared only a few times to the disciples, in all apparently not more than seven, and even on these occasions he *appeared* in a form of flesh (as angels did during previous dispensations) and communed with them for a few moments, and then vanished out of their sight. As the wind he came, as the wind he went, and they knew not whither. Invisible as the wind, he was present with them, taking note of all their affairs, during all that forty days, and merely appearing at the proper times to give the needed counsel and directions and assistance. So it will be with all of the kingdom class, when they are born of the Spirit; they will be able to go and come and attend to all the various functions of the kingdom, without being visible to mankind. They will be as the wind. It will be within their province to appear as men, as the angels have done, if there be necessity for so appearing, although we incline to think that there will be no such necessity, as God has already provided an *earthly class* as the representatives of the kingdom amongst men.—Heb. 11:39, 40.

We are in no sense denying or objecting to the ordinary thought, that a work of grace takes place in the heart of the Christian when he is adopted into the divine family as a son and prospective heir of God, a "new creature in Christ Jesus." On the contrary, we are affirming this, as an absolute necessity to a share in the kingdom, for whoever is not *begotten* of the spirit surely can never hope to be *born* of the Spirit. We are merely making the proper distinctions between the begetting of the Spirit, which is merely the beginning of the work of grace in us, and the birth of the Spirit, which is the completion of that work, when we shall be like the Lord and see him as he is, and behold and share his glory.

We cannot wonder that Nicodemus was astonished when we remember that the holy Spirit was not yet given, and that Nicodemus was not a member of the house of sons, but merely of the house of servants. We wonder far more that some who have been begotten of the Spirit do not readily comprehend this spiritual teaching; for it is their privilege to understand "the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:10) As our Lord said to Nicodemus, "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" we may, with much greater point, say to Christians who cavil today, Are you begotten of the Spirit and taught of God, and yet ignorant of these things?

Our Lord does not even class this teaching as being specially spiritual, but rather earthly, such as the natural man, in proper harmony with God, should be able to understand and appreciate. He says, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" Those whose minds are on so gross an earthly plane that they cannot appreciate so simple a matter as this are not in the condition to be inducted into the deeper things of God. They are at most but "babes," and have need to be fed with milk instead of with strong meat. (Heb. 5:12) Nicodemus, unable (or perhaps we should say, because of prejudice, *unwilling*) to believe this message concerning the spiritual character of the kingdom, was unprepared for any further teaching along that line—he was unwilling to receive the truth, the only message which Christ had to give, although he was already persuaded that our Lord was a teacher sent from God. Hence our Lord says, "Ye receive not our witness."

Our Lord's statement, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God," deserves further consideration. We have seen what he meant by the expression, "born of the Spirit," *viz.*, born from the dead by the power of God as a spirit being, but what is signified by the expression, "born of water?" It is claimed by a very large number indeed that this refers to water baptism, and that those who are not born out of water will not have part in the Lord's kingdom. We are willing to admit the truth of this only to a limited extent. We hold that the Lord refers to the true baptism, which is merely symbolized by immersion in water, and the rising out of it. We hold that the real thought is the burial of the old nature, and the rising of the new nature to newness of life, and that this is accomplished through consecration of the will to the will of the Lord, a burial or immersion of the human will to death, as the necessary step to be taken in connection with the obtaining of the holy Spirit, the holy mind, the mind of Christ, the spirit of Christ, which is the beginning in our flesh of the new creature, which must be developed and made ready if it would be born of the spirit in the resurrection.

This same thought seems to be in the mind of the Apostle, when he refers to the *bath of a new birth*, the making new by the holy spirit. (Tit. 3:5) Cornelius evidently had this bath of the new birth, the making new by the holy Spirit, before his baptism in water (which was a symbol of it, and an outward confession to others). And so it is, we believe, with some Christian people today. They have had the bath of the new birth, and the making new by the holy Spirit, and are thus genuinely new creatures in Christ Jesus, without having had the symbolical immersion in water—because, being mistaught as a result of the errors of the dark ages, they do not discern the beauty of the symbolic baptism in water, and the Scriptural command thereto; and this ignorance and disobedience God evidently has passed over, with many of us, for years. But when, in the abundance of his grace, a knowledge of his will on this subject ultimately reaches us, there should not be one moment's hesitation—there will not be one moment's hesitation, if the will of the flesh is entirely dead and the mind of Christ fully in control.

The oldest Greek MSS. (the Sinaitic and the Vatican) omit the last four words of verse 13, with evident propriety, for, although our Lord is now in heaven, he was not in heaven at the time he addressed Nicodemus. The words in this verse were intended to remind Nicodemus that he need not look to fellow-human creatures for information respecting heavenly things, as they could not know them, any more than himself; but incidentally this verse teaches us something more, *viz.*, that no man has ever been in heaven except our Lord Jesus. This not only agrees with the statement of Peter on the day of Pentecost, "David is not ascended into the heavens," but it also agrees with the Apostle Paul's statement, "Flesh and blood [human nature] cannot inherit the kingdom of God."—1 Cor. 15:50; Acts 2:34.

The only ground for hope that any of the fallen race of Adam will ever know anything about the heavenly condition is then stated by our Lord to depend upon his own justifying work on man's behalf. He must be lifted up as the great sin-offering, the antitype of the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness, the antidote for the bites of the fiery serpents, which represented sin.

Our Lord's reference to the results gives the thought of the wideness of God's mercy, and of his provision for our race. Although now this mercy is confined to the elect church, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call," it is in due time to be world-wide, and a blessing to "whosoever believeth on him." Then the grand Gospel provision is briefly stated in few words—God's sympathetic love for the world, his provision of the ransom in the person of his Son, and that provision made not merely for an elect class, but for the world of mankind in general—whosover believeth.

Another thought: God's provision is not to rescue any from the flames of hell, from an eternity of torment; but to rescue them from death, from destruction, from perishing, from nonentity, and to grant everlasting life to whosover is willing to have it on the conditions of the New Covenant.

THE WATER OF LIFE

Jan. 29.—John 4:5-15.

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."—John 4:14.

Early in his ministry, in sending forth the apostles to preach the kingdom of God at hand, our Lord had instructed them that they were not to go amongst Gentiles nor to Samaritan cities to deliver their message. It was easy to avoid the Gentiles, because comparatively few of them resided in Palestine: the governors of the land, Herod and Pilate, the centurions, and the soldiers, were probably the only Gentiles they were likely to meet, and these they were to seek to avoid, as the message of the kingdom was not for them. But it was a difficult matter to avoid the Samaritans, for the district called Samaria lay between Judea proper and Galilee, and was necessarily passed through repeatedly by our Lord and his chosen twelve.

The Samaritans, it will be remembered, were not Jews, although they were worshipers of God, and had come largely under the influence of the teachings of the law. They were descendants of those mixed peoples which were placed in possession of the land of Israel, as colonists, when the ten tribes were taken captive and colonized amongst the Gentiles. As the Israelites in a foreign land took up with the religious customs of those lands to a large extent, so these Gentiles, transported to Palestine, took up with many of the religious customs, etc., related thereto. But their belief in God, and the fact that they worshiped the true God, did not constitute them proper subjects for the Gospel call, which was confined exclusively to the natural seed of Abraham up to the time of our Lord's rejection; then their house was left desolate, and the middle wall of partition between them and other nations was broken down, and the Gospel of the kingdom was sent forth, without restraint, to whosoever would have the ears to hear it.

It was while our Lord and his disciples were passing through this Samaritan territory, between Galilee and Judea, that, coming to one of the cities of Samaria, he was refused entertainment, and James and John inquired, Wilt thou that we command fire from heaven to destroy them? and Jesus refused, saying that his mission was one of salvation and not of destruction. The Samaritans did not refuse entertainment because they were opposed to the Lord and his teachings, for, quite to the contrary, they apparently would have been very willing to receive him, recognizing him as a teacher sent from God, who performed many wonderful works. Their refusal to entertain him was because he did not purpose to stop with them to teach them, perform miracles in their midst, heal their sick, etc., but was merely passing through in his journey to perform his miracles upon and teach the Israelites.

It was while our Lord and the apostles were similarly passing through Samaria again that, weary with his journey, and probably not wishing to appear unkind, nor to be similarly repulsed again, Jesus waited beside Jacob's well and rested, while the apostles went to the city of Sychar to replenish their stock of provisions. And in the interim a woman of Samaria met Jesus at the well, when she came to draw water. It was evidently with less of a desire for the water for his own comfort, than from a desire to teach the woman, that our Lord asked her for a drink. While he could not invite her, or any other Samaritan to a place in the kingdom, which was the central thought of his Gospel, he could nevertheless appropriately give her some food for thought, which later on might do her good, and prepare her to have a hearing ear against the time when the Gospel call would be unrestricted—for whosoever hath an ear to hear.

The completeness of separation between the Jews and Samaritans, as of different classes or castes, is clearly shown in the woman's surprised reply to our Lord's request. Not that the Samaritans were averse to having fellowship with the Jews, but that the Jews, imbued with the thought that the promises of God were to the seed of Abraham exclusively, would "have no dealings with the Samaritans," would ask no favors of them, and apparently would grant few favors to them. While our Lord was bound to act in line with that truth, that the seed of Abraham, and the promises made to it, were distinct and separate from all others, yet he was not influenced by feelings of pride, caste, etc., and in this instance he pursued a policy in harmony with the Apostle's admonition—that good be done to all men as we have opportunity—preferably to the household of faith. (Gal. 6:10) For the time our Lord was not in a position to speak to Israelites, to do them good, and he was prompt to embrace the opportunity to do what good he could to even a Samaritan woman. And therein is a lesson for all of his followers today: we should serve the household of faith wherever possible, but when this is impossible, and an opportunity offers, we should seek to do some good to others—to speak words which may help them by and by, if not in the present time or age.

Not entering into a dispute with the woman, nor into explanations of the distinction between the seed of Abraham and others, our Lord proceeds to talk of something much more important to her, and in this also sets a good example to all those who would speak his truth in his name, in his way, wisely. He told the woman of a more important matter—that he alone could give the water of life. While physically he was weary, and needed the natural water, yet in a higher sense the woman was the weary one, heavy-laden with sin, who needed the invigorating water of life of which the Lord himself is the fountain.

The thought in the expression, "living waters," is that of a fresh spring in contrast with stagnant waters, which become contaminated and foul. The water which our Lord proposed to give the woman was certainly not the holy Spirit, for this is distinctly termed the gift of the Father, and is symbolized by the anointing oil. The water of life is the *truth*, which both cleanses and refreshes. A portion of this our Lord could properly give to the Samaritan woman, if she were hungering and thirsting after it, and he did give her a drink of it.

The woman classed herself as a daughter of Jacob, and thus implied a hope on the part of Samaritans that notwithstanding their rejection by the Jews from heritage in the Abrahamic covenant, they nevertheless trusted in some blessing. And indeed there was a mixture of Israelitish stock amongst the Samaritans, for certain poor Israelites had not been deported to foreign countries, and these, ignoring the strictness of the Abrahamic covenant, had inter-married with the Gentiles, and in general had abandoned circumcision and the other conditions of Judaism, and hence could be no longer recognized by the Lord as in any respect different from the other nations, Gentiles. So, too, it was with many of the Israelites who were deported: they mixed and mingled with the Gentiles, abandoned the sign of circumcision in the flesh, and in general all the provisions of the Lord's covenant: these, in every sense of the word, ceased to be Israelites, and had no further hopes under that covenant, being as much strangers and foreigners to the promises of the covenant as any Gentiles.

Thus, from our Lord's treatment of the Samaritans we can readily see the baselessness of the expectation of some, who style themselves "Anglo-Israelites," and claim to be the decendants of these deported Israelites who abandoned circumcision and all the features of the Law Covenant, given to Israel. Those who lean on such a prop lean upon a broken reed. The only Israelites who can hope for any mercy and blessing at the Lord's hands, under the Law Covenant, and as the natural seed of Abraham, are those who have a sufficiency of Abrahamic faith to at least maintain the outward signs of the flesh, and an outward attempt at obedience to their Law Covenant. As for the others, who become part and parcel of the Gentiles, they have neither part nor lot any longer with Israel: they may, however, through Christ, come under the still more beneficent terms of the New Covenant, sealed with his precious blood. But the blessings of the two covenants cannot be mixed, and, as the Apostle Paul distinctly declares, whoever hopes for justification under the Law Covenant and under the New Covenant is making a great mistake, and is falling between them both. Whosoever he be, Christ profiteth him nothing; he is yet in his sins, and not an heir, neither as a member of the natural seed, nor yet as a member of the spiritual seed.—Gal. 5:2.

The woman's slowness of comprehension is striking, and yet so it is with all of us when first we came in contact with spiritual truths. Our Lord's patience as a teacher, with a congregation of only one, and that one a woman of a low caste, should be a lesson to all of his followers who seek to distribute to others a taste of the water of life.

Our Lord's explanation of the peculiarities of the water of life of which he is the fountain for mankind is very beautiful, but its force can be appreciated only by those who have received this blessing at his hands—only by those to whom he has communicated his truth and who have been sanctified by that truth, set apart as his disciples—as fountains of truth for others.

Errors, falsities, may satisfy temporarily the craving of those who have never yet tasted of the *truth*, the water of life; but nothing can give permanent, lasting satisfaction except the truth: and our Lord himself, the Word, the Logos, the message of the Father, full of grace and truth, is the embodiment and representative of this satisfying water of life. Whoever receives the Lord as his Redeemer and Leader and Teacher, through whom all the gracious promises of God are to be fulfilled; whoever receives this water of life, receives a satisfying portion, and will never be found looking for truth in other directions. It will satisfy his longings as nothing else could do, and so abundantly as to leave no appetite for strange waters.

The saints, the body of Christ, the prospective bride, are the only ones who receive this water of life in its fullest and completest sense during this Gospel age; and of them it is true that this water is always fresh, springing up within them everlastingly. And when these many well-springs shall in God's due time be brought together in the kingdom, then will be fulfilled through them unitedly, as the body of Christ, the prediction, "Out of thy belly shall flow rivers of living water." —John 7:38.

This river of water of life does not flow at the present time: it cannot flow out to the "nations" until all the "little flock" as well-springs shall be brought together in the kingdom. And thus it is pictured in Revelation, that after the throne, the kingdom, is established, from under it shall flow the river of water of life, clear as crystal. *Truth* will then flow as a mighty river, refreshing and blessing the whole earth, and causing the trees of promise to bring forth "leaves for the healing of the nations [the heathen]." And then shall be fulfilled a promise of the Scriptures which is misapplied by many to the present time: "The spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17) The bride cannot say, Come, in this sense of the word, until she becomes the bride, when the marriage of the Lamb is come, and the new age has fully opened. Neither can she invite the whole world to come to the river of truth until she herself has been glorified, and until that river of life flows. While looking forward to that glorious day, when grace shall be free to every creature, we nevertheless rejoice in the election of the present time, in which the Gospel call is intended not for every one, but for only those who have ears to hear, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts 2:39.

FAITH REWARDED—"THY SON LIVETH"

FEB. 5.—JOHN 4:43-54.

"Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house."—John 4:53.

Two days were spent preaching to the woman of Samaria and completing the journey into Galilee, etc., ere the nobleman's son was healed. Galilee was a part of the territory which formerly belonged to the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel, and the district called Samaria lay between Galilee and Judea. It will be noticed that, while our Lord journeyed hither and thither, he never went outside the territory occupied by the twelve tribes. It will be remembered that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, not far from Jerusalem, and that his parents, shortly after his birth, fled into Egypt, under the Lord's direction, before the slaughter of the babes of Bethlehem: and on the return from Egypt, instead of returning to Bethlehem, they located at Nazareth in Galilee,—"that he might be called a Nazarene," and that thus odium for eccentricity might attach to the Lord, as an offset to his wonderful personality and the "gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth"— "such as never man spake" before or since;—to the intent that only the Israelites indeed might hear in the true sense of the word, and be healed and accepted as sons of God under the new covenant* of grace.

It will be remembered that our Lord's disciples were known as "Galileans," and himself as the "Galilean." And recognizing the truth expressed in the proverb, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country," our Lord did not begin his ministry in Galilee, but in Judea. It seems probable that after his first miracle at Cana he, with his disciples, went to Judea, and was present there at the time of the Feast of the Passover, and at that time performed many notable miracles, on account of which his fame went abroad, not only throughout Judea, but also into his own country, Galilee: for it was the custom for large numbers of the devout Jews to go to Jerusalem to the Feast of the Passover every year, and these from Galilee had brought back word of the works and fame of their countryman. Hence our Lord was now returning to his own country, a great prophet, because of the fame first gained elsewhere.

Our Lord's experience was no exception to the general rule: it is a trait of human nature to lightly esteem things with which we are intimately acquainted. "Distance lends enchantment to the view." When one sees a mountain at a distance, its outlines stand out with boldness and symmetry, but when he comes close to it the beauty and grandeur are apt to be marred, in his estimation, because his eye rests upon the smaller fragments and the silt and soil and tangle of common weeds. Nevertheless, the view and thought from a greater distance are the truer ones, the proper ones. So, too, some of earth's characters who are highly esteemed today were much less esteemed by those who came most closely in contact with them in their day: not that the present view is the false one, but because those who were closest to them, and who were affected by the commonalities of daily life, failed to rightly appreciate them. This is often true in the households and family connections of the world's notables. The little things of life are seen, and the character is measured by these, rather than by its larger features, which alone are seen in the distance. For instance, Julius Cæsar, who by all the world is acknowledged to have been a great man, was lightly esteemed by Cassius, his intimate friend and servant, who once saved his life from drowning, and who was with him when sick, and who measured him by the weaknesses of these occasions and others, rather than by the largeness and greatness exhibited at other times. He, for instance, called attention to the fact that "when Cæsar was sick he cried, 'Give me some drink, Titinius,' *like a sick girl.*" His closeness hindered him from seeing the greatness which others, less close, could readily discern; and thus he says:

"It doth amaze me,
A man of such a feeble temper should
So get the start of the majestic world,
And bear the palm alone."

So it was with Jesus: "Neither did his brethren believe on him" (which expression in olden times signified kinsfolk, including cousins as well as brothers). They knew Mary, his mother, they knew his brethren, they knew Joseph, the husband of Mary, and apparently they knew also that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, but was conceived before Joseph had taken Mary as his wife (Matt. 1:18); for this was the evident purport of their sneer at him, when contending with him they said, "*We* be not born of fornication." (John 8:41) They knew him as the young man who probably had worked as a carpenter in their midst for years. They knew that his home city, Nazareth, had never been reputed for its wealth or its learning—its sons were not bright ones of the Jewish firmament. It was correspondingly difficult for them to realize that this one whom they knew so well could be the great one of whom Moses and the prophets did write.

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* See June 15, 1919, for critical examination of Covenants.

Hence we find that in his own city, altho they said, "Whence hath this man this wisdom, and this miraculous power?" they also said, "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary, and do not his brothers James, and Joses, Simon and Judas, and all his sisters, live with us? . . . . And they stumbled at him. . . . . And he did not perform many miracles there because of their unbelief."—Matt. 13:54-58.

But, returning to our lesson: the news that the great Galilean Prophet and healer of the sick had returned to his home, soon reached Capernaum, which was only about twenty miles distant from Cana; and a person of social and political rank in that city was amongst the first to manifest his faith, and to receive a corresponding blessing; for we are told that the healing of his son was the "second miracle" performed by our Lord after his return from Judea.

It was doubtless by way of testing his faith that our Lord seemed at first to object to his petition, saying, in effect, You do not have faith in me as the Messiah; it is my signs and wonders that you are interested in. The troubled and affectionate father showed by his answer that his interest was not merely one of curiosity and desire to see a miracle performed: his was a true faith in Christ's power, which, he did not question, was able to save his son from death—"Sir, come down ere my son die." His true faith had its reward, and yet he was required to exercise it still further, and to believe that his request was answered, notwithstanding he could have no proof of this for several hours. His faith again stood the test, and he went his way, ascertaining later that the child had begun to mend at the very time our Lord had granted the request. And his faith brought him a still greater blessing than the physical recovery of his son's health, for it made him and his family "believers" in the Messiah, and thus brought them within reach of the great privilege of sonship and joint-heirship mentioned in John 1:12.

Our Lord's object in this and other healing miracles was evidently not merely the recovery of the sick from pain and disease. Had this been his object, he might have commanded the healing of all the sick in one breath: and more than this, he might have remedied the evil conditions which tended to promote sickness. For instance, the nobleman's son had a fever, and quite probably there were many others in Capernaum similarly afflicted, as the city was built near low, marshy ground, and is noted in history as a malarial locality, unhealthful. The Lord did not do this work of general healing, but this is no evidence of a lack of sympathy, nor of a lack of appreciation of what would be necessary to make that and other portions of the earth healthful, any more than it could be considered a lack of interest in mankind on God's part which had permitted malarial and other evil conditions and resulting sickness and disease throughout the whole world for thousands of years. On the contrary, God foreknew the sickness, and designed to permit the evil conditions, as accompaniments of the sentence against man as a sinner—as accessories and concomitants to his death sentence.

The time will come when he who redeemed mankind, and who redeemed also from the curse the earth, "the purchased possession" (Eph. 1:14), will cleanse it from all evil, baneful influences—and there shall be no more death, nor pain, nor sickness, nor crying, for the former things shall have passed away, and all things will be made new. And the period of renewing of the earth and of mankind, for whose use and blessing it was intended, is Scripturally termed, "the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." And this restitution the Apostle Peter, speaking under the inspiration of the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost, tells us will begin at the second coming of our Lord Jesus.—Acts 3:19-23.

At his first advent our Lord's mission was specifically to give himself as the world's ransom price, and secondarily to furnish evidences which to a certain class would be a ground for faith in him, in his teachings, and in his future work—to the intent that such "believers" of the present age might come to the Father, receive the adoption of sons, and the promises; and through faith and obedience unto self-sacrifice might become joint-heirs with Messiah in his great future work of restitution—in the work of blessing all families of the earth.

Bringing the matter down to an individual one, we find that the nobleman received the blessing through faith, and that his faith was attested by his conduct. And so must it be with all who would be acceptable to God, and who would win the great prize set before us in the Gospel. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your *faith*:" but "Faith without works is dead." Faith cannot live without manifesting itself. All of our services to the Lord are valuable chiefly as proofs of our faith in his promises.—1 John 5:4; Jas. 2:26; Heb. 11:6.

A story is told of how a private soldier in Napoleon's army exercised faith in his word, and as a result of acting thereon received promotion to a captaincy. Napoleon was reviewing his army in the city of Paris, when the bridle dropped from his hand and the horse started on a gallop. A soldier leaped from the ranks, caught the horse and returned the bridle to Napoleon. The Emperor thanked him, saying, "Much obliged, *captain*." The soldier immediately responded, "Of what regiment, sir?" And the Emperor, pleased with his quickness and confidence, answered, "Of the Guards." The soldier immediately took his place amongst the officers, altho his clothes were those of a private and nothwithstanding the fact that they ridiculed his faith. He believed the Emperor's words, and acted on that belief, and was a captain. So our Lord has given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature;" and those who will attain the exceeding great and precious things which God has in reservation for them who love him will be the ones who take him at his word, become "children of the light," and "walk in the light." Such, ultimately, shall be members of the great Sun of Righteousness, which shall arise with healing in its beams, to refresh and bless the world by scattering the darkness of sin, superstition, evil.—Matt. 13:43.

But let us guard ourselves against the error of some who have great *faith in themselves*, and consider this a proof that they are of the "elect." Only the soldier who *served* as well as *believed* Napoleon was rewarded. Each should therefore ask himself—Are the exceeding great and precious promises to *me?* Are there conditions attached to those promises? and if so, am I living up to the conditions so as to make sure of my calling and election?

To answer his question so as to have "full assurance of faith," he should search the promises—their significance and conditions, and then act accordingly, if he would win the prize: remembering our Lord's word's, "Not every one that saith, Lord! Lord! shall enter the kingdom, but he that doeth the will of my Father in heaven."

WHO IS JUDGING THE CHURCH?

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—A brother who gave a lesson here recently spoke on the judgment—and claimed that Christ had been judging the church during this age. A number of the friends took exception to this. For my own part, I have studied all the texts on this subject, and I cannot find one text that favors the idea that Christ is the Judge of the church, unless it be Rom. 14:10;—but that is a wrong translation. Tischendorf, Rotherham, Revised Version and all the best authorities render it "the judgment seat of God."

In 2 Cor. 5:10, the church is said to appear before the judgment seat of Christ—not to be judged, but to receive, etc.

All *krisis* (judgment) has been given into the hands of the Son, but the church does not come into the *krisis*.—John 5:22, 24.

The judgment seat of Christ does not come into existence until his thousand-year reign begins; and the *krisis* or the *krisis day* does not begin until the dead come out of their graves, and Christ sits on his *own* throne.—John 5:29; Rev. 14:7.

"God has appointed a day [the *krisis* day] in the which he will judge the *world* by that man," but where does it say that that God has been judging the church by Christ?—Acts 17:31.

Peter says, "If ye call on *the Father* [not on the Son] *who* without respect of persons judgeth," etc.—1 Pet. 1:17.

Christ says, "*I* am the Vine, ye are the branches, and my *Father* the husbandman." "Whom the Lord [the Father] loveth *he* disciplines, and scourges *every son* whom he receiveth."—John 15:1; Heb. 12:6-10.

When the judgment of the world is spoken of the Greek word *krisis* is always used, but never *krima*. On the other hand, in speaking of the judgment of the church the word *krima* is used but never *krisis*. The church does not come into the *krisis*, but it does come into the *krima*.—1 Pet. 4:17. Compare with John 5:24.

It is this *krisis*, in which the church does not come, that God has placed in the hands of Christ.—John 5:22.

I would like to hear from you on this matter. I hope this communication will find you well in every way, and that the Lord will continue to give you strength for every trial. You are surely having abundant practice in suffering and ought to become quite a proficient sufferer. Paul says, "I glory in tribulation, for tribulation works out the capacity for enduring. And the capacity for enduring works out approval; and approval works out hope, and hope maketh not to be ashamed."

May our dear heavenly Father continue to be with you alway—and that you may continually realize his approval and smile—is my prayer. Sister McPhail and I often talk to ourselves about your severe trials, and wonder how you have been able to bear them as you have. I often think of Paul's words, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed," etc. (2 Cor. 4:8-11.) God's grace was always sufficient for him, and will be for you.

Wishing you a happy and successful new year, with Christian love from Mrs. McPhail and myself to you and all with you,

Your brother in Christ, M. L. McPhail.

In Reply:—Dear Brother:—I am glad to know that I have the Christian love and sympathy of yourself and family. One thing in connection with my troubles gives me great satisfaction, namely that, repeatedly and carefully searching my heart, I find in it no hatred toward those who have been maligning me—no desire to render evil for evil, but on the contrary a desire to do them all good, if possible. There is a great satisfaction in this, as it affords me one evidence that the spirit of love has possession of my heart. I trust that it may never be otherwise; but that more and more I may become a copy of God's dear Son, our Lord,—"who when he was reviled reviled not again; when he suffered threatened not, but committed his cause to him who judgeth righteously." (1 Pet. 2:23; 1 Cor. 4:12.) You will be glad to know that I have so far grown in grace that the peace of God rules in my heart, and that I have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men.—Col. 3:15, 16; Acts 24:16; 1 Pet. 2:19; 3:16.

Respecting the proposition that Christ has been judging the church during this gospel age, would say: The church is the body of Christ, and as such is collectively at the judgment seat of the heavenly Father. Our Lord Jesus is not presented to us as our Judge, but rather as our Advocate before the Judge, our Bridegroom, our Friend, our Lover, our Redeemer, our Deliverer, our Head, our Governor, our Guide. As the Head he takes the supervision of the body, he commands, instructs, guides in the affairs of his church, and takes it into fellowship with himself in the building up of the body of Christ in the most holy faith. If we love him we will keep his commandments, and he that loveth him will be loved of the Father. Thus his commandments are to us a law of *judgment*, rules of life, daily; we are in him as members of his body, who professedly have given him our wills,—accepting his will as supreme instead of our own. Nevertheless he has given *gifts* unto men, unto the church—a measure of his spirit, his will, to every man to profit withal; and for the use of these gifts received from our Lord Jesus we are accountable to him. And our use or misuse of these will constitute a judgment with which he will have to do, as represented in the parables of "The Pounds" and "The Talents." I presume these were the thoughts which the Brother had in mind, when he spoke of our Lord Jesus as judging the church during this Gospel age. As the head judges or watches the body, succors it, shields it, supervises its affairs, so does Christ with the church, which is his body.

Seemingly you have overlooked the Greek word, *krino*, which is also rendered judgment, and which occurs more times than *krisis* and *krima* both together, in the New Testament.

Strong (in substance) defines these words thus:—

Krisis—Decision, for or against. Justice.

Krima—Decision, in respect to crime.

Krino—"To distinguish, decide, try," etc.

Krino is used in referring to the judgment (trial) of the Millennial age when the church (Head and body) will be the judges.—See Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30; John 12:48; Acts 17:31; 1 Cor. 4:3; 6:2, 3.

The same word, *krino* is used in attributing that coming judgment to God.—See Acts 17:31; Rom. 3:6; Heb. 13:4.

These seemingly contradictory statements are made harmonious by two other texts in which this same word *krino* is used—thus, "God shall *judge* [*krino*] the secrets of men *by Jesus Christ*" (Rom. 2:16); God "hath appointed a day in the which he will judge [*krino*] the world in righteousness *by that man whom he hath ordained*"—the Christ, Head and body, "one new man."—Acts 17:31.

From this standpoint—of "God the *judge* of all," we need not be surprised if we find not only that the world's judgment (trial) by Jehovah is committed to the well beloved Son, but the Church's judgment (testing, trial) also. Hence our Lord's statement, "The Father judgeth [*krino*] no man, but hath committed all judgment [*krisis*] unto the Son." (John 5:22.) This *judgment* of the church is not only referred to in the parables of the Pounds and Talents, etc., but the Apostle particularizes respecting it in 1 Thes. 2:4-12. And here the statements respecting the Father's part and the Son's part are so intertwined as to prove that they are united in the one work of judgment—of the Father, by the Son. In this text *krino* is rendered "*ought to be judged*."

Again, "ye that are spiritual" are to take part in the work of judging the church now. Especially each one is to *judge himself* and help each other to look into the perfect law of liberty (Love) by which all are now being judged (Jas. 2:12) under the New Covenant. "If we would judge [*dia-krino*—"thoroughly judge"] ourselves, we should not be judged [*krino*]. But when we are judged [*krino*] of the Lord we are chastened, that we should not be condemned [*kata-krino*—"judged down"], with the world."

It is in harmony with the above that the Apostle declares our Lord Jesus "the Lord, the righteous *Judge*," who will give him his crown of life (2 Tim. 4:8); and in harmony with this thought that the church, the Lord's body, is being judged now, under his supervision, and is not (directly) in the Father's hands for judgment, is the Apostle's expression in Hebrews 10:31, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." To be judged by Jehovah directly none of the imperfect race of Adam could stand—all would fall under his just sentence; but under the New Covenant,* God is dealing with the church now as "the body of Christ"—so long as we severally abide under the robe of Christ's righteousness, our wedding garment—not imputing our trespasses unto us, but unto our "Head" who died for us. Nevertheless, we (the church) are "accepted in the Beloved" in a manner different from the world: they will not be accepted at all, nor have any intercourse with the Father until the close of their trial at the close of the Millennium.—1 Cor. 15:24-28.

Similarly Jehovah is the Creator of all things, yet he does this by proxy through him who was "the beginning of the creation of God" (John 1:3). Likewise it is written, "They shall be all taught of God;" yet Jesus was the Teacher sent of God, and we are in the school of Christ, learning of him.

With much Christian love, very truly your brother and servant in the Lord, —The Editor.

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* See June 15, 1898, for critical examination of Covenants.

LETTERS FROM DISTANT COLABORERS

Canada.

Dear Brother Russell:—I have just tonight received the Christmas number of the Tower, and have scanned it through hurriedly, intending to study it tomorrow. In renewing my Tower subscription I wish to write to you more particularly.

You know well my sentiments towards yourself, but on this anniversary of the Saviour's birth, a grand and happy time, I think it is fitting for me to express them once again. For years and years I hungered for truth, and longed to know and understand the Bible, and nobody gave to me the spiritual food. I searched the Bible for myself and the more contradictory it grew; and the preachers never tried to explain it to me.

At length God answered my prayers and gave me the understanding of the glorious Gospel, and for his great goodness in sending me the truth I cannot love and serve him as I would; I can only ask him to accept such services as I have and to count them perfect through the Saviour's blood.

It was through you that this glad tidings came, and I know how you must have loved me, for the Lord to have used you. "He that desireth the office of a bishop desireth a good thing," and I know that you desired it in the real

Scriptural way; that is to say, you said in your heart, "The Lord's people are hungry and thirsty. Lord, I wish to 'serve' them." And truly, you have done so. In all my intercourse I have never known you otherwise than as you sign yourself,—a brother and a servant: and therefore I send my heartfelt thanks.

My feet had well nigh slipped, after I had received the truth, for I was growing cold and losing my first love, and again your loving words helped me and put new life into me, and just lately you have honored me by giving me an opportunity to share with you the work of feeding the Lord's sheep. Is is a grand and glorious privilege, and most heartily do I thank God and the Lord for giving me this opportunity.

With regard to the "Good Hopes" I thoroughly endorse your words; no need is there to urge those to give who know this truth, for it is so satisfying that we long to tell it to others and, if we have money, to use it in the spreading of the "Good News." God willing, I purpose devoting to this the interest accruing to me this coming year from the money loaned to the Tract Society, and I have every reason to hope I shall be able to do so.

Your brother in the Lord, W. Hope Hay.

[The above is from the dear Brother whose donation of $10,000 to the Tract Fund was noted in our issue of Dec. 15, '96. He has since then deposited with us as a *loan*, at low interest, money which he is not certain if he can spare. He is going out now as one of the "Pilgrims." May the Lord bless and "water" him while he thus serves the "flock!"—Editor.]

Scotland.

Dear Brother:—We wish you a very bright, happy and prosperous new year. Enclosed find order for four pounds, three shillings. We think possibly your own comforts are not sufficiently attended to, and we think you should take two pounds of enclosed for your own special wants. It is a small thing for us, the recipients of so many spiritual blessings by God's goodness through you, to repay you with carnal things. The Lord himself will abundantly reward you. May you never fail or be discouraged, till all the will of the Lord has been fully wrought out in you, and by you. We know a little of the difficulties of the fight of faith, and of enduring hardness as good soldiers of Christ; therefore we send our hearty greetings, and deepest love and sympathy.

The Towers continually come, laden with blessing. We have by means of them, and especially in our busy work in worldly affairs, a rich spiritual feast every time. The last one, Dec. 1, was particularly interesting and blessed. Some of the readers here say that the facts recorded are merely to bring out the points of the truth, and that we must not think of it as an actual reality. We contended, saying, All the facts of the case—the train journey, the Presbyterian minister, the conversation, his conversion, his resolve to preach the fuller Gospel—were all an actual reality, tho written up in proper form, for a Tower article. Could you kindly let us know which is the case, and if possible who is "B"?

We are still trusting that the Lord will open up our way that we may yet get free to distribute the glorious truth ere the dark night closes in. We have started (a month ago) a "Dawn Circle Bible Class."

I am yours in our blessed Lord, C. N. Houston.

Reply: Dear Brother:—I am always glad to hear from you. I congratulate you that the past year brought you so many opportunities for serving the truth—by holding meetings, by writing articles in defense of the truth for the public press, by using of your various little vacations from business in colporteuring the Dawn and circulating tracts: and I thank God on your behalf that you have the *will* to thus serve both the Chief Shepherd and his sheep.

I am glad to know that the things pertaining to our Lord's cause are so *first* in your heart, and your business so secondary, that you are seeking release from the latter in such a way as will permit more and more of your time and energy to go to the former. I am sure that our Lord is pleased with your efforts to *do* what your hand has found to do; and I feel sure he will continue to open the door of opportunity before you in proportion as he sees you *humble* and *faithful*. I trust that the present year may be a very blessed one to you and to all of the Lord's faithful.

I thank you most heartily for the proffered (£2) two pounds sterling for personal use: but as my wants are at present well supplied, I am sure you will take no offense at my declining it as a personal matter and joining with you in making it a part of the heavenly treasure by converting it into the Tract Society's funds. Your other contributions to this fund are greatly appreciated also, dear brother. Your orders have had attention.

Respecting the discussion of The Bible vs. Evolution in our Dec. 1, '98, issue: It is an ideal sketch, intended as a hint to brethren and sisters respecting good opportunities and methods for preaching the truth to others when on a journey. Nevertheless, about nineteen-twentieths of that dialogue (almost word for word) actually occurred on our homeward journey returning from the Council Bluffs Convention. "Betha" represents the Editor. All articles in the Watch Tower are editorial, unless otherwise indicated.

Very truly your brother and servant in the Lord,

—The Editor.

Vol. XX ALLEGHENY, PA., FEBRUARY 1, 1899 No. 3

"ARE CHRISTIANS DESERTING LOWER NEW YORK?"

Dear Brother Russell:—I send you herewith a page taken from the *New York Herald*, Jan. 8th, the principal part of which is devoted to—

"A STUDY OF A REMARKABLE CHURCH SITUATION IN LOWER NEW YORK."

The array of facts showing a steady and uniform surrender of ground by the churches, notwithstanding the increase of population, should indeed prove an astounding revelation to the "Christians" appealed to. And the fact that these matters are promulgated by one of the eminent leaders of the New York pulpit, and are verified and added to by the *Herald's* investigations, make the statements well nigh indisputable.

It seems to me that the "study" of the conditions here presented lies not so much in the apparent, surface truth presented, namely, that south of 14th street the "church" would appear to be doomed to practical extinction, as it does in an inquiry into the results which may be expected from this moving and movable church in its later surroundings.

The mistake of abandoning this field can and may easily be remedied, if the conscience of the powers that control the situation be sufficiently deeply pricked. But the causes which suggested, and eventually accomplished, such sweeping changes are still at work in their new abode, and are accomplishing still other changes.

It is to be noted that the new *field* of these *old* "churches" is today the fashionable quarter of the city; and of course it is to be expected that these *old* "churches" are called upon to cater to the new requirements. Accordingly we are not surprised to learn that one such requirement is EXCLUSIVENESS. In the old abode, the idea would not have been tolerated; but conditions are now changed, and the new *environment* is such, that what before seemed to be sinful may now be regarded as an aid to the upholding, if not the upbuilding, of the edifice.

Pursuing this thought, it would be interesting if there could be collected, for purposes of comparison, the subject discussed, and texts preached from, in these older edifices, in days gone by, and those now made use of in the new fields. I am convinced the relation would be as startling, almost, as the facts here given.

When we reflect upon these things, can we wonder that our friend, Mr. Moody, in his last evangelizing work in New York city, told its ministers and people that if Jesus Christ should appear in person in one of their "churches," he would be driven out, because they would not recognize him!

Since reading the statement of facts alluded to, my attention has been called to another *ministerial* occurrence, which has its bearing on this particular line of "study."

An eminent D. D. of the metropolis, with a big church, fat living, well liked, and ostensibly doing a good work, is offered a professorship in one of our seats of learning. Rumor has it that he wants to accept it. Meeting a friend of the aforesaid D. D. I took occasion to allude to this call and its probable acceptance. "Yes," said this friend, "you know —— is not patterned after the old style preacher; he is a club man, something of a sportsman, can take his little toddy, and is 'hail, fellow, well met' generally. He is very popular, and is beloved by his congregation, which is fighting hard against this call. But he has literary aspirations and consequently favors it." Thus we see at work the same underlying evil which succeeded in driving the "church" out of the down-town district.

The student of history, noting such potent and disturbing events as here stated, discovered today in New York, sees them somewhere reflected in London, events, tho peculiar to a locality, having at the same time a universal significance; he hears the alarm sounded, not by the pessimist, but by the trained and conservative judgment of the church as it is understood today, and cannot fail to see the inevitable trend of events.

Can these conditions be changed? Reason answers, About as easily as the heathen are today being changed or converted. It must be obvious that the powers which now obtain are as impotent to work the desired change (if indeed it be even desired) in the one case as in the other. What a profoundly sad outlook must the array of facts, which give rise to these and cognate thoughts, produce in this, the closing year of the century.

Sad must they be to the student of events, unless indeed he be also a student of God's Word, and can discern his times and seasons, and their peculiar events. Then what a change! As one season alternates another with precise regularity, each doing the work allotted to it, so he sees the conditions now prevailing fulfilling their purpose, only to give way to still other conditions in a later development of God's plan.

He looks ahead to that future great epoch in the history of time, which is to take the place of the present, and by faith he realizes some of the changes then to be established. Among those changes, he is assured that "an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness;" and, "The wayfaring men, tho fools, shall not err therein."—Isa. 35:8.

As one of those who are quite ready and willing to note the signs of the times, the more especially because he is assured by the Word of truth that "*weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*," and confident in the comforting assurance that in that day (Millennial morning) separate "churches" will be unknown and unnecessary, because the way of holiness shall be open to all, and all shall then know the Lord from the least unto the greatest (Jer. 31:34), I remain, in the common hope,

Faithfully yours, JOHN W. ALEXANDER.

Extracts from the *Herald* are as follows:—

"ARE CHRISTIANS DESERTING LOWER NEW YORK?"

"Dr. Peters says so in a sermon, and the *Herald* here shows that twenty-three churches have been abandoned or moved from below Forty-eighth street in the last ten years.

"'The church, instead of adjusting herself practically to the changed conditions of civilization in New York, moves up town and puts on style. . . . . A church is located with reference to clientele. So much money must be paid to support it, and it must locate where the rich live, and, as a result, those needing the saving influence of the church most are neglected'—says the Rev. Dr. Madison C. Peters.

"This is a startling arraignment of the church in New York; yet the Rev. Dr. Peters quotes statistics which bear out what he says. The church in the Borough of Manhattan is moving up town, and the lower part of the island is every year becoming more churchless. An investigation made by the *Herald* shows that within the last ten years seventeen houses of worship have moved up to the less thickly populated parts of the city, where the wealthy live, and six churches below Fourteenth street have gone out of existence. In the region from the Battery to Forty-eighth street twenty-three churches have in ten years either moved up town or have become extinct, and little has been left in their place.

"'The Christian forces at work below Fourteenth street,' to again quote the words of the Rev. Dr. Peters, 'with a population of 700,000, are not as much as they were twenty-five years ago. Altho during that time over 200,000 persons have moved in below Fourteenth street, twenty churches have moved out. One Jewish synagogue and two Catholic churches have been added, so that if we count the churches of every kind there are seventeen fewer than twenty-five years ago.'

"It will be seen by consulting the table of churches which have moved up town that all of them belong to Protestant denominations, with the exception of one Catholic organization. There have been from time to time utterances from various pulpits concerning the lack of forces shown by the Protestant churches. It is not an optimistic view of the work of the church among the masses who live in the lower part of the city which is drawn from an analysis of the uptown movement of the churches.

"There are many who maintain that the churches are doing missionary work in the fields which they have left. With the exception of the efficient work of Trinity Parish, of the Protestant Episcopal church, and the work of the Catholics, this field in the lower part of the city is practically left to the sower of tares. . . . . There is no escape from statistics. The majority of those who dwell in the lower part of the island are churchless. South of Fourteenth street there is one church to every 4,732 persons. In that section there are districts where there is one saloon to every 111 persons.

"In discussing the causes of the movement of the churches, Dr. Peters, the pastor of the Bloomington Reformed church, told me that the fashionable churches were becoming fashionable clubs.

"'Let me give you two examples of what I mean,' said he. 'A man who belonged to one of the uptown churches told me recently that in his church there was only one poor man, and "he a Scotchman who could not be snubbed into leaving." Another man, a member of a church of the exclusive uptown kind, told me that in his church the pew rents were made so high that only a "certain class" could come.' . . . .

"Statistics show that in comparison with the growth of population here the Presbyterian church in this city has lost eighty per cent in the last twenty-five years. The Methodist church, supposed to be the most aggressive force in Protestantism, has in the last twenty years increased only twenty-five per cent., whereas in proportion to the increase of population in the borough it should have increased eighty-five per cent. The Dutch Reformed church has in the same proportion lost ten per cent. The only Protestant church doing anything like holding its own here is the Episcopal church. That is largely owing to the fact that much of the enormous wealth of Trinity Corporation is used in work among the poor. The census of 1890 gave the Catholic population of the then city of New York as 384,000. If the Catholic church had held her own she should have had 900,000."

* * *

Some one failing to grasp the situation will perhaps say or think,—"Well, you criticise others, but what are you doing in the line of mission work?"

We reply that it is not the *actions* of these "churches" that we find fault with, but the inconsistency of their actions and professions. These denominations, one and all, profess in their published creeds that they exist for the very purpose of converting the world, and that all not converted by them will suffer a horrible eternity; and straightway they leave the world to what they say is its fate, to meet for essays, lectures, music and social pleasures—as "social clubs"—called "churches."

Our views of the divine plan for human salvation are very different from theirs—and hence the question is not, Are we following their theories more consistently than they follow them? but, Are we following our own conception of the divine plan consistently?—are we practicing what we preach and profess to believe, faithfully? We trust that every regular WATCH TOWER reader can answer promptly,—I am doing with my might what my hand finds to do, in harmony with my understanding of the divine will concerning me. And if any cannot so answer, promptly, we trust he will begin at once such "reasonable service."

We hold that none are in danger of eternal torment—that the very thought of such an unjust punishment for sin is in antagonism to God's revealed plan, rightly interpreted, utterly repugnant to "the spirit of the truth," "the Spirit of Christ," "the holy Spirit."

We hold that ignorance neither justifies nor condemns—either in New York or Africa or elsewhere; but that knowledge alone brings blessings and corresponding responsibilities. Nor do we understand that all knowledges bring grave responsibilities and are savors of life unto life or of death unto death; for but one knowledge, one science, is thus made a test in the Scriptures—the knowledge of the way, the truth and the life, the knowledge of the true God, the God of justice, wisdom, love and power.

We hold that the masses in down town New York, not possessing this knowledge, but being *blinded* in their minds by the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4), are not on trial now as are we who have this knowledge, but will have their trial by and by, during the Millennial age, at the same time with the "heathen" millions of Asia and Africa,—after Satan has been "bound" and deceives the peoples no more (Rev. 20:1-4), after the Lord and his elect church have begun the reign of righteousness. And we hold the same to be true of their polished and wealthy and better educated neighbors who have moved up-town; and who, "blinded," mistakenly call themselves "churches."

We hold that the Lord's church, the only one to which the name *ecclesia*, body or church, is properly applicable, is so insignificant, so unostentatious, and comparatively so poor in this world's riches, that it is not recognized nor recognizable from the worldly standpoint. It is neither man-made nor man-ruled; nor are its members enrolled on earth, but in heaven. (Heb. 12:23) Its head and bishop is the Lord, its law is his Word: it has but one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; and it is built upon the testimonies of the holy apostles and prophets—Jesus Christ himself being its chief corner-stone.

We hold that, while neither the *masses* of lower New York nor the *classes* of upper New York constitute this church, some in both may be eligible to its membership and blessings—"even as many as the Lord our God shall *call*," and no more. And we hold that in New York, as elsewhere, many more have been called than will be chosen;—because the call being to a very high post of service and honor, God has made the way to it *narrow*—so narrow that few find it, and fewer still care to walk therein after they have found it; a way of self-sacrifice, self-denial.

In harmony with this our faith and knowledge respecting the divine plan, we are neither sitting in the seat of the scorners, drawing nigh to God with our lips, while our hearts are far from him (rebelling against him as monstrously unjust and unloving—as blasphemously misrepresented in the creeds of Christendom), nor are we excitedly and frantically with drums and tambourines and "War Crys" striving to save from eternal torment fellow creatures—under a theory that God would horribly and unjustly misuse them, but for our efforts.

On the contrary, we are endeavoring to do as Jesus and the apostles and the early church did, before the errors ("tares") of false doctrine were planted by the great Adversary. We are striving to find those who are not wholly blinded by the god of this world;—the "called," those who have "ears to hear," among the "masses" and among the "classes;" we are seeking to find, and to explain to them the way of the Lord more perfectly. And whether they hear and obey, or whether they forbear, we doubt not for a moment that all the gracious purposes of our all-wise God will be accomplished,—that the foreordained number of the "copies of his Son" will be completed, and that then these as the body of Christ, "the seed of Abraham," as God's glorious kingdom, shall rule and relieve from blindness all mankind and bless and uplift all willing to obediently return to God's favor through the great Redeemer.

Above all we are seeking now, because it is the "harvest" time, the time of preparation for the marriage of the Lamb, to prepare ourselves, and each the other, for that great event which shall complete our joy and usher in the world's blessings; that we may be in heart (and as nearly as attainable in the flesh also) "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."—Eph. 5:23; Rev. 19:7.

THE DATE FOR THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

In our last issue we noted that the Hebrew Calendar seemed this year to disagree with the original methods of reckoning (and we have experienced similar difficulties in the past). Since then we have interviewed Rabbi Mayer on this subject. His explanation is that the Jews had great difficulty in securing uniformity of date for the Passover, because, after the watchers had noted the new moon, the fact required to be signalled by fires from hill tops, and by messengers sent to various communities, etc. Consequently, about fifteen hundred years ago, in the fourth century, Hillel's Calendar was adopted, and it has been followed since.

We are to bear in mind two important matters relating to the date of the Passover. (1) It was to be after the Spring Equinox (yet not too long after), so that the 16th of Nisan, the date of our Lord's resurrection, could be provided with a sheaf of the first-fruits of the harvest—a type of "Christ, the first-fruits" born from the dead. (2) The lamb was to be killed at the full of the moon, as representing the fulness of God's favor under the Law Covenant, to the Jews, which culminated there, and which was followed by the rejection of that nation and their waning in accordance with their prayer, "His blood be upon us and upon our children."

The decision regarding the month to be esteemed the first month was seemingly left to the Elders of Israel, subject to the limitations foregoing; and it appears that they did not always wait until the Spring Equinox, and then after that wait for the following new moon, to begin counting Nisan. (To have done so this year would have been to begin Nisan as late as April 11th.) On the contrary, knowing when to expect the equinox, they accepted the appearance of the new moon whose full would be about the harvest time, and after the equinox.

Following this rule, we find that the full moon after the equinox this year will be on March 27th, which therefore should be recognized as the 14th of Nisan, the anniversary of our Lord's death: and according to Jewish reckoning the 14th would begin on Sunday, March 26th, at six o'clock P. M., the anniversary of the Last Supper. From this it will be observed that the date given in our last issue was in error.

Some will doubtless notice that almanacs give the date of the new moon as March 11th, but if the fourteen days were counted from that date it would not bring us to the full of the moon. We assume, therefore, that the Jews, instead of accepting the dark moon for the new moon, waited until a sufficiency of the moon would be visible to the eye, and counted from that date. So counting now, the new moon would be expected to be visible on the night of the 13th and morning of the 14th of March, which would be Nisan 1st.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO FAITHFULNESS AND PROGRESS

"Rouse up, O heart, brooding o'er earth's broken friendships,
Mistakes and griefs. Retrospection truly brings
Relief at times; but to scan too oft life's pages
Brings weariness, sapping strength thou need'st for progress.
The past forget! As a mighty vessel swings
To right her course, while the skies, serene and fogless,
And calming seas, tell no tale of tempests' rages,
So thou, O heart, whilst her pennant Mercy flings,
Retrieve the past; and returning calm and sun
Shall not condemn—only speed thine onward journey,
Forgiving and forgiv'n.

"Fret not, O heart!—not because of evil-doers.
They soon shall cease. When their cup of crime is full
To overflow, then the great and just Avenger,
With girded loins, sword unsheathed and wrath enkindled,
Will tread the press, and his blood-stained hand annul
Their ill kept lease, and shall vanquish all the tinseled
Recruits of sin. But, O heart, heed thy great danger.
Besetting sins, and fair vanities which lull
To fancied safety the listless, thou must fear,
Lest that dread sword thee mark also for its victim,
A reprobate despised.

"Awake, O heart! Hurriedly from drowsy slumbers
Arise, arise! Night is sleeping time, not day.
Press nobly on, heeding not the faithless numbers!
The mid-day glare tempts to quietness and shadow;
Suave lethargy, friendly false, persuades the way
Is soon retraced from cooling brook and meadow;
But he who turns from the strife and glare, and cumbers
Himself with pleasure's delights, will ne'er essay
The path again; and yet thou, O pilgrim weary,
Foregoing rest, shalt be strengthened with all might:
Thy faith, sore tried, shall develop eagles' sight,
And penetrate, past environment, to glory
Unspeakable, where in heaven's effulgent light,
Thy glorious Leader dwells." —*Unknown.*

JUDGMENT—KRINO, KRISIS, KRIMA

Question. (*a*) In the last WATCH TOWER we note that you refer to *krino* as having the significance of *judgment.* Do you refer to its significance in Greek? I do not find it rendered "judgment" in our Common Version English Bible.

Answer. (*a*) Certainly, *krino* is a Greek word, and its significance in that language was what we sought to present. The word occurs more times than *krisis* and *krima* together: it is variously rendered in our English common version Bible, —judge, conclude, condemn, decree, determine, damned, ordain, sentence. The thought in every instance is that of *judgment* or *trial.* This is the word used by our Lord when referring to the honor to be given to the apostles, "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones *judging* the twelve tribes of Israel." It is the same word used by the Apostle Paul when referring to the future work of the church, saying, "Know ye not that the saints shall *judge* [*krino*] the world? and if the world shall be *judged* [*krino*] by you, ... know ye not that we shall *judge* [*krino*] angels?"—Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3.

Question. (*b*) Do you consider the definitions of *krisis, krima* and *krino,* given from *Strong's Concordance,* reliable?

Answer. (*b*) Yes. You can convince yourself of this fact by noting the uses of these words in the New Testament. Any definition at variance with those given could not be applied to every text in which these words occur. This is the best way to test any definition, whoever gives it: test it by the Scriptural usage of the word.

We will give here *Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon* definition of these words (our comments in brackets):—

Krima. "A decision, decree, judgment"—in New Testament usage, "Condemnation, sentence." [This word seems not to contain the thought of *trial,* except in the past. It relates to and signifies *sentence.*]

Krisis. "(1) A separating, putting asunder: hence a choosing. (2) A deciding, determining, judging, judgment." [This word includes the thought of *trial* culminating in a decision that is final, irrevocable.]

Krino. "(1) To separate, part, put asunder; hence also to order, arrange. (2) To inquire, search into, investigate." [This word is full of the thought of *trial,* or *testing,* or *criticism;* but it does not imply *finality* of decision.]

Indeed, *krino* is the root word from which *krima* and *krisis* are derived. (1) *Krino* relates to probationary trials and testings and corrections (now, and in the coming age). (2) *Krisis* points out a decision or a time of decision. The Jewish "harvest" was such a time of decision or *krisis* to fleshly Israel: the present "harvest" is a time of decision or *krisis* to nominal spiritual Israel. And the entire Millennial age will be a time of *decision* or *krisis* for mankind in general, ending the *krino* or probation of that age with a "harvest" time of decision or *krisis.* (3) *Krima* relates to the final and irrevocable *sentence* upon evil doers. Compare these definitions with the New Testament usage of these words and be fully convinced.

Question.. (*c*) If "the Father judgeth [*krino*] no man, but hath committed all judgment [*krisis*] unto the Son, so that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father," would it not imply that there is *no judgment* of any kind in progress by the Father *directly* during this Gospel age?

Answer. (*c*) Yes.

Question. (*d*) And if our Lord Jesus has nothing whatever to do with the judgment or correction of the church, but must wait and begin his judgment (*krisis*) with the world, and the Millennial age, would it not imply that the Gospel church is not on judgment (*trial*) at all during this Gospel age? And would not such a conclusion be an unreasonable one?

Answer. (*d*) Yes;—to both questions. The only solution to the problem, the only way to harmonize these statements of Scripture, was, we believe, offered in our last issue.

We there showed that ALL *krisis* or decision has been committed to the Son, but the Son does not exercise that *krisis* authority until the harvest, the end of this age. He then exercises *krisis* power in respect to the church and the world—rewarding his faithful and bringing a great time of trouble upon the unfaithful of the church and the world. We are already in this *krisis* time—thousands are "falling"—"Who shall be able to stand?" The humble, faithful few only, "shall never fall, but an entrance shall be ministered unto them abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Thus says the Apostle of this class, "Love has been perfected in us that *we* may have boldness in the day of judgment."—*krisis.*—1 John 4:17.

Altho *all* judgment (*decision, krisis*) was committed to the Son, there is only one text which even implies any exercise of *krisis* judgment (decision) by our Lord during this age: and that is the Apostle's statement, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment [*krisis*]." (1 Tim. 5:24) This would seem to imply that, altho the Lord's *decision* respecting the majority of the church will not be manifested until the "harvest" of this age, yet there have been exceptions to this rule; and the Apostle mentions such exceptional cases. (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29) But the casting of many into outer darkness *now,* because of unfaithfulness to the Word of the Lord or its spirit of love, is *not thus exceptional;* for the time of *krisis* has arrived;—yea, and it will mean a final *sentence* (*krima*) to some; for, as the Apostle declares, "The time is come that *krima* [*sentence*] must begin with the house of God."—1 Pet. 4:17.

But respecting the judgment, criticism or inspection represented by the word *krino:* it does not wait for the "harvest," but has been in progress throughout this entire age, in the church. It is practically the only kind of judgment that has thus been in operation. It was respecting this judgment that our Lord Jesus declared, "The Father *judgeth* [*krino*] no man." (John 5:22) Who, then, exercises this *krino* judgment? We answer that the *krino* or trial or probationary judgment, as well as the *krisis* or decision, is committed of the Father to the Son. Yea, all power in heaven and in earth, as it may relate to mankind, has been committed to the Son—the Father *rests* the entire matter in his hands.—Heb. 4:10; John 5:17.

The Lord gives us his Word, his teaching, as representing himself, saying, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and *my words,* of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory." (Luke 9:26) The teaching of the great Teacher and of his chosen twelve apostles is to be the *kriterion* or rule of judgment (*krino*) to his followers, who by their faithfulness or unfaithfulness to those teachings may be said to judge (*krino*) themselves. The Apostle thus uses the word *krino* to some whom he addressed, saying, "Seeing ye judge [*krino*] yourselves unworthy of eternal life." (Acts 13:46) Again, to the church the Apostle says, "For if we would judge [*dia-krino*—thoroughly examine, criticise, judge] ourselves, we should not be judged [*krino*]; but being judged [*krino*] by the Lord, we are chastened that we should not be *condemned with* [*kata-krino—on trial with*] the world." (1 Cor. 11:31, 32) Does the Apostle here refer to the Heavenly Father under the name Lord, or to our Lord Jesus? To the latter unquestionably; for his words must be in accord with the words of our Lord Jesus, "The Father judgeth [*krino*] NO MAN." This teaches us that in addition to his Word our Lord gives a personal supervision or correction or discipling to those who are at heart seeking to walk in his footsteps.

Moreover, the Apostle exercised this kind of judgment (*krino*) in the church as an *Apostle,* as a special representative of our Lord Jesus, and in his name. We read, "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged [*krino*] already, as tho I were present, concerning him that hath done this deed." (1 Cor. 5:3-5) He reproves the church for not *judging* and reproving such persons of their number as were known to be living in sin: and he most positively enjoins such judgment and that those thus found guilty be no longer associated with as "brethren." Then, answering a misunderstanding of his previous message—that they were to withdraw from evil doers not professing Christ, he says (we paraphrase his words),—It is not my business to judge (*krino*) those who are outside the church and name of Christ. My complaint of you is that you neglect to judge (*krino*) those who are within the pale of Christian brotherhood. Those outside the church God will judge (*krino*—in his own time and manner —Acts 17:31). Expel from your midst evil doers.—See 1 Cor. 5:9-13.

This thought that the church is in duty bound to look after the outward conduct of those it recognizes as "brethren," and to (*krino, judge*) settle points of misunderstanding amongst themselves, is clearly set forth by the Apostle in his discourse following the above reproof. (1 Cor. 6:1-6) He points out that the Lord's people should not think of going to law before the courts of the world to settle differences between "brethren." Here he uses the word *krino* (judge, examine) and asks if there is not in their midst a single person in whose wisdom they could rely, and ironically suggests that if they have lost confidence in the leaders whom the Lord has "set" in the church for such like purposes, they should at least choose as judges the *least esteemed* in the church as preferable to a court of unbelievers. Thus would he shame them and urge that if they had no confidence in each other, they at least do not manifest more confidence in outsiders, but preferably suffer wrong and injustice, rather than dishonor the church and her Head, the Lord. But all this only proved that they had not been careful to *judge* (*krino*) and to disfellowship the outwardly impure and unrighteous.

This judging by the church of its own faithful is by virtue of the *spirit* of the Lord in the church, as the Apostle declared (1 Cor. 5:4); the thought is that our Lord is in a church of even two or three met in his name, to direct such as seek his guidance. Hence we read, "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, ... pastors and teachers and evangelists, ... for the edifying of the body of Christ"—in these chosen members of his "body," the church, the qualities of the "Head" were represented. Thus, representatively, as well as by his Word, our Lord Jesus has been judging, correcting, guiding his church throughout this Gospel age. Take his own statement of this his work of judging his body, in his messages to the seven stages of his church, recorded in Rev. 2 and 3. We read,—

OUR LORD THE SUPERVISOR OF THE CHURCH

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, ... else *I will come* upon thee quickly and remove thy candlestick." "Be thou faithful unto death, and *I will give thee* a crown of life." *I have* a few things against thee; . . . . repent, or else *I will come* unto thee quickly and will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth." "To him that overcometh will *I give* to eat of the hidden manna." "*I have* a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel. . . . . *I gave* her space to repent. . . . . *I will cast* her . . . . into great tribulation, ... and *I will kill* her children with her death; and all the churches shall know that *I am he* that searcheth the reins and hearts: *and I will give unto every one of you* according to your works. . . . . He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him *will I give* power over the nations." "*I have not found* thy works perfect before God. . . . . He that overcometh. . . . . *I will not blot out* his name out of the book of life." "These things saith he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." "Behold *I will make* them of the synagogue of Satan . . . . to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, *I will also keep thee* from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." "Him that overcometh will *I make* a pillar in the temple of my God." "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, *I will spew thee out* of my mouth." "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich. . . . . *As many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent.*"

Here we have our Lord's own word for it, that *he* is supervising and correcting his church now, and that as a culmination of this trial (*krina*) time will come final decision (*krisis*)—rewards and punishments.

We repeat that the proper thing to do is to *harmonize* these various statements—some of which refer to the heavenly Father as the "Judge of all" and corrector of the church, while others declare that the Father judgeth *no man*, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. Nor is it difficult to harmonize these: the Scriptures themselves indicate how *both* are true, pointing out that the Son is the representative and honored agent of the Father in the judging (*krino*) or probationary trials of this age and will be also his agent and representative in giving (*krisis*) decisions—rewards and tribulations—in the end of this age. And with his glorified church he will give similar judgment (*krino* and *krisis*) to the world in the Millennial age—the world's day of judgment.—Acts 17:31.

So far from this being peculiar or exceptional, it is the general rule of Scripture in matters respecting the Father and the Son. In the matter of creation, for instance, the Heavenly Father is always named as the Creator, and yet we are assured that the Only Begotten was both the beginning and the ending of the Father's direct, personal creation; and that "all things were *made by him* [the Only Begotten] and without him was not one thing made that was made." (John 1:3) The matter is explained by the Apostle, saying, All things are *of* the Father, and all things are *by* the Son.—1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15-17.

Take another illustration. In the familiar xxiii. Psalm we read in the original, "Jehovah is my shepherd, I shall not want," etc. But do not all realize that the Great Shepherd's great Son is our Shepherd also? It is the Shepherd-Son that the Apostle Peter declares to be "The shepherd and bishop of our souls." (1 Pet. 2:25; Heb. 13:20) It is our Lord himself that declares, "I am the Good Shepherd." (John 10:11) Not only so, but our word, "pastor," signifies shepherd, as does also the Greek word rendered "bishop" in our common version New Testament: and God, the Great Shepherd, "set" these in the church, says the Apostle. Again he says that the Good Shepherd, Jesus, gave these *gifts* to his church. Is there conflict between these statements? By no means; they are all true and all consistent when viewed from the right standpoint: the Head of the under-shepherds is Christ, the Good Shepherd, and the Head of the Good Shepherd is the Great Shepherd, and the flock is one. The key is in the oneness of purpose and of work between the Father and the Son—"I and my Father are one." But this statement can only be apprehended by becoming *one* with the Father and the Son, in harmony with our Lord's prayer.—John 17:21-23.

Question. (e) You point out the Apostle's injunction that we should judge, *krino;* but does not our Lord use this same word in Matt. 7:1, saying, "Judge [*krino*] not, that ye be not judged [*krino*]; for with what judgment [*krima*, sentence] ye judge [*krino*] *ye* shall be judged [*krino*]?" How shall we harmonize these commands of the Lord and the Apostle?

Answer. (*e*) The two are in accord: the Apostle speaks of the duty of the church *as a church* to judge its members on common moralities. In the above expression the Lord discountenances criticisms and accusations and sentences of one another *as individuals.*

Elsewhere the Apostle also discountenanced *individual* judging, accusations, back-bitings, etc., saying, "Why dost thou judge [*krino*] thy brother? . . . Let us not therefore judge [*krino*] *one another* any more; but judge [*krino*] this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."—Rom. 14:10, 13.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BODY OF CHRIST

And our Lord not only approved of judging on the part of the church, but gave explicit directions to all its *individuals* respecting how to avoid *judging* one another and how to submit themselves to the judgment of the church as the body of Christ.

(1) They were to avoid judging a brother or sister guilty of wilful wrong-doing and were to attempt to reason the matter out privately, that the one or the other might see his error.

(2) If this proved unavailing, the one feeling himself aggrieved (yet still not judging his brother wilfully guilty) is to call in two or three brethren to hear both sides of the controversy. (As the Apostle suggests, those called in should be "wise"—1 Cor. 6:5;—such as both the accuser and the accused would recognize, and whose judgment they would respect and follow.)

(3) If these brethren, called on to act as judges, and his own choice of "wise" brethren, give their verdict against the accuser, that should settle the matter; the accuser should recognize his error. Not to do so would imply that he was not seeking to *ascertain* the truth, but that he had *judged his brother personally*, the very thing that both the Lord and the Apostle warn us against. If the accuser be not able to see matters fully in the same light as his "brethren," he should nevertheless accept their decision and trust and pray to the Lord that he would be guided into clearer views. But should the brethren, called in to judge, agree with the accuser, the accused of course should yield,—especially if he had acknowledged the judges to be "wise." The violator of the judgment of such "wise" brethren (if the matter were considered of sufficient importance) was to be charged and the cause heard before the church—whose decision was to be final; and disregard of its decision implied excommunication.—Matt. 18:15-35.

We have examined this question somewhat in detail, because fearful that something in our last issue might have seemed to sanction *personal* judging. The Lord, however, does recognize his church and does promise to act through it and to give *his* judgment thus to those who seek it, promising in this very connection that, Where two or three are gathered in his name, *he is in their midst.* The great difficulty with many is their *lack of faith;* they do not believe the Lord's Word, nor trust to his providences, but want to take matters into their own hands. And this is particularly the case with those who are in the *wrong.*

PRESENT TRUTH IN EUROPE

We have heretofore mentioned the fact that the Lord has raised up efficient servants of present truth who are colaboring in Germany, Switzerland, France, Austria, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. The success of the work in these fields for 1898 is more encouraging than in any previous year;—as we should of course expect. Particulars did not arrive in season to be itemized in our annual report in the Dec. 15th TOWER: and even now that they are at hand, they are difficult to harmonize and unify—matters which will be duly rectified for 1899.

We have already mentioned the earnestness and devotion of Brother Weber who has charge of the French work, Sister M. Giesecke, our representative in Germany, and Brother Winter, colaborer in Denmark. These have been in the harness for now several years, and the Lord's blessing upon their efforts has stirred up other colaborers in this "harvest;" so that during 1898 many hands served the truth in circulating tracts and DAWNS personally and by mail. Nor were these content merely to circulate the truth—they also shared the financial burden generously, contributing according to their abilities; and that without solicitation—prompted by their love of the truth and by its spirit.

The German and French works are closely identified because Switzerland and Belgium are common fields where both languages are spoken. The reports show that nearly one thousand volumes were disposed of (900 DAWNS and 100 booklets); about 15,000 tracts circulated free; and many thousand sample copies of the German WATCH TOWER.

We feel confident that 1899 will be a favorite year in Europe, as several who have found the truth recently seem to be persons of ability who are zealous to serve it to others. One is a Salvation Army captain in Sweden, another is a sister in France who has been for some years a mission worker, another is a sister of influence in Austria, besides quite a number in Switzerland and Germany—an editor, a minister, several school-teachers and merchants.

The Lord's blessing be with these efforts, as well as upon the still larger work going on in the English tongue! And, by the way, the work in Great Britain is a work in Europe also, and larger up to the present time than any other there. We pray that it also may be greatly blessed and prospered of the Lord, and that his noble servants there may have large measures of the spirit of the truth. We recognize no national or tongue distinctions among those who have become new creatures in Christ: this "holy nation" is indeed a peculiar people, gathered *out* of all nations so completely that henceforth they know each other not by their mother tongue nor by the place of natural birth, but solely and only by the tie of Christian love which binds their hearts and hopes and aims in one.

IS PRESENT TRUTH UNREASONABLE?

The pastor of a Baptist church writes us, saying in substance that he sees much in the teachings of the WATCH TOWER to commend; and that in general its reasonings on the Scriptures are logical, its applications of Scripture found to harmonize well with the context. He would be convinced of the entire position, but for one thing—the smallness of the movement. He says that he knows of no other publications than those from this office that present these views which we denominate "present truth," asks if he is mistaken in this, and whether it is not *unreasonable* to believe that so important truths should be committed of the Lord to so narrow, so comparatively insignificant, a channel. Admitting that the Scriptures teach that at his second coming the Lord will not find *the* faith general on the earth, but that on the contrary the Apostle declares that the close of this age will witness an increase of headiness, pride, disobedience to parents, unthankfulness, unholiness, etc., and declares that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, he wants to know how to harmonize these things with the progress of philanthropy, gentleness, etc., in the world today.

Answer. (*a*) We cannot deny the fact that ZION'S WATCH TOWER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE is the only publication in the world telling that we are now in the harvest of this Gospel age, that the Master is present harvesting the wheat, that it soon will be garnered, and shine forth in the Millennial kingdom (Matt. 13:43), and that after the Lord has thus set up and glorified his "jewels" in kingdom power, the blessing of *restitution* will begin for the world of mankind in general. This, however, is no argument against the truthfulness of our position, which must be tested solely by the Scriptures.

And we are here reminded of our Lord's words at the first advent "harvest"—the type of the present "harvest,"—"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John 7:24) The "doctors of divinity" of that time not only ignored our Lord's teachings, but opposed him and said all manner of evil against him and his work, falsely, and even accused him of being possessed of the prince of devils; and they warned, cajoled and hoodwinked the common people who heard him gladly, until they cried for his blood. But none of those things hindered that "harvest" work to the extent of preventing it. Likewise the present "harvest" work will go right along to completion, regardless of who shall attempt to hinder or make light of it.

It should not be forgotten that, as set forth in our September issue (reissued as an Extra on Nov 7th), the Lord's purpose at the present time is not to arouse and startle and inform the world, but, on the contrary, to have the day of his presence come as a thief in the night—stealthily, unobservedly—in the which he will test and gather his jewels, preparatory to letting loose upon the world his corrective chastisements, retributions, and vengeance upon evil deeds and evil doers.

But you are mistaken, dear brother, in saying that ours is the only voice raised on behalf of the "present truth." On the contrary, all who hear the joyful news of heavenly grace are privileged to join in the proclamation of these "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." And we assure you that all who receive this "new song" into good and honest hearts are prompt to give utterance to it; and are singing it daily, as they find opportunity, to those who have ears to hear. But, as the Scriptures point out, no man is able to learn to sing that song clearly and harmoniously except such as are "taught of God"—only such as have been called to the high calling, and have accepted the call, and are in the way of obedience. Whoever leaves the way of humble faith and consecrated obedience, loses his power to sing "the song of Moses and the Lamb" harmoniously, properly.—Rev. 14:3.

You will be glad, we are sure, to know that with those of "this way" all who hear the message are preachers of it. We recognize no "clergy" and "laity" classes; for all who are in the true Church of God are, as the Apostle expresses the matter, "priests," members of the royal priesthood, of which our Lord is the Head or Chief Priest. Asked not long ago, "How many ministers are of your way of thinking?" we replied, to the astonishment of the questioner, that there are about ten thousand, who are preaching every day to the best of their ability. Then we explained that from our standpoint, the Scriptural standpoint, every member of the body of Christ is anointed of the spirit, and is fully commissioned to make known the good tidings to everyone who has an ear to hear. Some have talents for public speaking, others find a field for usefulness as preachers in colporteuring the truth, and still others for private conversation and private circulation of the good tidings in printed form.

The effect of the combined effort of these ministers of the truth is that the *sound* thereof is extending to the utmost parts of the earth. Not all, however, are able to clearly *discern* the sound now, and we believe that it is intended for only such as have "ears to hear," to whom alone it will be a special blessing in the present time. We look forward with pleasure, however, to the time promised in the Scriptures when all "the deaf ears shall be unstopped" and all "the blind eyes shall be opened," and when, as a consequence, the true knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep—the sea.—Isa. 35:5; 11:9.

Answer (*b*): We are living today under a glare of light, such as the world never before enjoyed. We are not, therefore, to expect the grossness of the past; but while there is a polished veneer upon the world in general today, such as it never had the opportunity of having before, this only gives a corresponding amount of responsibility, from the divine standpoint. Where much is given much will be required. The Scriptures assure us that the only proper course for those who have the enlightenment, which we enjoy, is a recognition of our own imperfections, and of the Lord's standard of righteousness, and an acceptance of the salvation which he has provided in Christ, and a thorough change of heart, will, sentiment,—from sin to righteousness.

True, the numbers in Christendom, who now outwardly observe rules of propriety and decency are larger than ever before; but we doubt if the proportion of the truly consecrated, the "saints," is greater. We have frequent evidences, too, that the veneer of the present time is very thin, and that the old nature, *unconverted*, is underneath. For instance, this was shown a year or so ago, at the notable French Charity Bazaar, when the fire occurred, and when so many who were esteemed to be thoroughly polished socially gave evidence of fierceness and brutality worthy of the dark ages. A similar evidence that mankind, as a whole, are practically unchanged at heart, was furnished in the savagery displayed at the time of the disaster to the steamer La Bourgogne. Nor have we reason to question that in all civilized lands the spirit of discontent which prevails would, under favorable conditions, show up as horribly as in the "Reign of Terror" of the French Revolution. Indeed, the latter is set before us in the Scriptures as a picture or illustration of the conditions which will prevail throughout the entire civilized world, and in the midst of which the torch of civilization will for a short time be utterly extinguished. For further evidences along this line we refer you to Millennial Dawn, Vol. iv.

As an illustration of *modern* cruelty of thought take the following from the pen of a man of learning, a highly esteemed French gentleman—M. Rochefort. Assailing his political opponents, the judges in the Dreyfus case, he said:—

"To smear them over with pitch, and make live torches of them, as Nero did with the Christians, would be somewhat of an antiquated amusement. An idea has occurred to me of a punishment which might give satisfaction even to the most exasperated. The members of the Court of Cassation having been previously drawn up in single file, an executioner duly trained to the work should cut off their eyelids, so as to leave the eyeballs denuded. Then spiders of the most venomous kind should be enclosed in nutshells, applied to the eyeballs, and properly fastened behind the culprit's heads. These spiders in a famished condition could not be expected to be very fastidious, and would slowly and gradually feed on the culprit's eyeballs until nothing but a ghastly cavity remained. This done, these hideous blind men should be chained up to a pillory erected before that Palais de Justice where their crime has been perpetrated, and on their chests a placard should be affixed, bearing these words: 'Thus does France punish the traitors who attempt to sell her to the enemy.'"

If the veneered and polished can think such thoughts and use such language, what may we not expect of the ignorant and uncouth when frenzied and in despair, in the coming anarchy!

Answer (*c*): It is not for us to judge the hearts of others, and we shall not attempt to do so, but we believe that the Lord has arranged his truth so that it will do the judging. Our Lord voiced this sentiment, saying, "My words shall judge you in the last day"—the Millennial day. This judgment of the last day is already upon us, and, as the Apostle Peter declared, so we find it, "Judgment must begin at the house of God,"—the Gospel church, nominal and real. The fact that the Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the law of today do not accept the message and evidences of the second presence of our Lord, so far from being contrary to the teaching of the Lord's Word, is in perfect accord therewith. Has he not said to us that not many great, mighty or wise, according to the course of this world, will be worthy of a place in his kingdom? And do not all the great ones of today, to whom you refer, claim to be great and wise, according to the course and judgment of this world?

Moreover, our Lord gave us a sample or foreshadowing of the present harvest, and what we may expect here: it was furnished in the Jewish nation and its harvest at his first advent. Present conditions exactly correspond to that prototype: there as here it was inquired Have any of the Pharisees and doctors of the Law believed on him? The answer was then, as now, No. Of course the mass of the people then followed their leaders, and so also it will be now. Of that time our Lord said that the leaders were blind leaders of the blind, and that all would fall into the ditch, and it was so: the Jewish nation as a whole was overthrown in the time of trouble with which their age ended, and their house was left wholly desolate. So we expect it to be here: the masses of "Christendom" will follow their blind teachers, blind guides, and have a confidence in them worthy of a better previous record, and will eventually be greatly surprised when the "little flock," the Lord's Jewels, have been gathered, and the time of trouble breaks forth which will engulf all present institutions,—social, financial political, religious, and prepare the way for the fulfilment of our Redeemer's prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

Answer (*d*): If you want to be guided aright, dear brother, you must not look to human authorities, but to the Chief Shepherd himself, who declared, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow (obey) me." We do not set ourself as a leader of the Lord's sheep, and we neither ask nor expect any to follow us as their leader. We seek merely to be, so far as the Shepherd may be pleased to use us, his mouthpiece to call attention to the Shepherd, and to the way in which he is leading. None should follow us, except as they discern that we are following the Master, as saith the Apostle. —1 Pet. 5:3; Phil. 3:17.

"GREATER WORKS THAN THESE"

Feb. 12.—John 5:17-27.

"This is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."—John 4:42.

Jesus was again in Judea, probably attending the Feast of the Passover as was his custom,—these annual gatherings constituting the very best opportunity for reaching the devout Jews from all parts of the Holy Land, and from surrounding countries.

Our Lord, in his quiet Sabbath walk about Jerusalem, came to the Pool of Bethesda, which had a wonderful reputation for its healing qualities, on account of which its porches and sheds were crowded with sick people with divers ailments, waiting to take advantage of what was considered to be a miraculous action in its waters. What is today known as the "Pool of the Virgin" is supposed to be the one formerly known as the Pool of Bethesda, and a peculiar movement in the waters of the Pool of the Virgin is well known. Travelers whose word is reliable declare that they have seen this spring rise twelve inches in five minutes, and then subside about as quickly. There are other springs which have this same intermitting peculiarity. One of these is at Kissingen, Germany. Its flow is accompanied with an escape of gas, and its water is reputed to be more valuable at the time of its movements, and probably because surcharged with gas.

The intermittent movement of the water of the Bethesda Pool is referred to in vs. 7 of this chapter, but the explanation about the angel troubling the waters, etc., contained in the last seven words of the third verse and all of the fourth verse, is omitted from the oldest Greek MSS. (the Sinaitic and the Vatican). There was probably nothing whatever miraculous connected with the spring, but some peculiarity of the channel, which caused the water from one compartment to syphon out into the other at intervals; or possibly the action was caused by gas. The healings experienced were quite probably what today would be termed mind cures, a beneficial action of the mind and will upon the physical organism.

We do not know that the Lord made any movement toward the general healing of the multitude who were waiting for the movement of the pool, and hoping for relief; nor do we know that he extended his beneficence to any, except the one whose healing is the subject of this lesson, who was more helpless than the majority, and whose case was apparently hopeless, in that it was chronic, or thirty-eight years standing. Nor could the impotent one have had much ground for hope at the pool, for, as he himself explained, others less feeble than himself availed themselves of the fountain before he could reach it. It was to this heart-sick and weary one, hopeless and helpless that the Lord addressed: "Wilt thou be made whole?" He readily answered that he was anxious to be made whole. Our Lord did not even wait for him to manifest a previous faith in his power, but allowed the man's faith to be testified by his obedience: and exercising the faith, astonished and bewildered, he obeyed, taking up his couch, not even knowing his benefactor.

So it is with the greater miracles performed by our Lord throughout this Gospel age—some of the weakest and most hopelessly powerless for good are morally healed, strengthened, renewed, transformed, through the operation of *faith* and *obedience*. Yet such cases are but few compared to the world of mankind, similarly or even less diseased with sin, who are all eventually (during the Millennium) to be made acquainted with the Great Physician.

This miracle brought upon Jesus the opposition of the Pharisees, who, because of a wrong attitude of heart, mistook the real object and purpose of the Sabbath day and tacking on to the divine command traditions of the elders, had made of it a mere outward form, robbing it of its true thought. We are not to consider that our Lord performed so many of his miracles on the Sabbath, apparently in preference to other days, as signifying any disrespect to the day, nor as signifying a desire to provoke the Pharisees. Rather, we may suppose that the performance of the notable miracles on this day was largely in order to thus point out the great seventh day Sabbath, the Millennial day, the seventh thousand year period of earth's history, when the anti-typical and far greater miracles and blessings will come to mankind. "These things [miracles] did Jesus, and manifested forth [beforehand] his [coming] glory."—John 2:11.

The conduct of the Jews, in wishing to kill one who, according to their own testimony, had done nothing amiss, but had done much good simply because he differently interpreted the law, and disregarded the "traditions of the elders," is a parallel to the opposition which is sometimes manifested by present-day Christians—sectarians of the strictest sort. They might not indeed seek literally to kill the one who would do violence to their theories and traditions, but many of them would have very little hesitancy in assassinating his character, if thereby they could defend the falsities of their systems.

Our Lord's reply respecting his authority angered them the more: not because he declared himself to be Jehovah, the Father, as many seem to think, but because he declared himself to be the Son of Jehovah, who had been given a work to do by the Father. Nor did the Jews misunderstand him in this; their anger was because, in claiming to be the Son of God he was claiming an honor and place so much higher than themselves—a place which implied a closeness of relationship and of nature to Jehovah, a claim which they considered blasphemous. The successors of the Pharisees in our day go far beyond our Lord's claims, and claim for him what he never claimed for himself; viz., that he *is* the Father, and that he always has been the Father as well as the Son, and that the two are one in person, and not merely two persons of one harmonious mind, purpose, sentiment, will. These take great offence at any of the Lord's "brethren" of today who claim to be sons of God, and who apply that term in its Scriptural force and significance. As is well known to many, a prominent Doctor of Divinity and Professor in a theological seminary in Ohio has published a scurrilous review of MILLENNIAL DAWN, the chief point of which is the holding up to ridicule the hope of the church's "high calling," therein set forth, based upon and supported by the exceeding great and precious promises given to us in the Scriptures, the intention of which, the Apostle declares to be, "that we might become *partakers of the divine nature*."—2 Pet. 1:4.

The declaration that "the Son can do nothing of himself," if it were not backed up as it is by a score of other testimonies from the same interested and inspired Teacher, is a contradiction to the common thought of Trinitarians, that the Son *is* the Father: it is in direct conflict with the statement of the catechism, that they are "equal in power and in glory." Nevertheless the Father "loveth [*filio*—has affection for] the Son," and as a consequence of this affection has shown, is showing, and will show forth through him greater marvels, greater wonders. And our Lord Jesus has promised us that, as the Elder Brother (of the Gospel house of sons), whatsoever the Father shall make known to him he in turn will make known to us. This is brought forcibly to our attention in the Book of Revelation, which expressly declares that it is—"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which *God gave* unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." (John 15:15; Rev. 1:1) Our Elder Brother, our Bridegroom, our Captain, has promised further that in due time we also shall share with him in doing greater works than any which he performed at his first advent.—John 14:12.

Amongst the greater works the Lord mentions the quickening of the dead—claiming that, as the Father has the power to raise the dead, so also this power is granted to the Son. Nor should we suppose that our Lord, in this statement, referred to the awakening of Lazarus, and the son of the widow of Nain, and the daughter of Jairus. These at most were awakenings, and not, in the full sense of the word, resurrections—these individuals were not lifted up completely out of death into the perfection of life. Rather, we may suppose that our Lord was looking down into the future—to the resurrection of the church in glory, honor and immortality, and to the subsequent resurrection (under trial or judgment) of the world during the Millennial age.

This thought is borne out by the statement of vs. 22, that all judgment has been transferred to the Son. The resurrection life is to be the reward of those who will successfully pass the judgment. The first resurrection will be the reward of those who are "overcomers" in the trial in progress during this Gospel age under the conditions of the high calling, and its narrow way to glory, honor and immortality. The church is on judgment, on trial, under the terms of this high calling, now, during this Gospel age. The Lord will also judge the world of mankind redeemed by his own sacrifice,—during the Millennial age: and in that judgment of the world he has promised to associate with himself the bride class, whose judgment trial is now in progress. (1 Cor. 6:2) Those of the world of mankind, awakened and brought to trial during the Millennial age, who shall develop characters in harmony with righteousness, and fully acceptable to the Judge, shall attain to full resurrection, and enter life, complete and everlasting at the close of the Millennial age—at the close of their day of trial, while the residue will be cut off in the second death.

That this judgment of the world did not begin at our Lord's first advent, we have his own testimony: "I came not to judge the world." (John 12:47) And again, his declaration, "My Word shall judge you *in the last day*"—the last thousand-year day of the seven, the Millennial day. It is in full harmony with this that the Apostle declares, "God hath appointed a day [period—epoch] in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained"—the Christ, Head and body.—John 12:48; Acts 17:31; 1 Cor. 6:2.

In harmony with this, also, is the statement in vs. 17 and Heb. 4:4, 10. God rested from his work of creation when man became a transgressor, and instead of proceeding with the work, he abandoned it, placing a curse upon it —a penalty of death upon his chief handiwork. But altho he abandoned the matter, in one sense of the word, he did not abandon it in his purpose, but intended and foretold that he would raise up a seed of the woman which should eventually crush the Evil One, delivering the race from his power—implying incidentally the revocation of the death penalty, a resurrection. Our Lord Jesus was in person the promised Seed of the woman, but, as we have already seen, the divine plan included also the church, "members of his body." The sufferings of Christ, Head and body, are mentioned in the promise of Eden as the bruising of the heel by the serpent. This has been in progress throughout the Gospel age; Jesus was crucified by the forces of evil, yielding himself up a sin offering; and the members of his Body are suffering with him, "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."—Col. 1:24.

Soon the time will come when this great Seed, the Christ, shall be fully glorified, all the members sharing in the glory of the Head; and then, as the Apostle declares, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." (Rom. 16:20) And it is this great Deliverer, whose Head and Lord has redeemed the world with his own precious blood, that the Father has appointed to be the judge of the redeemed race, when it shall be on trial during the Millennial age, while Satan is bound. The work of the Son will not be complete until all evil has been thoroughly subjugated, which will be at the close of the Millennial age. He will reclaim, by a knowledge of the truth and chastisements and corrections in righteousness, so many as are willing, and the residue shall be destroyed from among the people. (Acts 3:23) And when he shall thus have put down all opposing authority, rule and power, the Apostle assures us, he will deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father. Thus the Father worked previously to man's fall, and has committed the work of reconciliation of man to the Son, and also the judgment of the race, and will receive it back again under divine jurisdiction, when, through the Son as his agent, he shall have made all things new.—1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 21:5.

It is therefore a great mistake to say, as some do "Jesus is our judge, *like* the Father"; for our Lord's own words assure us that the Father judgeth no man, having "committed *all* judgment unto the Son." The judgment of the church, in progress during this Gospel age, is referred to in vs. 24: those who now *hear* and believe and obey to the extent of their ability have everlasting life guaranteed to them, as a result of thus favorably passing the present judgment or trial. These are assured that they will not need to come into the general judgment of the world during the Millennial age, because they pass from death unto life as the result of the judgment of this age. The word "condemnation," in this verse, signifies judgment, and is so rendered in the Revised Version.—Compare 1 Cor. 11:32.

In vs. 25 the general judgment of mankind during the Millennial age is specially referred to, when all the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, be brought to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4), and when they that hear (obey that knowledge) shall live: shall be rescued not only from the tomb but also from all the imperfections mental, moral and physical, which have come upon the world through sin—be raised up to perfection of life. The fact that this judgment work begins with a little flock during this Gospel age is suggested by the expression that the hour for the dead to hear the voice of the Son of Man has already commenced, "*now is.*" The whole world, from the divine standpoint, is spoken of as dead, because it is already nine-tenths dead and under sentence of death to the full. It was from this standpoint that our Lord said to one, "Let the dead bury their dead."—Luke 9:57-62.

Our Lord realized that his hearers could not appreciate the possibility of his doing so great a work as a man, and hence he makes the explanation that the Father, who has life inherent (immortality), hath given (promised) the Son the same inherent life (immortality), as well as given commandment (authorization) that he, the Son of Man, to whom the work was committed, as declared in the prophets should execute judgment—the divine will. And it is in view of this high honor conferred upon the Son by the Father that we are told (vs. 23), "that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father." (Revised Version.) The explanation of this statement follows, and shows that the honor to the Son is as the Father's appointed representative and agent in the great work, saying, "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father *which sent him.*"

FEEDING THE HUNGRY

Feb. 19.—John 6:1-1.

"I am the bread of life."—John 6:35.

"After these things," says John; and various connected incidents show that it was nearly a year after the miracle and discourse of our last lesson. It is well understood that the Gospel of John does not claim to be a full record of our Lord's sayings and doings. It would appear to have been written after the other Gospels. John evidently recollected matters which, in whole or in part, had been overlooked by the others, and his Gospel sets forth some very interesting incidents and prayers and discourses, whose omission would have been a serious loss to us. Thus we see how God operates in various ways to accomplish his purpose. He could have miraculously used any one of the Evangelists to give the full and detailed account, but he chose rather to allow each to state himself in his own manner, and to supply the details in four narratives, in preference to one.

This very arrangement indeed, has led to a greater search of the Scriptures, and has thus brought the various details more pointedly to the attention of the Lord's people. We are to remember, however, that, altho a liberty was allowed, the matter was nevertheless under divine care and supervision, to the intent that the records should not err in their statement. Our Lord's promise we may rely upon, *viz.*, that whatsoever the apostles bound or loosed on earth, is bound or loosed in heaven, so completely were they under divine direction and protection against deception and misstatement.

News had just reached our Lord and his disciples that John the Baptist had been beheaded, and "whem Jesus heard of it he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart." (Matt. 14:13) Our Lord withdrew, probably in part to have an opportunity for private meditation and conference with his disciples, who undoubtedly would be greatly agitated by this news and needed his calming influence and assurance that Herod could have no power over him or them except such as might be permitted of the Father. The wilderness place to which they went was just outside the boundary of Herod's dominion, near Bethsaida. And the fact that our Lord's conference with his disciples had a pacifying and strengthening effect is evidenced by their return that same night to Galilee, Herod's territory.

It was while they were thus quietly aside, on the mountain slopes on the north-eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, that they beheld "a great company coming toward them." The largeness of the company is accounted for by the fact that it was near the time of the Feast of the Passover, and according to custom large numbers of the religiously inclined were on their pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

From the other Gospels we learn that the day was spent in healing the sick of the multitude, and preaching to them the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and that it was toward evening that they were miraculously fed on five barley loaves and two small fishes,—and had twelve baskets of fragments remaining. (Matt. 14:15; Mark 6:34; Luke 9:11) It is remarkable that the Gospels do not parade our Lord's generosity and kindness, but content themselves with recording the simple facts: yet these facts give ample testimony to those who have eyes to see, showing them in him "the glory of the only begotten of the Father, *full* of grace and truth." Here, for instance, we note the fact that he specially sought rest and privacy with his disciples yet when he saw the multitude he was "moved with compassion toward them:" he could not refrain from giving them his vitality in curing their ailments, and pouring in the oil and wine of truth, and satisfying their hungers and thirstings of heart with the good promises of the kingdom, and finally providing them natural food. And such will be the spirit of all the Lord's followers, in proportion as they have learned of him, and become partakers of the spirit of his holiness. Their delight will be, not in self-gratification, but chiefly in "doing good unto all men as they have opportunity, *especially to the household of faith.*" "So shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another."—Gal. 6:10; John 13:35.

John's narrative, in connection with those of the other Evangelists, shows us that our Lord counseled with the apostles respecting what should be done with the multitude, and that their general advice was that they be sent away, that they might find lodging and victuals in the nearest villages. The people themselves seem to have been so entranced with the good tidings that they entirely forgot their own necessities. Our Lord specially addressed Philip respecting the matter, because his home was in the neighboring city of Bethsaida.

The general conclusion of all the apostles was that the feeding of such a multitude was beyond any reasonable hope of theirs. And it must have been with bewilderment that they obeyed the Lord's direction to seat the people in orderly companies, and proceeded to distribute their scanty supply. All had sufficient to satisfy their hunger, and the fragments that remained, gathered into the haversacks (mistranslated baskets) in which the twelve apostles carried their provisions, were a good supply for their future necessities. Thus did our Lord additionally teach economy, frugality. The disciples and the multitude would be very likely to draw the inference that, where there was such power to create and to multiply, there would be no necessity for frugality. The course pursued by our Lord is a valuable lesson for our time also. It implies that those who receive of the Lord's bounty should be none the less appreciative of it, and careful in its use. According to the divine arrangement, it would seem to be the proper thing that wilful waste, sooner or later, brings corresponding woeful want.

The Lord's people should be careful to avoid wasting, in earthly food and temporal matters not because of selfishness, and a desire to hold and accumulate, but, as the Apostle explains, "that ye may have to give"—that thus we may have opportunity to be imitators of our heavenly Father, who is continually giving to the needy, some of his blessings being bestowed alike upon the worthy and unworthy. (Eph. 4:28) The same principle applies to some extent in spiritual matters. We may partake of our spiritual blessings to our full satisfaction, and with thankfulness; but we are not to waste spiritual privileges because they are God's free gifts. Rather are we to prize every spiritual morsel and to gather up in store for future needs of ourselves and others. The memory is our "basket," our haversack, and divine provision is so bountiful that every disciple may gather his basket full.

The same generous heart who had compassion upon the multitudes, declaring that they were as sheep having no shepherd, and following blind guides, and about to fall with them into the ditch of Israel's great calamity, and who taught them, healed them and fed them is the same yesterday, today and forever. We may know, therefore, that he is today looking with sympathetic compassion upon the multitudes of so-called "Christendom." He sees that the great doctors of finance, of sociology and of theology, tho thoroughly blind and disputing with each other respecting the way, are nevertheless leading the people on to the great time of trouble that is nearing. He beholds the multitudes, dissatisfied with the husks of human tradition and philosophy, hungering and thirsting after righteousness (truth), yet blinded from seeing it, by prejudice and superstition, and led of error by priestcraft and human subserviency. He sees the dark night of trouble approaching, but before sending the people away he instructs all who are his disciples to supply them with something to eat—with spiritual food, with truths pertaining to the kingdom, which will afford them some strength and some encouragement during the dark hour of that "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."

The Lord has already made provision sufficient in quantity and variety under his blessing; and he bids each of his specially consecrated ones to have faith, and to go forth in the distributing of the food, trusting the result to him. Brethren and sisters, let us be energetic in handing forth the bread of life, the "meat in due season," to the multitude,—to whoever is hungry enough to desire to partake. Those who distribute will find in the end—their own vessels full.

ASPIRATIONS OF A NEW CONVERT

I wish I were as pure, as fair to view,
As yonder blossom, sparkling with the dew;
But then I could not wear my snowy dress,
The Saviour's gift, his robe of righteousness.

I wish I were like mountains, towering high,
Strong and majestic, piercing cloud and sky;
But then I could not feel my weakness thrill
With strength to do my blessed Master's will.

I wish my life were placid as yon lake,
Unmoved by storms that o'er the ocean break;
But could I realize such rest and peace
As when the Master bids my troubles cease?

Lord, all my wishes, all my heart's desires
Find consummation when the world retires
And thou before my raptured gaze dost stand,
In perfectness complete, a pattern grand.

Ah! would I were, my blessed Lord, like thee!
Then should my heart thy fragrant garden be!
Then should my prayers past mountain tops ascend,
My peace be fathomless, my joy attained.

For thee leapt high the sacrificial fire,
Let it of me my cleansed parts require!
Into thy nostrils let the incense rise,
A token of accepted sacrifice!

—R. B. HENNINGES.

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THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

How sacred the memories which gather around the anniversary of our Lord's death! It calls to mind the Father's love as exhibited in the entire plan of salvation, the center of which was the gift of his son as our Redeemer. It calls specially to our thoughts him who gave himself a *ransom*—a corresponding price—for all. Then faith comes still nearer to him who "suffered, the just for the unjust," and with grateful, overflowing hearts and with tear-dimmed eyes we whisper, *My* Saviour! *My* Redeemer! *My* Lord and Master! "He loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*." Ah, yes!—

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend:
Life and joy and peace possessing
From my best and truest Friend."

How blessed the thought that he cares to have us think of him and call him *ours*;—he so great—"far above angels" and every title that is named, next to the Father himself,—and we so insignificant, so imperfect, so unworthy of such a friendship. And yet, to think that "he is not ashamed to call us brethren;" and that he is pleased to have us memorialize his death; and that he gave us the bread to emblemize his broken flesh, and the wine to emblemize his shed blood,—the one to represent the human rights and privileges purchased for all, and of which all may partake, the other to represent the life he gave which secured everlasting life for all who will accept it!

How delightful, too, to count, as he and the Jews did, the days and the hours, even until finally, "the hour being come," he sat down with his disciples to celebrate the death of the typical Paschal lamb, and to consider the deliverance of Israel's first-born from the great destruction which came upon Egypt, and the subsequent deliverance accomplished through those first-born ones for all the typical Israel of God.

How precious to look beyond the type which was commemorated, and to hear the Master, as he took *new* emblems say, "*This* [celebrating of the Passover] do [henceforth] in remembrance of me!" Ah yes! in the crucified One we can now see "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "Christ our passover [lamb] is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast;" for as oft as *we do this* we do show forth our Lord's death until he come again—until, his kingdom having come, we shall be permitted to drink with him the new wine (the new life and joy) in the kingdom.—Matt. 26:29; 1 Cor. 5:7, 8; 11:26.

But we are not only privileged to enjoy the favors of our Lord's sacrifice (by partaking of its merit and its consequent advantages: *viz.*, justification and restitution rights and privileges by faith, as redeemed), but more than this: we are invited to share with our Master in the *sacrifice* and in its glorious reward. He says to us, Whoever is in sympathy with my work and its results—whoever would share my kingdom and join in its work of blessing the world—let him also be broken with me, and let him join me in drinking the cup of self-denial, unto death. To all such he says, "Drink ye all of it." The Apostle confirms this thought, saying: "The cup of blessing which *we bless*, is it not the *communion* [fellowship] in the blood [death] of Christ? The bread [loaf] which *we break* is it not the *communion* [common-union] in the body of Christ? For we being many [members of Christ's body] are *one loaf* and one body; for we are all partakers of that one loaf."—1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

Gladly, dear Lord, we eat (appropriate to our necessities) the merit of thy pure human nature sacrificed for us—for our justification. Gladly, too, we will partake of the cup of suffering with thee, realizing it to be a blessed privilege to suffer with thee, that in due time we may also reign with thee;—to be dead with thee, that in the everlasting future we may live *with* thee and be like thee and share thy love and thy glory as thy bride. Oh! that we may be faithful, not only in the performance of the symbol, but also of the reality. Blessed Lord, we hear thy word saying, "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup and be baptized with my baptism." Lord, we are not of ourselves able thus to sacrifice; but thy grace is sufficient for us, for we are wholly thine, now and forever.

Oh! what a thought; that if faithful in the present privilege of drinking of his cup and being broken with our Lord as his body, we with him will soon be that "church of the first-born ones whose names are written in heaven," and as such shall constitute the royal priesthood, which, under our great High Priest, will lead out of the Egyptian bondage and slavery all those slaves of sin whose groanings and prayers for deliverance have entered the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

These will be some of the thoughts which will constrain numbers of the Lord's people all over the world to meet in little groups (and sometimes quite alone with Jesus) on the evening of March 26th, next, after six o'clock, to celebrate on its anniversary the most notable event in the history of the universe of God. (We prefer to get the date of this anniversary memorial as exact as possible; tho we do not understand that it would seriously matter if we had not the exact day: it is the *event* and not the *day* that we celebrate. Nevertheless, a uniform annual date is desirable.)

Eat and drink, O beloved, says the Bridegroom to his spouse. (Sol. Song 5:1) Let us eat and drink reverently, devotedly, thoughtfully, prayerfully, tearfully perhaps, as we each think of our Redeemer's love and sacrifice, and pledge ourselves afresh to be dead with him. Meet with any who recognize him as their ransom, and who are pleased to *do this in remembrance of him*—or else do it alone.

Let your heart be so full of the reality that forms and ceremonies will generally be forgotten, except such as are needed for decency and order. Prepare beforehand some sort of "fruit of the vine." Our preference is for stewed-raisin juice or unfermented grape juice: and for bread either Jewish unleavened bread or plain water-crackers, which are about the same in substance—flour, water and salt, without leaven. Leaven being a symbol of sin or corruption, yeast-raised bread is not an appropriate symbol of our Lord, the "undefiled and separate from sinners."

The church at Allegheny will meet at "Bible House" chapel, Arch street, at 7 P. M. of the day named. All who trust in the substitutionary sacrifice finished at Calvary, and who are fully consecrated to the Redeemer's service, and who can make it convenient to meet with us, will be made very welcome. Some who profess that their wills are fully immersed into the will of Christ, desire to symbolize their baptism; and an opportunity will be afforded after the 3 P. M. services.

On the subject of *Baptism* see your TOWER for June 15, '93. For further particulars concerning the Memorial Supper, see March 1st, '98 TOWER.

AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

FEB. 26.—JOHN 7:14, 28-37.

"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

As a result of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, noted in our last lesson, the multitude pronounced our Lord a great prophet, and proposed to take him by force to make him king. He, however, knew that such was not the Father's program; that, on the contrary, he was to fulfil a mission of contradiction of sinners, which would end in death, and that the kingdom to which he was heir could only thus be attained—that the kingdom promised him was not of this world, not of the present order and arrangement, but of a new dispensation. Our Lord therefore sent his disciples away by boat, while he himself withdrew to the mountain, subsequently meeting his disciples, walking on the water.

Six months more of preaching and teaching in Galilee, without any apparent effort to take advantage of the popular interest in his miracles, to forward his cause as a king, began to tell upon his brethren—his kinsfolk—who began to lose confidence, for their interest all along had been rather of pride than of faith. Now the time to go up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles having come, they noticed that Jesus was making no special preparations to attend. They were anxious that his power should be put to the test—Either do something, and make yourself great in the eyes of the whole world, or give the whole matter up and admit that your claims to Messiahship are fraudulent—was their attitude. Hence they said, Why do you not go up to the feast? Any person who makes such claims as you put forth should not make them in secret, but should seek the largest opportunities for publicity. You tell us that you have eternal life, and that you are able to give it to others, but apparently you are afraid to risk your life: "For neither did his brethren believe on him."

Our Lord's answer pointed out that it was very different with them than with him—they might go at any time, but he was under certain restrictions. They had not drawn upon them the murderous animosity of the most influential and powerful class of the nation. He had done this, by faithfulness to the truth which he came to the world to serve. While it is true that "Jesus did not walk in Jewry [Judea] because the Jews sought to kill him," yet this evidently was not for any fear of death, but because he realized that "his hour was not yet come." He felt it, therefore, to be his duty to coöperate to the extent of his ability with what he knew respecting the Father's plan, and not to ignore that plan so as to require a special miracle for his deliverance, that the divine plan might not be frustrated.

There are lessons here for all who are seeking to walk in the Master's footsteps:—

(1) If we are finding no opposition in the world it is because we have not been faithful to our Father's Word, and to our appointed mission in connection with it,—not been about the Father's business: for our Master declared that it would be with us, his followers, as with himself—not being of the world the world would hate us, would say all manner of evil against us falsely, and think that those who persecuted us did God service. The positive declaration is, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12) We are still in this time of persecution; the great Adversary is not yet bound, and if we are entirely free from such opposition it is a sure indication that we are not living up to our privileges in godliness—not following closely enough in the footsteps of Jesus to incite the animosity of the Adversary and his blinded servants.

(2) We are to remember that the special opponents of our Master were not the unbelieving world, but were the unbelieving, unfaithful professors of holiness and of complete devotion to the divine law. So with us, our special opponents and defamers and persecutors are to be looked for inside and not outside the pale of the nominal Christian church.

(3) We may profit by our Lord's example in not needlessly and unwisely placing ourselves in positions of jeopardy, expecting the Lord to miraculously intervene for our preservation. Like our Lord, however, we are not under any consideration to deny the truth, nor to forsake a duty for the preservation of our lives. We see that when the most wise and appropriate time came our Lord went to the Feast, and spoke fearlessly and boldly. So our caution in the protection of life, etc., is not to be the result of fear and lack of confidence in divine providence, nor lack of courage to do our duty, but merely the caution and prudence which desires to coöperate as far as possible with the divine will.

Our Lord knew the disposition of the Pharisees to kill him. He knew also that they would hesitate a great deal more to make any attempt against him on the occasion of these Feasts, when Jerusalem was full of visitors, thousands of whom would be from Galilee and more or less his friends and the friends of his disciples, who were also Galileans. He may have known, too, of some arrangements among the rulers to apprehend him at the beginning of the feast, during the commotion incident to the arrival of pilgrims. At all events, acting upon his own superior knowledge of the situation, he deferred his going until after the multitudes had gone, and then went in a quiet manner, avoiding teaching, miracles, etc.

In the midst of the feast-week he appeared in the Temple, teaching the people. His enemies had sought him previously, and were rather surprised that he had not come as usual, but now they beheld him teaching publicly and boldly; but they refrained from laying hands on him, because they feared the people—they feared that too large a proportion would have at least a sympathy for his teachings, recognizing that he "taught them as one having authority," with positiveness, and not with uncertainty, as themselves. The fact that many of the multitude were favorably impressed, and inquired amongst themselves whether or not they could expect any greater miracles from Messiah at his coming than those which Jesus had already performed, and the fact also that he was teaching publicly, and the rulers did not interfere with him, led some to inquire, "Do the rulers really acknowledge that this is the Messiah?"

Thus the rulers saw that their timidity was really advancing the cause which they hated, and they sent officers to take him; but apparently these felt that they must hear some rebellious, anarchistic or blasphemous utterances from his lips or they would not be justified in the eyes of the people in making the arrest, and so they waited, to watch him. They were charmed with "the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth," and returned without him, saying, "Never man spake like this man." Then Nicodemus, in his heart believing Jesus to be a teacher, sent from God, tho doubtful of his being the Messiah, raised his voice, being a member of the Sanhedrin, and expostulated, defending the officers, and exclaiming, "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?" Even this plea for justice was met with the sarcastic remark, "Art thou also of Galilee?" And the meeting disbanded, angry because they were foiled in their murderous attempt.

It should be true as far as possible with all of the Lord's true followers that their speech should be with grace, with moderation, the overflow of hearts full of loving sympathy for the truth and all who love and seek it. Their words should always be well within the limits of reason and righteousness, and strictly in conformity to the Word of the Lord. And their manner, their conduct, as living epistles, should harmonize with this, so that even their enemies would take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.

Having in mind the murderous designs of his enemies, and that thus it behooved the Son of Man to suffer and to rise from the dead, and knowing that the end of his pilgrimage was only about six months distant, our Lord said, I will be with you but a little while, "and then I go unto him that sent me." Then, taking into account the predicted troubles to come upon Israel, expounded to his apostles subsequently (Matt. 24) and that they would endure much before he would offer himself to them again as the Messiah at the second advent, he added, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me." The Jews have been seeking the Messiah during the eighteen centuries of trouble experienced since that time, for, as the Apostle declares, "the rest were blinded," except the remnant which received the Lord at his first advent—"the day of their visitation." So our Lord declared to them subsequently, "Ye shall see me no more *until that day* when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The prophet tells us that they shall *then* look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him as an only beloved son, and that *then* the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, their blindness being *then* turned away.—Rom. 11:27-32.

When our Lord declared that they could not follow him to the place to which he was going, the people speculated whether or not he meant that as he had shown himself willing to preach to the lowest classes of Israel (publicans and sinners), he might now purpose to leave Palestine entirely, and go to the "dispersed amongst the Gentiles," the scattered Jews amongst the Greeks,—speaking the Greek language and not the Syrian, the language of the Jews in Palestine. Here we see afresh the error of the so-called "Anglo-Israelites," who have a theory about "lost" (?) tribes of Israel. The scattered Jews were not considered lost in our Lord's time, evidently, and this statement of the multitude is in full accord with the statement of the Apostle, when he speaks of "the twelve tribes scattered abroad." The only sense in which these tribes are lost is that they have become so thoroughly combined and amalgamated that all tribal distinctions are lost, and very few Jews in the world today have the slightest idea of which tribe their ancestors belonged to.

Our Lord's remark, "Thither ye cannot come," is worthy of consideration from another standpoint. He did not mean that he was about to establish a kingdom, and that they could not get into the kingdom, but he did mean that he was going to heaven, and that they could not come to heaven. This is evident from his further statement, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I have said, therefore, unto you that ye shall die in your sins."—John 8:21-29.

But the poor, disbelieving Jews are not the only ones who cannot go to heaven. The Scriptures clearly indicate that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the holy prophets, have not gone there. (See Acts 2:34; Heb. 11:39, 40) Moreover, this same declaration was repeated by the Lord to his *believing* followers, saying "Yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and I said unto the Jews, Whither I go you cannot come; so now I say to you." (John 13:33) It is because the believers of the past as well as the believers of the present age could not go to our Lord, that all of them who were rightly instructed from his Word looked earnestly for *his return*, his second advent, his coming in glory and kingdom power, according to his promise, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also."—John 14:3.

Many have lost sight of the hope set before us in the Gospel, and have accepted instead a hope that has no foundation, except like the errors of fleshly Israel in "the traditions of the elders"—the hope that when they die they will not be dead, but more alive than ever, a hope that is as contrary to reason as to the Word of God, in which it finds not one solitary word of support. "But he that hath this hope in him [the hope of the second coming of the Lord to make up his jewels, to receive his faithful ones to himself] purifieth himself even as he is pure." There is no greater incentive to faithfulness than this, the true Gospel hope.

The last day of the Feast of Tabernacles was the eighth day, for it lasted in all for that period. The seven days of the feast were devoted to sacrificing, seventy bullocks being burned upon the altar, and understood to be sacrificed on behalf of the whole world, but the eighth day was specially a Jewish day, and was the most joyous day of this joyful thanksgiving feast. Describing it, Geikie says:—

"The whole week was full of excitement, the great altar smoking with whole burnt offerings of oxen, lambs, and rams, besides the solemnity of the morning and evening sacrifice, the Sabbath sacrifice, and countless private voluntary sacrifices and offerings of all kinds. Every available spot inside Jerusalem, and in the hollows, and on the slopes around it (which, by legal fiction, were counted holy ground) was covered with huts or tabernacles of wattled or interplaited twigs, set off by branches of trees, fronds of palms, and all kinds of ornamental greenery."

But the last day of the feast, called the great day, the day of special rejoicing, had one peculiar feature—its *Water-offering*, and it was on this day, and probably in connection with the pouring out of this libation, that, taking it for a text, our Lord lifted up his voice, saying, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." He is here presenting himself as the giver of the water of life, as in the more private discourse to the woman of Samaria. He is the fountain of life, the fountain of truth, the fountain of refreshment, to all who accept him. In every human heart there are thirstings, longing desires, and all who have sought to satisfy these desires from earthly fountains of fame or pleasure or wealth have found that they do not satisfy; but those who have received the water of life, the truth, the grace of God in Christ, have received the only satisfying portion. Lord, ever more give us of this water.

An able writer, Edersheim, gives us a very interesting account of the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the great day, as follows:—

"Let us suppose ourselves in the number of worshipers who, on 'the last, the great day of the feast,' are leaving their 'booths' at daybreak to take part in the service. The pilgrims are all in festive array. In his right hand each carries a branch consisting of a myrtle or willow branch tied together with a palm branch (Lev. 23:40). In his left hand he carries a bough of the so-called Paradise apple, a species of citron. Thus armed, the festive multitude would divide into three bands. One of these, to the sound of music, started in a procession from the temple. It followed a priest who bore a golden pitcher, capable of holding three *log* (rather more than two pints). They proceeded to the fountain of Siloam, in the valley south of the temple. Here the priest filled from this fountain the golden pitcher, and brought it back into the court of the temple, amid the shouts of the multitude, and the sound of cymbals and trumpets. The rejoicing was so great that the rabbis used to say that he who had never been present at this ceremony, and at the other similar ceremonies by which this feast was distinguished, did not know what rejoicing meant. The return was so timed that they should arrive just as they were laying the pieces of the sacrifice on the great altar of burnt offering, toward the close of the ordinary morning sacrifice service. The water from the golden pitcher was poured upon the altar. Immediately the great 'Hallel,' consisting of Psa. 113-118, was chanted antiphonally, or rather with responses, to the accompaniment of the flute. At the close of this festive morning service there was a pause in the services while the priests prepared to offer the special sacrifices for the day. At this moment there arose, so loud as to be heard throughout the temple, the voice of Jesus. He interrupted not the services, for they had for the moment ceased; he interpreted, and he fulfilled them."

"YE SHALL BE FREE INDEED"

MARCH 5.—JOHN 8:12, 31-36.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—John 8:36.

Our Lord's discourses of this lesson are presumed to have been delivered on the day following the eighth or great day of the Feast of Tabernacles, referred to in our last lesson: this conclusion is based upon the statement of the first verse of this chapter and the last verse of the seventh chapter. It appears that, altho the eighth was the last day of the Feast proper, another day was kept to a certain degree, the people being loth to relinquish the joys of the season. Another view is that this was a part of the discourse of the eighth day.

It is said that during this festival there were two great lights near the porch of the Temple, where Jesus discoursed (the Court of the Women—the portion of the Temple structure open to women as well as to men). These lights or candelabra, ornamented and gilded, were about seventy-five feet high, and threw a great light over the city, extraordinary for that period. It is presumed that this may have given Jesus the text for a discourse on the light of the world: but it is possible that our Lord took occasion to make this observation at the time of the performance of a certain ceremony by the Jews, described by Buxdorf as follows:

The ninth day, or day after the expiration of the eighth, which belonged to the "Feast of Tabernacles," is a solemn day likewise, and is called, "The Feast of Joy for the Law;" because on that day the last section of the Law was read, the rest having been read weekly during the course of the preceding Sabbaths. On this ninth day the custom of the Jews was to take all the books of the Law out of the chest, and to put a candle into it, in allusion to Prov. 6:23, and more particularly to Psa. 119:105.—Synag. Jud., c. xxii.

This act, symbolically considered, would imply, first, that the Law was a light, and secondly, that ultimately the Jewish law would be superseded by the True Light—the Gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Either this last, or the two great lamps, or both of them, were quite a sufficient suggestion and illustration of the lesson which our Lord designed to inculcate. The thought of the one is that the world is in darkness, and needs the Light of Life, and that he who walks in the light will not stumble. The thought or suggestion of the other is equally comprehensible, implying that ultimately the vail of ignorance shall be removed, and the spirit of the truth shall be discerned, and thus Jesus, as the True Light, shall lighten every man that cometh into the world, respecting the divine character and law, and the conditions upon which eternal life may be enjoyed.

Another suggestion is that, as this Feast of Tabernacles represented the period of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness, en route to Canaan, the great light to be followed would probably refer to the pillar of fire and cloud, which led Israel during the wilderness journey as a great light, and which was to their enemies who pursued them a cloud of great darkness. This thought is in full accord with the others, for we realize that spiritual Israel is journeying toward the heavenly Canaan, through the wilderness of sin, and that our Lord and his teachings are a light and a guide to his people—to the entire household of faith, but especially to those who are vigilant and attentive to the heavenly counsel.

That relationship to Christ is not a matter which, being put on in the instant of consecration, can never be dissolved, is clearly shown by the statement of vss. 31 and 32. Therein our Lord sets forth that *discipleship* is the thing that is entered into by those who accept him as the Saviour and the privileges and blessings obtainable only through him. And *discipleship*, as here shown, does not signify mastery: on the contrary, it signifies that the one who becomes a disciple is, until perfect, a novice, who becomes a disciple in order that under the Master's instructions he may come, morally and intellectually, to the full stature of manhood in Christ. A great mistake is made on this point, not only by worldly people, who expect perfection in all who have named the name of Christ, but also by Christians themselves, who vainly imagine that a fulness of *consecration* to the Lord should produce in them instantaneous perfection: some vainly and sinfully claim that they are without sin, and thereby give the inference that they have no need of a Saviour, a Mediator, and his merit, to cover their blemishes of omission and commission.

The correct thought to get is the one which is clearly set forth in our Lord's Word; *viz.*, that sinners are not called to discipleship, but are called to repentance and faith in the Redeemer for the forgiveness of their sins (justification): but this is all to the intent that as justified persons they may, by a full consecration to the Lord, become his disciples,—*pupils* in the school of Christ.

Why do we enter this school? What lessons are we to learn in it? And for what reasons do we seek to learn these lessons, and consecrate ourselves to their study?

The incentive to enter the school of Christ is the heavenly Father's invitation to *justified believers* who approach his throne of grace by the new and living way—Christ: to such he extends a "high calling," inviting such to become "sons of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

This school of Christ may be considered a school of self-denial, of self-sacrifice, prompted by love and maintained by devotion. The great Teacher of this school, appointed by the Father to instruct those who shall be accepted as his "brethren," was himself educated in the same school, under the Father's inspection and direction—"He learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect [acceptable to the high station to which he was called—the divine nature] he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."—Heb. 5:8.

It was necessary that the "Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," should be tried in all points like as we are—that his obedience to the Father's will at any cost should be fully proved and demonstrated, as well as his love for his neighbor, humanity, whom by the Father's arrangement he came to redeem and to uplift. Much more, it is necessary that we who belong to this fallen but redeemed race, having been called to joint-heirship with him, should receive instruction and disciplining in this school which the Father has provided for those invited to be his sons,—partakers of the divine nature,—to the intent that we may fully put on the spirit of Christ, which received the Father's unstinted approval. Indeed, we have the plain declaration to the effect that we are all called according to a predestination on God's part that we might become copies of his Son, and thus be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," as joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

From this we see that in joining the Lord, through faith and consecration, we are not proclaiming ourselves graduates and heirs, but are proclaiming ourselves students, disciples, who *desire to be prepared to inherit* "the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him." If this thought be kept in mind, as the divine teaching on this subject, it will help to prevent our discouragement with ourselves when we find that unavoidably we do those things which we ought not to have done, and leave undone those things which we ought to have done, and that in our flesh dwells no perfection.—1 Cor. 2:9; Rom. 7:25.

Moreover, we are to remember that it is not the flesh that has entered the school of Christ, and is under his instructions and preparation for the kingdom,—for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 15:50) Our acceptance of the divine call to spirit nature meant the renouncement of the earthly nature in every sense of the word, and meant our begetting as new creatures—"sons of God." It is the "new creature," the new mind, the new will, that is in the school of Christ, and that is to be perfected—to be brought into full accord with the divine will—to become a copy or likeness of the Lord. We will never succeed in getting our flesh into absolute harmony with the divine law, because of its imperfections, inherited and otherwise. And he who is looking for perfection of his flesh, and who is resting his faith therein, must of necessity have a poor hope of ever attaining to the likeness of Christ—of ever becoming one of the predestinated class—"a copy of his Son."—Rom. 8:29.

It is unnecessary that we should point out that the new mind, in proportion as it develops in likeness to the mind of Christ, will relax no efforts to keep the body under, with its motions of sin—to keep the will of the flesh dead. Surely, no spirit-begotten son of God could allow sin to *reign* in his mortal body: should sin to any degree control him, it will not be willingly, and hence could be but momentarily—until the new mind, the new creature, seeing the uprising of the flesh, would conquer it, obtaining the promised grace and help in every time of need, from the heavenly store-house of grace,—Christ.

This thought, rightly entertained, will help true disciples to appreciate their own position, and not to be utterly cast down if overtaken in a fault of the flesh, so long as they realize that their *hearts* are not in sympathy with the sin and unrighteousness, but on the contrary in full sympathy with the principles and instructions of our Teacher, and longing to be pleasing and acceptable in his sight. And this correct thought will also help all such to exercise fervency of love amongst themselves, toward the "brethren," who similarly are disciples, pupils in this school,—new creatures, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit of their minds. If, therefore, each shall see blemishes in the flesh of the "brethren," disapproved and striven against, each should remember that the evil which he sees is that of his brother's enemy and not the evils of the brother himself, the "new creature;"—if so be that he gives us the assurance that his heart, his will, is in harmony with the Lord and his law of love; and that he is daily seeking to learn the lessons taught in this school of Christ; and seeking to fight a successful warfare against the weaknesses of the flesh.

This is Scripturally termed walking in the light, and not stumbling about in the darkness—understanding and acting upon and in harmony with the divine arrangement—viewing matters as God views them, and as he presents them in the Word of his grace. We need not, however, expect the worldly-minded to be willing or able to view the Lord's consecrated people in this light—of love, of charity, of patience, of long suffering, of brotherly kindness. On the contrary our Adversary, "the god of this world," points out to them the hypocrite, who uses the name of Christ and the law of love as a cloak of maliciousness, selfishness, etc., and this Adversary continually seeks to misrepresent the terms and conditions of the school of Christ, not only to the world and to the hypocritical professors, but also and especially to the true disciples, whom he would fain discourage and turn back from the right way—persuading them, contrary to the Word of the Lord, that they are being judged according to the flesh, and not according to the spirit, the new mind.

"Disciples indeed" are those who will finish their course in this school of Christ and graduate and become joint-heirs with their Lord, and ultimately be associates with him in teaching and blessing all the families of the earth. But joining the school does not bring these results necessarily; as our Lord indicated, it is only by *continuing* in the school, continuing under his direction, under the direction of his Word of truth, faithfully and perseveringly, that the grand object of this school shall be attained. Nevertheless, at each step of the journey it may be our privilege to see that we are making progress—that we are coming to know more and more of the truth, and that it is more and more making us free. We are not to expect an instantaneous knowledge nor an instantaneous freedom.

The general effect of the light of the truth, of which the Word of God is the lamp, is to break the shackles of superstition and to make people independent, but these effects are of questionable profit to those who are not disciples in the school of Christ. To others, freedom and light of knowledge are apt to bring nearly as much bane as blessing, leading often to arrogance, self-conceit, unkindness, boastfulness, combativeness, dissatisfaction and general unhappiness. These evil results come upon those who are made free in some respects only, and left bound in other respects: and this is the general and growing condition of the civilized world today, including the majority in the nominal church.

But the true disciples, heeding the Word of the great Teacher, and continuing in all things to be his pupils, are not only set free from superstitions and ignorance, but also from the service of Sin; and receive instead a correct appreciation of their own natural weaknesses and blemishes, and of the divine mind—the truth. In consequence, their freedom is one which blesses instead of injuring them; one which brings humility instead of pride and boastfulness; one which brings patience instead of anger; one which brings generosity and benevolence instead of spitefulness and selfishness; one which brings joy and peace instead of discontent and bitterness of spirit. Truly, the Son alone can make us free indeed.

And yet, be it remembered, our freedom is not a freedom of the flesh, but a freedom of the heart, the mind, the will, the new nature. And this freedom is necessarily incomplete so long as we have this treasure in an earthen vessel—so long as the new creature must use the imperfect body of the flesh as its instrument and exponent. These "brethren" of Christ, "sons of the highest," will be free in the absolute sense only when they attain their share in the first resurrection,—"I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

Our Lord points out that those who commit sin are the servants of Sin, and are not free. The Apostle declares, "He that committeth sin is of the devil," and yet declares that, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 3:8; 1:8) How, then, shall we reconcile these opposing statements and understand the Scripture which declares, "Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness?"—Rom. 6:18.

We answer that the Scriptures ascribe *no sin* to the new mind, and *no perfection* in righteousness to our fallen flesh: both of these facts must be kept in mind in studying this subject. The "new creature" begotten of God (whose flesh is reckoned dead) and which is represented by the new mind, CANNOT SIN, because in its very essence as the "seed" or germ, implanted by the truth, "the spirit of the truth," it is opposed to sin. (James 1:18) This new creature is so fully in accord with righteousness, so fully imbued with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, that it delights in holiness, and not in sin; and this must be the case so long as this begotten or holy spirit condition continues. He that is *begotten** of God sinneth not (willingly—does not approve of nor take pleasure in sin), because his *seed* remaineth in him,—the holy seed of the truth, the spirit of the truth, with which he was begotten, and "that wicked one toucheth him not."—1 John 3:9; 5:18.

So long as the heart (the mind, the will) is holy, in harmony with God and with righteousness,—that is to say, so long as the seed of our begetting, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of holiness, continues in us,—the new mind cannot approve of sin, but must and will be its opponent. Even though many of the battles fought are with the members of our own fallen and weak human nature, their appetites and desires, we nevertheless, as "new creatures," are separate and distinct from the flesh and the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh are not imputed to the new creature in Christ Jesus, but are reckoned as covered, hidden under the merits of our Lord's redemptive sacrifice.

Thus, although our flesh, through weaknesses of the fall, and through evil besetments, may never come up to the standard of the divine law, notwithstanding all our efforts to bring it into subjection to the same, nevertheless *we*, as "new creatures," have the Scriptural assurance that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us ["new creatures"] who are walking not after the flesh [but resisting day by day its seductive influences to the best of our ability, and seeking divine aid] but after the spirit [we are walking,—not *up to* the spirit probably, but following day by day, to the intent that eventually we shall, by the grace and help of our great Teacher, arrive at the glorious condition of character as "new creatures" which even the heavenly Father can accept as copies of his dear Son]."—Rom. 8:4.

On the contrary, if any who had thus become "new creatures" should engage in sin *willingly*, *heartily*, and live according to the flesh, it is a sure sign that the *seed* of truth wherewith he was *begotten* has perished: for so long as this *seed* remaineth in him, he cannot sin willingly.—1 John 3:9.

Those who are slaves of sin, who have not been made free indeed and received into sonship, may sometimes be used for a time, under present conditions, as servants of the divine plan, in the accomplishment of the plan of the ages; as, for instance, God sometimes overrules and uses the wrath of man and Satan's opposition; but God has made no provision for the everlasting continuance of sin and those who are its slaves. Ultimately the only ones who shall be privileged to exist at all will be sons of God. Not to be misunderstood here, let us remember that there are sons of two ages:—

(1) The sons of this Gospel age, begotten of the Father to joint-heirship with Jesus Christ, our Lord, as his "brethren," otherwise called the Bride of the First-begotten, who has inherited all things. "Now are we [thus] the sons of God." This house of sons, begotten to the spirit nature, will soon be complete, and never have further additions to its members; but we are to remember that—

(2) Another house of sons is shortly to be started. For the declaration is that our Lord Jesus shall become a Father, a Life-giver, to the world—to whosoever will accept this gift of God under the terms of the New Covenant during the Millennium. Those will be the sons of the after resurrection, while the church are to be sons of the first resurrection, the first-born ones. The Apostle, referring to these sons of Christ who will be begotten during the Millennial age, and be born to full sonship at its close, declares that they also shall be delivered "from the bondage of corruption [death] into the glorious liberty of the sons of God"—freedom from sin, death, sighing, crying, pain, etc. They will inherit these, the common privileges of all the sons of God, and in addition the earthly heritage, the "purchased possession," secured for mankind by the great sin-offering.—Rom. 8:21-23.

The restitution class of earth will thus be sons of Christ, who *bought* their life and who will give afresh to them that which was lost in Adam and which he redeemed at the cost of his own life. But this will not imply that such will not eventually own Jehovah as their Father also and be owned by him as his sons. On the contrary, the typical custom in Israel on this point makes this all plain. For instance, all Israelites were known as children of Abraham, children of Israel and children of Jacob.

But the central thought we would impress is that all who shall be recognized by God as *sons* at any time must be freed from the incubus of sin by the Only Begotten Son of God, the Mediator,—and such only are free indeed.

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* *Gennao* here signifies *begotten*, and refers to the beginning and not the completion of our "change" of nature.—See also *Revised Version*, and the *Emphatic Diaglott*.

"WHEREAS I WAS BLIND, NOW I SEE"

[Reprinted in article entitled "Who Did Sin, This Man of His Parents," published in issue of July 15, 1900, which please see.]

THE GOOD SHEPHERD—THE CHRIST

March 19.—John 10:1-16.

"I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."—John 10:11.

The Evangelist first presented Christ to our attention as "the beginning of the creation of God," "made flesh," that he might be the Light of the world: afterward, under his presentation, we considered him as the Feeder of the hungry; then as the Giver of the water of life to the thirsty; next as the Healer of human woes, and the Supplier of human needs, spiritual as well as temporal; next as the Opener of the eyes of our understanding. In the lesson now before us he presents Christ's mission from another standpoint—as the Good Shepherd.

This parable probably followed closely the closing incident of our last lesson, in which we saw the reverend doctors of the law incensed at the man whose eyes had been opened, so that they cast him out of the synagogue, because he confessed Jesus as the channel of divine favor. It was doubtless as a reproof to such false shepherding that our Lord spoke this parable. The very ones who should have been helping the poor scattered sheep of Israel to recognize the true Shepherd, and to come unto him and become inheritors with them of the long-promised kingdom, were seeking to prevent the Lord's sheep from recognizing the Shepherd—seeking to hinder men from entering the kingdom which they themselves also refused to enter.—Matt. 23:13.

The illustration of the Lord as a shepherd, and his people as sheep, is common to the Scriptures, and very fitly represents their close confidential relationship, but it is a figure that is quite contrary to the spirit of the world. The "natural man" sees little in the figure to admire, and when he expresses his sentiments he would rather represent himself to others and have them regard him as a wolf, a lion, a tiger, or some other ferocious creature, which they would best not stir up, lest he devour them. We find this characteristic well borne out in the emblems of heraldry; the escutcheons of the great are emblazoned with figures representing beasts of prey, birds of prey, and nondescripts, blending various natures—but all of them ferocious, snarling, howling, screeching, or otherwise implying fierceness and intimidation of foes. But when God would represent the emblems of his royal family, his only begotten Son is called the Lamb of God, and all his people are styled his sheep,—symbols of meekness, gentleness, harmlessness. "Jehovah is my shepherd" is properly represented as their sentiment.—Psa. 23.

Sheep-raising in Palestine, and more or less throughout that vicinity, was carried on quite extensively, and yet very differently from present methods of Europe and America. The owner of the flock or his son usually did the shepherding, or sometimes an employee who was given an interest in the increase of the flock—as, for instance, Jacob, with his father-in-law Laban. Under the circumstances it is not surprising that the relationship between the sheep and their shepherds was very different from now—much more confidential. The shepherd was acquainted with his sheep and loved them, not merely as so much wealth and merchandise, but as friends, companions, with whom he conversed, and whose welfare he defended. Travelers tell us that the peculiarities of this parable are fully illustrated in eastern countries, even to this day; that a shepherd will know every individual sheep in his flock, and have a name for it, and that the sheep know their shepherd, and discern readily the sound of his voice, and cannot be deceived. Some tell us how they have experimented and proved these peculiar statements of the parable: one asked the shepherd to call some particular sheep by name, to see whether or not it would come to him; the shepherd called one that was far off, and it immediately lifted its head, looked toward him, and when the call was repeated started, and wending its way, in and out through the flock, came to his feet, where he patted its head in reward for its obedience. Thinking this possibly a solitary instance, requests were made for repetitions of the test, with similar results. Another traveler imitated the shepherd's voice, and called the sheep, but they paid no attention. Thinking that it was because he had not on the shepherd's garments, to test the matter, he and the shepherd changed raiment, but still the sheep would not heed the voice of the stranger; but when the shepherd spoke to them, even though clothed in the garments of the stranger, they knew his voice and at once responded.

Our Lord used these facts, well known to his hearers, to illustrate his relationship to the Lord's people, as their Shepherd, the Son of the Great Shepherd; and he pointed out that all who were truly of his flock would hear his voice, would not be deceived by the Adversary, though he should disguise himself in garments of light, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. The important thing, then, is that we should become true members of the Lord's flock, intimately acquainted with him, and familiar with his word, his voice—disciples indeed. He is seeking no others than these for his present flock. Nor has he at the present time two flocks, one of them hearing and obeying his voice, and the other heedless of his words. He declares, "My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me." Those who are not following the Lord, in obedience to his voice, expressed in word and example, are not of his flock; they are not being led to the green pastures and still waters of present truth; their table is not furnished in the presence of their foes, nor are they in the way marked out by the divine goodness and mercy, to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.—Psa. 23.

Jehovah God established a typical kingdom or sheepfold, and accepted the nation of Israel as his sheep, but as a nation they were wayward sheep and knew him not. Nevertheless, with a Law Covenant he fenced them in. They desired a king, a ruler, a caretaker, a governor, and God let them have their wish; but none of these was the true shepherd, neither did any bring the sheep into desirable conditions. And when these were finally done away, various others presented themselves as the Messiah, falsely claiming the right to lead Israel—false Messiahs. These, as our Lord declares, were thieves and robbers, who sought the control of the sheep, not from interest in the sheep, but from selfish motives, for self-aggrandizement and exaltation. These attempted to lead out the Lord's people, not by the door, but by climbing up other ways: by climbing over the Law, or by digging under it, they would reach the sheep and become leaders; and altogether in various ways a large proportion of Israel had been led astray out of the fold, some to idolatry, and some simply to wander in the wilderness.

At our Lord's first advent this was the condition of things: God's covenant with Israel was standing as a wall around that nation, but its door was barred by justice, as represented in the Mosaic Law—Israel's covenant. There could be no proper ingress or egress; all were prisoners of the Law,—shut up unto that hope which should afterward be revealed, namely, Christ the door or "way" of life. Meanwhile, though the door was guarded zealously by the scribes and Pharisees, the fact was entirely neglected that thieves and robbers, Satan's servants, were at work plundering the sheepfold.—John 10:1, 2, 7, 9; Gal. 3:24; John 14:6; Zech. 9:9-12.

Nor could our Lord Jesus rightfully open the fold and take charge of the sheep, except at the cost of his own life. This was the purpose of the Father, the Great Shepherd, and with this in view he shut up the sheep under the Law, to the intent that they would need to be *redeemed* by his Son (the appointed Shepherd), from under the dominion of the Law, before they could be made free with the liberty wherewith Christ makes free his people. And this was the first work that the Good Shepherd did for the sheep; the laying down of his life began at the beginning of his ministry, when he made a full consecration of himself even unto death, and symbolized this in baptism. It was in view of this sacrifice which he had already devoted, and was even then offering, and which was finished subsequently at Calvary, that our Redeemer announced himself as the Good Shepherd who giveth his life for the sheep.

The Apostle declares that our Lord's death redeemed Israel from under the curse (sentence) of the Law—but it not only satisfied the Law, "the porter," so that he opened the sheepfold, but it gave to the true Shepherd the ownership and control of the sheep, that he might lead them out to green pastures, and that they might go out and in with perfect freedom, as his sheep, following him. Our Lord testified, however, that many true sheep had gotten out of the fold, and were lost in the wilderness of sin. His ministry was a call to these as well as to those who remained in the fold,—to the publicans and sinners as well as to those who were endeavoring to live near to God.

Thus the true Shepherd showed his interest in all his true sheep, including the lame, the weak, the starved. He called sinners to repentance, and the true sheep, realizing their shortcomings under the Law, responded and came to him as the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. But inasmuch as many of the flock had wandered far from the position of true sheep, so that there were not enough who heard his voice, to complete the elect number of his flock, this Good Shepherd has, during this Gospel age, lifted up his voice (speaking through the members of his body), and has called sheep from amongst the Gentiles; and a sufficient number to complete the original predestination will eventually respond.

The call of this present time is not a general one, but as this Scripture declares, "he calleth *his own sheep by name*,"—it is therefore a special call. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." They manifest relationship to him as his flock by their obedience to his call—by following him. The flock which is now being called, and which eventually will make its calling and election sure, the Scriptures inform us will be only "a little flock," and the fold provided for these is a special one; *viz.*, the kingdom.—Luke 12:32.

Throughout this Gospel age the Lord has been caring for this class; he has specially led and fed and blessed them, notwithstanding that to the appearance of others they have passed through severe trials, disciplines, sufferings. Yea, as our Shepherd himself declared, whosoever lives godly suffers persecution. But we are to remember that this is a peculiar trial time, for a peculiar and elect flock. We are to remember, also, the Shepherd's declaration that he has other sheep which are not of this fold—not provided for in the calling to the kingdom. These other sheep are still astray in the wilderness of sin, but the Millennial day is near at hand, in which the Lord will gather all his scattered sheep, all who would seek and love righteousness and harmony with God under favorable conditions,—that they may all be brought into accord with him and be his flock. The Good Shepherd gave his life a ransom for all his sheep—not merely for the "little flock" of this age, the "heirs of the kingdom." Christ's larger flock will be gathered after the kingdom is set up.

A part of the key to this parable, as it is also the key to many other features of the divine plan, is found in the fact that the sheep of the "little flock," now being called and selected to joint-heirship in the kingdom, are to be *sacrificed:* as the Shepherd, the King's Son, himself was sacrificed as the Lamb of God, and not only opened the door to those who are shut up under the Law, but by the same sacrifice also redeemed the whole world of mankind, amongst which are the "other sheep" that he is yet to seek, so the sheep of the "little flock," now being called, are all to suffer with Christ—with the Lamb of God,—are all to be "living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and their reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) As the Apostle elsewhere declares, "Hereby we know love, because he laid down his life on our behalf: and we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren," for the fellow-sheep.—1 John 3:16—*Diaglott.*

From this standpoint it will be seen that, as our Lord was the Father's Lamb, and the sin-offering for the world, so we who are of Jesus' flock are to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, in the interest of his body, which is the Church. (Eph. 1:22) And other Scriptures show us that all of the flock thus faithful, in following the Shepherd even *"unto death,"* are counted as members of the body of the Shepherd. Thus the entire Gospel age has been the period of suffering with Christ, of dying daily, of laying down our lives for the brethren; and not until this sacrifice is complete in the close of this age will the New Covenant be thrown open in the largest sense of the word to the world of mankind in general, and the great Shepherd be complete—Head and body. Then the spirit and the bride will say, Come, and whosoever will may come,—whereas now, "No man can come except the Father draw him," and in all a "little flock."

The spirit of the great Chief (or Head) Shepherd of the flock is to be in all those now being called to association with him in the kingdom. As the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the flock so all of these will lay down their lives in the service of the truth. As the Good Shepherd was not indifferent to the necessities of the sheep, caring simply for himself, and how much he could get out of the sheep, so it will be with those who have his spirit—their service of the body of Christ will not be for filthy lucre's sake, nor for honor among men, nor for earthly gain, in any sense of the word; but for the love of God, the love of the truth, the love of the flock.

NOTIFY US RESPECTING MEMORIAL CELEBRATION

Will all the little groups appoint some one of their number to notify us *the next day* respecting, (1) The interest manifested; (2) If a blessing were enjoyed; (3) The number in attendance? Only a few words are necessary, and postal cards will suffice. We are interested in having such reports complete as possible, and thank you all, in advance, for them.

VOL. XX ALLEGHENY, PA., MARCH 1 AND 15, 1899 NOS. 5 AND 6

TABERNACLE SHADOWS

MARCH 1st AND 15th ISSUES OF THIS JOURNAL
Will Be a New Edition of "Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices"
(In Pamphlet Form for Convenience). Next Issue
in Usual Form Will be April 1st

VOL. XX ALLEGHENY, PA., APRIL 1, 1899 No. 7

BLESSING GOD AND CURSING MEN

"But the tongue can no man tame: it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."—James 3:8-10.

These words of the inspired Apostle are addressed to the "brethren"—not to the world. Indeed, the entire Epistle is addressed to the church: the fact that in opening it James addresses "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad," is not to the contrary of this. We are to remember that to the twelve tribes of Israel, the natural seed of Abraham, pertained originally the great promise of God made to Abraham. By natural heredity, then, God's offer or proposition to bless the world belonged to fleshly Israel, as the divine instruments, if they would comply with the divine conditions. But one of the divine conditions was that they should have *the faith of Abraham,* and should not be considered the promised seed of Abraham without that faith, since Abraham was to be the Father of the Faithful. Our Lord and the apostles, in the New Testament, set forth clearly how and why natural Israel, as a nation, was broken off from inheritance under that covenant: the Apostle representing the promise as an olive root, describes all Israelites as branches, growing up out of that root, and tells us that many of the natural branches were broken off, the vast majority, and that only a remnant at the first advent were found possessed of the faith of Abraham, and accepted by our Lord as members of the new house of sons.—John 1:12.

The Apostle further explains that the rejection of the unbelieving of natural Israel left the way open to engraft in the place of the broken-off branches some from amongst the Gentiles, possessed of the faith of Abraham. And this, we see, has been the work of this Gospel age—grafting into the original root of promise believers from amongst the Gentiles, who were once without God and having no hope in the world, strangers from the commonwealth of Israel, but are now brought nigh, united with Christ, and through him united with the Abrahamic root of promise, and inheritors of all its richness and fatness.—Eph. 2:12, 13; Rom. 11.

Thus we see that these spiritual Israelites become the Israelites indeed, from the divine standpoint, the actual inheritors of the Abrahamic promise: altho we see also yet to be fulfilled certain gracious earthly promises to the natural seed of Abraham, they nevertheless have missed, have lost, as a nation, as a people, the great prize: as the Apostle declares, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for: but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. 11:7.

So then the "twelve tribes" of Israel had promises made to them which apply not merely to themselves, but also and specially to spiritual Israel, whom they typified; while the original election or predestination of God, respecting the Abrahamic seed, that it should be 144,000, or 12,000 from each tribe, still stands; and consequently that each one accepted from amongst the Gentiles, and engrafted into this root of Abrahamic promise, is counted as taking the place of one of these broken-off branches of the various tribes. By the time the Gospel age shall have finished its work, a spiritual Israel will have been found—"a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people,"—showing forth the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light—neither one more nor one less than the original, elect, predetermined number,—a natural Israelite having been "broken off" for each one from the Gentiles "grafted in." The church is thus referred to in Revelation 7:3-8: and the sealing of the church is spoken of as being so many from each of the tribes, with the intimation that all of these will have been "sealed in their foreheads" before the great time of trouble shall come upon the world.

So, then, the Epistle of James is to be understood as addressed to these true Israelites, engrafted into the root of promise, and taking the place of the natural Israelites. And to this agree the words of the Apostle Paul, "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." (Rom. 9:6, 7) And again, "He is not a Jew which is a Jew outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart." (Rom. 2:28, 29) And again, the words of our Lord in addressing his church: "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan."—Rev. 2:9; 3:9.

Our Lord recognized this same distinction between natural and true Israelites: when receiving Nathaniel he declared, "Behold, an Israelite indeed." These *two* Israels, of the flesh and of the spirit, were typified in Isaac and Ishmael, and again, as the Apostle declares, in Jacob and Esau. (Rom. 9:8-13, 22-33) In each case the inheritor of the promise was the younger brother; as illustrating that spiritual Israel would be developed *after* natural Israel, and take its place as heir of the chief blessings mentioned in the Abrahamic Covenant. However, we are to remember that a blessing was granted also in each case to the elder brother, in the types; and so it is in the antitypes,—while God has appointed Christ to be the heir of all things, and has called the church as his bride, to be his joint-heir in all things, he has nevertheless provided that blessing shall flow from these to the earthly seed, and in turn through the latter to all the families of the earth.—Rom. 11:26-33.

Having thus definitely determined that the holy spirit, through the Apostle, is addressing the church, let us consider the astounding statement of our text, and seek to ascertain in what sense it should be understood; resolving that, should we find that in any sense or degree it applies to us individually, we will assuredly quickly respond to the spirit's teaching, and correct so evil a condition.

BLESSING GOD WITH THE TONGUE

We may readily see how the Apostle means that God's people bless or praise his name with their tongues. They do so in prayer; they do so in their hymns of praise; they do so in declaring his truth, and in witnessing to his providences on their behalf. In a word, we bless God with our tongues by showing forth his praises, who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

CHRISTIANS WHO CURSE MEN WITH THEIR TONGUES

But in what sense does the Apostle mean that spiritual Israelites *curse men* with their tongues?—and that so commonly, so generally prevalent as to require public reproof? Surely no Christian curses his fellowman by oaths and profane swearing! But are there not other ways in which our tongues may be a *curse* and an *injury* to fellow-men? We are to remember that the meaning of our English word "curse" has somewhat altered in common usage within the last century, having very generally lost the sense of *injury* and assumed wholly the sense of swearing, profanity. In the Greek language different words are used when referring to a cursing oath (*viz., anathema,* and *anathematiso,* used ten times in the New Testament), and when referring to a spoken condemnation as a blight or curse (*viz., katara* and *kataraomai,* which signify condemnation,—to speak against, to speak evil of, to injure). The latter is the word used by the Apostle James: hence his language really is—With the same tongue wherewith we praise and honor God, we do injury to fellowmen, by evil-speaking, slandering, etc. Thus our Lord, using the same word, said, "Bless them that curse [speak evil of] you." The Apostle Paul, using the same word, admonishes God's people to "Bless and curse not"—speak favorably of others, but do not speak injuriously of them. Again, we are told that our Lord *cursed* (the same Greek word) the figtree, saying, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth"—he injured it, he made a declaration unfavorable to its future development. Thus also the Apostle declares that the Jews under the Law were under a *curse*—not that the Law was evil, but that, because of imperfections of the flesh, the Israelites came under the *condemnation* (curse) of the Law. He declares also that "Christ hath redeemed us [formerly Jews] from the curse [condemnation] of the Law, being made a curse for us"—having suffered for us the full condemnation or blight which the Law imposed upon the transgressor. (Gal. 3:10-13) He illustrated the same thought in connection with the word "curse," when he declares that garden land which had been overgrown with thorns and briars is "nigh unto cursing"—not ready for profanity, but for *condemnation,* as unfit for tillage, until burned over and its weeds exterminated.—Matt. 5:44; Rom. 12:14; Mark 11:21; Heb. 6:8.

Having thus before our minds the real word, and its signification as used by the Apostle, we see that while *curse* is a proper enough translation of the original, the whole difficulty is that present-day common usage and common education have largely hidden from sight this signification of the word. (Similarly the word *evil* has lost its original breadth of meaning, and is almost invariably considered to signify immorality, badness, wickedness; whereas in its breadth of meaning it may be used to refer to anything that is undesirable, not good, such as calamities, etc.)

Looking at the Apostle's statement from this stand-point, we see clearly that his charge is applicable to Christian people of today to an alarming extent. How many there are who do injury with their tongues to their fellow-creatures, who use the same tongue in offering praise to God. We know of no evil to which God's consecrated people are more exposed than to this one. With many it is as natural to gossip as to breathe: they do it unconsciously. We have even known people who took cognizance of the Scriptural injunction against slander and evil-speaking, who were so utterly confused on the subject, and so unaware of their own conduct, that they would declare their horror of speaking a slander in the very same breath in which they utter slanders. We mention this in proof that this evil is so ingrained in fallen human nature as to elude the notice of the new nature sometimes for years—and thus escapes the correction in righteousness which the Lord's Word directs, and which all who are truly the Lord's people desire.

Many are the peculiar subterfuges which the fallen nature will use, in its attempt to stifle the voice of conscience and yet maintain the use of this channel of evil,—long after it has been driven from evil practices which are less common, less popular, more generally recognized as sinful.

(1) It will say, "I mean no harm to anybody; but I must have something to talk about, and nothing would be so interesting to friends and neighbors as something which has more or less of a gossipy flavor (scandal) connected with it." But is evil-speaking, slander, any the more proper on this account for the children of the light? By no means. Hence it is that the Scriptures instruct us, "Let your conversation be such as becometh saints;" "Let your speech be with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man;" "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is *good,* to the use of *edifying,*—that it may minister grace unto the hearers."—Phil. 1:27; Col. 4:6; Eph. 4:29.

But the scandal-monger, however refined his methods and words, well knows that so far from the scandal ministering grace to the hearer, it ministers evil; that the hearer is impelled by the forces of his fallen human nature to go quickly and tell the scandal further, to others; true or false, he knows not and heeds not: it has kindled in his heart a flame of carnal sentiment which issues from his lips to "set on fire the course of nature" in others, similarly weak through the fall. The fallen nature feasts and revels in just such things, feeling the more liberty to do so because they delude themselves that thus they are moralizing—preaching against sin, and that in thus discussing and impliedly denouncing the *said-to-be* transgressions of another, they are mentioning matters abhorrent to their righteous souls. Alas! poor, weak, fallen humanity's reasonings are seriously defective when the Lord's counsels in righteousness are ignored.

As for the point that there would be little else to talk about if scandals were thoroughly eliminated from Christian conversation, and were all to abide strictly by the Apostle's injunction, "Speak evil of no man," we answer: Is there not a wide scope for conversation amongst Christian people, on the subject of the riches of God's grace in Christ Jesus our Lord, expressed in the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word? In these things we have indeed that which not only ministers grace to the hearer, but which adds also to the grace of the speaker. It showers blessing on every hand, so far as the "new creature" is concerned, and assists in deadening the old nature with its evil desires, tastes, appetites.

This is what the Apostle had in mind, evidently, when he said that the Lord's people should "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."

And a heart filled with the spirit of love, the spirit of God, the spirit of the truth, and overflowing with the same at the mouth will be sure to overflow that which is within, for, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." An evil mouth, therefore, a mouth which does injury to others, either to fellow-members of "the body of Christ" or to those that are without, indicates an evil heart,—implies that the heart is not pure. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."—1 Pet. 2:9; Matt. 12:34; 5:8.

(2) Another excuse for gossip about other men's matters is offered by others, who say: I can talk about religious matters to those who are religiously inclined, but when I am with worldly people, or with professors of religion who take no interest in religious themes, I must be agreeable and accommodating, and must at least *hear* their gossip and news; and if I do not share in such conversation I would be considered very peculiar, and my company would not be desired. Yes, we answer; but this is to be one of the peculiarities of the "saints:" they are not only to be different from the world, but different also from the nominal professors of religion. Their religion is not merely to be on the surface, and on one day of the week, and under a certain suit of clothes; but is to be of the heart, related to all the affairs of life, for every day and every moment. To follow strictly the divine injunction will indeed separate you from some who are now your friends and who love such evil things,—forbidden us who have become sons of God and who have received of his spirit of sonship, the spirit of love.

And that the Lord understood and meant this is evident from the fact that he foretold to us that the way of discipleship would be a "narrow way." If, therefore, your failure to be an entertaining visitor, neighbor, friend, is because of your fidelity as a "new creature" to the law of Christ, love—which "worketh no ill to his neighbor," either in word or deed, then indeed you have cause for rejoicing, because you are suffering a little, experiencing a loss, for Christ's sake, for righteousness' sake. The loss may at first seem heavy, but if you endure it for Christ's sake, in obedience to his righteous law of love, you will soon be able to say with the Apostle that such losses are "light afflictions," not worthy to be compared with the offsetting blessings.—Phil. 3:7, 8; 2 Cor. 4:17.

Your cause for rejoicing is that you have the Lord's promise that such suffering shall work out for your good. Companionship with those who are not seeking to walk according to the mind of the spirit, but according to the common "course of this world," is injurious to the saints, to those who are seeking to walk in harmony with the new mind. They are far better off without such worldly companions and friends, and in proportion as they are separated from these will they find closer fellowship with the Lord himself and with his Word, and with all who are true members of his body, and under the direction of his spirit. It is in harmony with this that the Scriptures declare, in so many words, that the friendship of this world signifies enmity against God. (Jas. 4:4) God has purposely placed the matter in such a position that his people must take their choice, and lose either the divine friendship and fellowship, or the worldly friendship and fellowship; because those things which the Lord loves are distasteful to the worldly, and those things which the worldly love, evil deeds and evil thoughts, evil-speaking, are an abomination in the sight of the Lord, and those who love and practice such things lose his fellowship—they are not of his spirit. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Rom. 8:9.

(3) Another way by which some otherwise good Christian people avoid this question, and justify themselves in this common fault of humanity, is by confining themselves (as they think) to the truth: tho how frequently their gossip-loving natures pervert their judgments and lead them to accept as truth things respecting which they have little or no knowledge, they never know. Nor are such anxious to know more, after they have circulated a slander with their stamp of verity on it: to find it untrue would prove them "false witnesses" and put them to trouble to correct the lie; the pride of the natural mind objects and refuses to believe the truth under such circumstances. Thus one evil leads to another.

Such will say,—"Oh, I never tell anything for *truth* until I positively know it to be true—of my own observation, my own personal knowledge. Anything that I do not know of myself to be true I am always careful to so state, and say, I have heard thus and so, or, I am told thus and so; I do not vouch for the truth of it myself. Thus I am sure that I always avoid speaking evil of anyone." Perhaps there is no more common delusion on this subject than is thus expressed. The depraved taste hedges itself behind conscience, and declares that it is always right to speak the truth, and hence God cannot have meant that speaking the truth would be slander, but that in condemning evil speaking and slander, as works of the flesh and the devil, he must have meant the speaking of that which is false, untrue.

This is a great mistake: a slander is equally a slander, whether it is true or whether it is false, and is so regarded, not only in the law of God, but also in the laws of civilized men. True, in human law, if a suit were brought for slander, if it were proven that the charges made by the slanderer had some basis of fact, that would probably be considered by the court and jury an extenuating circumstance, and would probably very much reduce the amount of the verdict for damages. A slander is anything which is uttered with the intention of injury to another, whether true or false, and the laws of men agree with the law of God, that such injury to another is wrong.

In other words, divine and human laws agree that a first wrong does not justify a second wrong. Human law says, If a wrong has been committed, the courts are open to the injured one to seek redress or the punishment of the evil doer; but the injured one shall not be permitted to take the remedy into his own hands, either by making an assault with physical force nor by the use of the more subtle weapon, the tongue, to assassinate his character with the poisoned stiletto of envy and malice. True, many slanderers are never prosecuted; true also, the newspapers of the United States have sometimes escaped heavy damages for libelous slander by the plea that they did not publish the defamations as of malice, but simply as news, which, they claimed, properly belonged to the public as in the cases of politicians who were seeking the franchises of the people for positions of public trust. Then again, public men knowing that much of the false statements by the opposition press will be properly credited as falsehoods, consider it good policy to let any ordinary slanders go unchallenged in the courts. The effect is a gradual growth of slander among the people—sure to work evil to themselves and to their institutions;—for government officers and courts and everybody of influence coming under such slanders (generally, we believe, untrue) lose their influence for good over the lower classes, who are thus being helped along to greater lawlessness day by day, and preparing for the period of anarchy which the Scriptures tell us is near at hand.

But the law of God, the law of Christ, goes much further and deeper into such matters, naturally, than do the laws of men; for it deals not with men, but with the "new creatures in Christ Jesus"—transformed by the renewing of their minds, under special New Covenant* relationship, and bound by the law of that New Covenant—love—which "worketh no ill to his neighbor," under any circumstances, under any provocation: which on the contrary returns "good for evil"—"blessing for cursing."

The law of the New Covenant, love, commands *silence* to all who acknowledge that law and the Law-Giver, saying, "*Speak evil of no man.*" (Titus 3:2) It goes further than this and declares against evil thoughts, evil suspicions, evil surmisings, against neighbors. It declares that love filling our hearts will not only hinder evil conduct and injurious words, but will prevent evil thoughts. "Love thinketh no evil"—can only be convinced of evil by indisputable proofs. Indeed, to impress this subject and its importance in his sight, the Great Teacher declares to the pupils in his school—With what judgment ye judge others, I will judge you. (Matt. 7:1) And again he tells them to pray to the Father—"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." (Matt. 6:12) Again he declares, if *at heart* ye treasure up resentment against others, the heavenly Father will not forgive you. (Matt. 18:35) Ah! indeed, a Christian after the Lord's pattern, a graduate of the school of Christ and prepared to teach others, is one who not only outwardly, but inwardly also, is clean—separated, washed by the water of divine instruction, from the meanness, the filthiness of the flesh. He is no longer the slave of sin, controlled by the desires and weaknesses of his fallen flesh and its spirit of the world, bearing fruits unto unrighteousness,—anger, malice, hatred, strife, slander, evil-speaking. (Col. 3:8; 1 Pet. 2:1, 2) From his high standpoint of appreciation of the divine law, the advanced Christian sees that in the Lord's sight hatred is *murder*, slander is *assassination*, and the destruction of a neighbor's good name is *robbery* and rapine. And any of these things done in the church, among the professed people of God, is doubly evil—the assassination and robbery of a *brother*.—Compare 1 John 3:15 and Matt. 5:21, 22.

To utter a defamatory or injurious remark against another, and then to add, "I do not know whether it is true or not," is to show that the speaker is exercised by an evil spirit and not by the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of love. He wishes to injure or curse his fellow-creature, is anxious to do so. He would feel restrained to some extent from telling what he knew to be absolutely untrue, but he delights to speak evil, and glad to know of evil that he may roll it as a sweet morsel over his tongue, and hence speaks of even those scandals which he *does not know to be true,* and attempts to excuse himself with such an apology as the above. Verily, it is with force that the Scriptures declare that the natural heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Those who thus speak, and thus attempt to justify their misconduct, have either never entered the school of Christ, or are as yet only in the infant-class, and do not know that theirs is the spirit of murder, and not the spirit of brotherly-love. Oh! that all true Christians might learn the scope of this law of Love, in its relationship not only to God, but also to fellowmen; what a bridling of tongues it would mean, what a carefulness of speech! As David said, "I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue." And he who watches his tongue is putting a detective upon his deceitful heart and can the better know it and master it, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."—Jer. 17:9; Psa. 39:1; Matt. 12:34.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

The only exception to this rule, "Speak evil of no man," would come in where we might know of an absolute necessity for making known an evil—where the relating of the evil would be contrary to our heart's wishes, and only mentioned because of necessity—because of love for others who, if not informed, might be injured. For instance, the law of the land demands, that, if we know of murder having been committed, it shall not be considered slander, but on the contrary be considered duty, to make known to the proper officers of the law the *facts* (not suspicions) which have come under our observation. Likewise, if we knew of some weakness in a brother or sister, and realized that they were about to be placed in a dangerous position, because of some other brother or sister not knowing of that weakness, it might become our duty to make known, either to the individual or congregation liable to be injured, so much of our knowledge of *facts* (not suspicions) as might be necessary to guard them against injury through the weakness mentioned. But this would not be speaking evil, but, on the contrary, would be speaking with a good motive, with the intention of preserving the one party from extraordinary temptation, and of preserving the other party from injury. And before anything should be said on the subject we should most positively satisfy our own consciences that our motive in speaking is a good one, and not an evil one, that we are about to use our tongue to bless, and not to injure. And even then, prompted by the spirit of love and kindness toward the weak brother, as well as toward the others, we should avoid mentioning one solitary item that would not be necessary to the object in view.

But some will object to limiting this liberty to cases of positive *knowledge,* and urge that absolute knowledge generally being small little could be said. We answer that this is in line with the divine law,—"Love thy neighbor *as thyself.*" You would not want your neighbor to use brain and tongue in evil surmises and slanders against you; and you should not do so to him. The law of the land does not demand that you should tell one word more than you *know* (of personal knowledge against your neighbor—it does not ask your suspicions and evil surmisings. And on the contrary, the law of the Lord commands that all under the New Covenant shall not utter one solitary suspicion against a neighbor: and that if suspicion beyond knowledge is *forced* upon the mind by associated circumstances, the new mind shall promptly, with its native benevolence, counterbalance the suspicions by suggestions of the possibility of misinformation or misinterpretation and always give the apparently guilty the benefit of the doubt.

Another will object, "Oh! I could never waste so much time in getting at *facts.* Life is too short! Why, I would have no time at all left for my own business, if I carefully hunted up the *facts* so as always to speak from *knowledge* and never from hearsay!"

Just so! and the lesson to you should be to follow the Scriptural rule—"Speak evil of no man."

(1) Because you have not the time to get at the facts, and quite probably also lack the ability to judge impartially, if you had *all* the facts before you.

(2) Because, if you have the spirit of Christ, love, dwelling in you richly, you will prefer to tell no one the facts, even if you have the chain of evidence complete: you will loathe the matter the more in proportion as the known facts are unfavorable. What, then, must be the condition of those who have itching ears for scandals and of those whose tongues delight in scandal as a sweet morsel, and are anxious to scatter an evil report of which they have no knowledge—only prejudiced hearsay? The most generous view possible of such is that they have *little* of the spirit of Christ; that they are deficient in brotherly love and have never truly learned "the golden rule."

The Apostle inquires, "Doth a fountain send forth at the same opening bitter water and sweet?" The form of his question implies the answer, No; it is either good water only or brackish water only. He evidently wishes to suggest that we apply the same rule to our hearts and mouths: How is it possible if our hearts have been renewed that our mouths utter loving sweetness to God and bitter acrimony, envy, hatred, strife, towards or respecting our fellow-men?

There is but one way of understanding this, and accounting for it Scripturally. It is expressed by the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 4:7): "We have this treasure [the new heart—the new nature] in an earthen vessel." Not that Christians are of two natures, for that thought is contrary to the science of the Bible. No mixture of natures can be recognized, hence it was that our human natures were first justified through faith and a renouncement of sin, and secondly were consecrated or sacrificed to death, that instead we might have spiritual natures and become "new creatures in Christ Jesus." The new creature, however, is as yet only in embryo, only the new mind which dwells in and proposes to regulate and govern the mortal bodies, which are reckoned dead so far as the will of the flesh is concerned.

Hence, every Christian may properly use the language of the Apostle, and speak of and think of himself and of others Christians from two different standpoints—the new mind (the new creature) reckoned alive and given control, and the old mind (the old creature) reckoned dead, and deposed from control. But as the new mind is only living a reckoned existence by faith, so the old mind is only dead in a reckoned sense through faith. And as the Apostle declares, these two are contrary the one to the other. There cannot be spiritual progress if the reign is divided. Hence, the new mind which is to us the "treasure," begotten of the spirit of the Lord, through the word of truth, is to keep the old or natural mind, will, or disposition, tastes and appetites, dead; that the new mind may thoroughly and completely control and exercise these mortal bodies, in works and words and thoughts in harmony with the new mind, in harmony with the new law of love, in harmony with the spirit of righteousness and truth.

When, therefore, our mouths are speaking forth heart-felt praise to God, who hath blessed us, lifted our feet from the horrible pit, and the miry clay, and placed us upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and has put a new song into our mouth, our praise implies that the new mind is controlling at such a time, that the treasure in the new heart is overflowing in the mortal body, and going forth through the lips to the praise and edification, the comfort and encouragement, of those who hear. Thus the fountain in our heart is sending forth sweet waters, carrying with them life, blessing, refreshment. But when our tongues speak evil of any, whether it be true or false, it implies that the new nature is, temporarily at least, overcome by the old nature; it implies that another fountain is now operating and using the tongue, the mouth, in issuing forth the words of malice or hatred or envy or strife or reproach or evil speaking of any kind—cursing or injuring others in any degree, great or small. This implies that the old nature, the old will, the will of the flesh, is not being kept under, as the Apostle Paul expresses it—kept dead, kept buried, kept out of sight: there is either a *truce* between the new mind and the old mind, by which the two use the mortal body between them, sometimes for good and sometimes for evil, or a stupor and lethargy has come over the new mind, which is taken advantage of by the mind of the flesh. Such a condition therefore implies slow spiritual development or retrogression—falling away on the part of the "new creature." All such should remember, as the Apostle Paul declares, "The time past of our lives sufficeth us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles," and again he says, "Yield not your members as instruments of unrighteousness; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."—1 Pet. 4:3; Rom. 6:13.

From this point of view we may console ourselves if in looking backward, we perceive that in our own cases from the same mouth has proceeded praise to God and injury and defamation and slander and evil-speaking and malice and hatred and strife, or any of these, toward our fellow-creatures. It does not, therefore, prove that our hearts were not truly justified, and sanctified by the holy spirit of adoption; it does not prove that we are not sons of God and partakers of his spirit. It does prove, however, that we are in a sadly improper condition—spiritually sick and in need of taking a purgative, as the Apostle expresses it, saying, "Purge out, therefore, the old leaven [malice, etc.], that ye may be a new [unadulterated, pure] lump" or loaf—proper representatives of the body of Christ.—1 Cor. 5:7.

We may know assuredly that, until the "new creature" gains a thorough victory over the will of the flesh, we will not be winners of the great prize which is promised only "to him that overcometh." The overcoming, however, will be not in the *perfecting of the flesh*, but in the *perfecting of the heart*—the will, the intentions. As for the blemishes of the flesh, some of them undoubtedly, despite every effort on our part to eradicate them, will continue with us so long as we are in the flesh. The perfection which is to be hoped for, and aimed at and expected and gained by the overcomers, is the perfection of the will, heart, intentions. "Blessed are the pure in heart; they shall see God." Moreover, our physical weaknesses and defects not only vary in kind but in intensity. Some are by nature more inclined to gentleness, kindness, etc.; others, until accepted of Christ, may have very uncouth, coarse, rude, rough earthen vessels: and while the influence of the treasure within, the "new mind," will be sure in any case to exercise a modifying and transforming effect upon the earthen vessels, we cannot expect as much of a change in some as in others. We cannot expect as complete a correction in righteousness in the outward man where coarseness, rudeness, unkindness are, so to speak, bred in the bone and fibre, as we might expect in one born to fine sensibilities.

While recognizing this difference of "earthen vessels," we of course must use our best endeavors each to correct his own. We are to remember that our relationship to one another in the body of Christ is not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit; hence, as the Apostle declares, we know one another no longer according to the flesh, with its weaknesses, imperfections and ungainly and ungraceful natural tendencies. We know each other only according to the spirit, according to the intentions, according to the heart—as "new creatures," not as old creatures. (2 Cor. 5:16) This will lead us to be very pitiful of one another's imperfections of the flesh, so long as we have the assurance that the flesh does not represent our brother's real self, his mind, his will. We are, therefore, to be gentle toward all, kindly affectioned one toward another, so that so far from desiring to wound one another, or to injure one another, or to devour one another with our tongues, we shall sympathize with each other, do each other good, and by words of grace and comfort, or of admonition and reproof spoken in love, may build one another up in the most holy faith—in the likeness of our Lord and Master.

Proceeding with this subject, the Apostle points out that there are two kinds of wisdom, a heavenly and an earthly, and that all of the Lord's people should discern these, and should see to it that theirs is the heavenly. The Apostle's intimation is that there may be some with the church, who may have counted themselves in the church, who may have associated themselves with the church from worldlywise motives—some who have caught sight of the fact that there is a reasonableness and a wisdom in the teachings of the Scriptures, which they admire and which they can turn perhaps to their own advantage. These, he implies, will be inclined to be heady and to make a show of their wisdom, and to be "puffed up" by it, and while outwardly acknowledging the propriety of the Christian graces, brotherly-kindness, gentleness, meekness, patience, love, they have in their hearts bitter envyings and strife—strife to have name and fame—envying those who may seem to them to have more of these.

These, the Apostle intimates, will find it difficult, yea, impossible, to avoid *cursing* (speaking evil of, injuring) the brethren. It will be so natural to them to do so that they cannot avoid it, because they have not pure hearts—they have not regenerated hearts. If their hearts ever were regenerated, they have returned like the sow to wallowing in the mire—like the dog to his vomit. The Apostle's advice to such as find that they have in their hearts envious and bitter feelings, is that they have no cause to glory or to boast, but on the contrary should acknowledge that, having these evil conditions in the heart, they are not Christians at all, and they should cease to lie against the truth—cease to act fraudulently, hypocritically—cease to continue to claim to have renewed hearts, sanctified in Christ Jesus.

He tells such plainly that their wisdom, their knowledge, is not of God, is not of the holy spirit—"This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish: for, where envy and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work [to be anticipated]."—Jas. 3:15, 16.

It seems evident that, although the Apostle's denunciation applies to any professing to be Israelites indeed, he nevertheless is specially aiming his remarks at those who profess to be teachers in the church, to have *wisdom* to a considerable degree. And his words remind us of the words of the Apostle Paul, when speaking of the various gifts distributed to the church, he seemingly points out the dangers of those of large knowledge, and as an illustration of this principle which James presents, he says:

> Though I could speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, it would imply that I had become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, making a noise indeed, but having no feeling respecting the matter myself, I have neither part nor lot with those who possess the spirit of Christ. Although I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, and have not love, I am nothing; and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.—1 Cor. 13:1-8.

Thus the Apostle points out distinctly that knowledge and oratory are not the most vital tests, but that love permeating the heart and extending out through all the course of life, and actuating and operating our mortal bodies, is the real test—the real proof of our divine relationship. He points out that those who had received gifts of God before they had come into a proper relationship to God might become sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, and thus become "nothing," if they lose the love, if they lose the spirit of Christ; for "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

It is well for the Lord's people to take particular note of these divine instructions from two of the chiefest of the Apostles, and to remember that valuable though they be, neither *oratory* nor knowledge are to be considered amongst the "brethren" as sure proofs of their being in the right way, nor that their influence might not be injurious instead of helpful. The *leading* characteristic to be looked for in every one accepted as a servant of the church, to minister in holy things, should be first of all the spirit of love. We do not mean to say that knowledge and ability should be entirely ignored, but we do mean to say that these should be considered of secondary and not of primary importance, as is always the tendency. Look out from among yourselves holy men, full of the holy spirit, that they may have the charge of the spiritual interests of the different companies of the Lord's people. And for a divine explanation of how this holy spirit will manifest itself, of the qualities therefore that are to be looked for in the servants of the church, see 1 Cor. 13:4-8; also 1 Pet. 1:22, 23; 2 Pet. 1:1-13. For their own good, as well as for the good of the church, all who, having other qualifications, give evidence of being puffed up and of desiring to lord it over God's heritage, the church, or who manifest envy, strife, bitterness, evil-speaking—these should be passed by, as giving evidence of having the wrong spirit that cometh not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. They are unsafe teachers, and are likely to do more harm than good, with whatever knowledge they may possess.

Continuing, the Apostle leaves no doubt respecting his meaning, for he distinctly outlines the course and fruitage of heavenly wisdom, saying: "The wisdom that is from above is first pure"—(truthful, honest, sincere, not put on, not used as a garment of light to deceive and to cover up selfishness, malice, hatred, strife; it makes no compromise with sin, impurity, in any shape or form.) It is "peaceable." (So far from being a quarrelsome, bickering disposition, the "new mind" desires peace—it will contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, but it will not contend simply from a love of contention, a love of strife; on the contrary, the new mind is peaceably inclined, would prefer, so far as possible, to yield a non-essential point in a controversy; it loves its opponents and sympathizes with their difficulties.) It is "gentle" (not rude nor coarse, not rough, in action or word or tone; and if the earthen vessel through which it speaks have these rudenesses by nature ingrained, the "new nature" regrets them, strives against them, and seeks to conquer them; and where they do injury to others is ready, willing, glad to apologize, and to remove the smart). It is "easy to be entreated" (easy of approach, not haughty, not disdainful, not hard or cruel; yet it is firm on matters of principle—principles cannot be bended or modified; they belong to God. But while affirming the principles, this spirit of wisdom points out its own willingness to moderation, by acknowledging any good features in its opponent, and by pointing out the reason why no modification is possible in relation to divine laws and principles). It is "full of mercy and good fruits." (It delights in all things prompted by love and kindness; it takes pleasure in doing for others; it takes pleasure, not only in showing mercy to dumb animals under its care, but it especially delights in mercy in dealing with brethren in respect to their faults. It is merciful also in the family—not over-exacting, but generous, kind, benevolent. It is generous also with opponents, and those who are contentious—not wishing to push a victory, even for the truth, to such a point as would be injurious, hurtful, unmerciful to the antagonist.) It is "without partiality." (It loves the good, the true, where these are found; and opposes the untrue, the impure and the unholy, whether found amongst friends or enemies. Its justice is of the strictest kind, tempered with mercy; it will not approve a fault in a brother, because he is a brother, but would reprove the same with gentleness and meekness, remembering the liability of all to the assaults of the world, the flesh and the devil. It will not fail to see a virtue in an enemy, nor hesitate to acknowledge it. Truth is its standard, not prejudice, not partyism, not sectarianism.) It is "without hypocrisy." (It is thoroughly candid; it needs not to feign love, because it is love; it needs not to put on a kindly exterior and to smother feelings of wrath and envy and strife, for it is without envy, without strife. Such works of the flesh and of the devil have, by the grace of God, been seen to be earthly, sensual, devilish, and have been repudiated, and the heart has been justified, cleansed, sanctified to God, renewed in thought, intention, will, and is now full of the treasure of the holy spirit.)

With these thoughts before our minds, let us all, dear readers, more earnestly than ever, guard against the old nature, and its insidious attempts to gain control over our tongues. Let us, more and more, seek to appreciate, in ourselves and in others, this heavenly wisdom, whose operation is so forcefully presented by the Apostle. The more important our members, the more influential, the more earnestly ought we to strive to keep them in full subjection to the Lord, as *his* servants. Our feet are useful members, consecrated to the Lord; we may use them in many errands of mercy, to the glory of his name and to the profit of his people. Our hands are likewise useful, if thoroughly consecrated to the Lord's service. Our ears are also useful in his service, to hear for him, to refuse to hear the evil, and thus to approve evil, and to set a good example to others. Our eyes are a great blessing from the Lord, and they also are to be kept from evil, from the lust of the eye and the pride of life, and are to be instruments or servants of righteousness, in seeing the good, in appreciating the good, and in assisting the good, and in helping us to know the will of our God.

But of all our members the most influential is the tongue. The tongue's influence exceeds that of all our other members combined: to control it, therefore, in the Lord's service, is the most important work of the Lord's people in respect to their mortal bodies and the service of these rendered to the Lord. A few words of love, kindness, helpfulness—how often have such changed the entire course of a human life!—nay, how much they have had to do with moulding the destiny of nations! And how often have evil words, unkind words, slanderous words, done gross injustice, assassinated reputations, etc.!—or, as the Apostle declares, "set on fire the course of nature"—awakening passions, strifes, enmities, at first unthought of. No wonder he declares such tongues "set on fire of *Gehenna*"—the second death!

The public servants of the church are to some extent specially its "*tongues*," and what an influence they wield for good or for evil, in the blessing and upbuilding of the Lord's people, or for their injury—cursing! How necessary that all the tongue-servants of the Lord's body be such, and such only, as are of his spirit! Their influence not only extends to those who are in the church, but in considerable measure they are mouthpieces heard outside. And the same principle applies to every individual member of the church, in his use of his member, his tongue. He may use it wisely or unwisely, with heavenly wisdom or with earthly wisdom. He may use it for strife, and tearing down the faith and character of the brethren, in overthrowing love and confidence, or he may use it in building up these graces of the spirit. How many have proved the truth of the Apostle's words, that the tongue has great possibilities, either for defiling the whole body, the church, and setting on fire the course of nature, by stirring up the evil poisons and propensities of the fallen nature! How few amongst the Lord's people have conquered the tongue to the extent of bringing it unto subjection to the will of God, that they may minister good, and only good, to all with whom they come in contact! Let us, dearly beloved, be fully resolved that by divine grace (promised to assist us) the present year shall witness great progress in our control of this most important member of our bodies, bringing the same into full subjection and obedience and service to the King of kings and Lord of lords—to him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER AT ALLEGHENY

Our journal is just ready for press, but we hold it to say,—that the Memorial service here on March 26th was one of the most refreshing ever celebrated by us. We felt that the Lord poured out a blessing upon our uplifted hearts, while they burned with fervent love for our dear Redeemer and for all his "brethren"—who were remembered in our prayers feelingly: we knew, too, that we had the love and prayers of many of the Lord's "little flock" in every quarter of the world. Fourteen *witnessed* to their consecration by symbolic baptism in the afternoon; and in the evening about two hundred and fifty partook of the emblems of our Lord's broken body and shed blood and pledged themselves afresh to follow faithfully in his footsteps and "lay down our lives for the brethren."

"A BOTTLE OF SPIKENARD, VERY COSTLY"

April 9.—John 12:1-11.

"She hath done what she could."—Mark 14:8.

The last week of our Lord's earthly ministry was a busy one. The sixth day previous to the Passover was the Jewish Sabbath, which ended at 6 o'clock in the evening, and it is possible that it was at that time that our Lord and his disciples were entertained by Martha and Mary at "the house of Simon the leper"—probably their father: Lazarus, their brother, whose recovery from death was noted in the previous lesson, was also one of the table-guests.

Our Lord knew that the time of his death was near at hand, and he had given intimations of this to his beloved disciples, but they were so accustomed to having him say wonderful things beyond the power of their comprehension that they probably failed to realize their closeness to the great tragedy of Calvary. This need not surprise us when we remember the Scriptural declaration that our Lord spake in parables and dark sayings—"and without a parable spake he not unto the people:" for instance, his declaration, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." And again, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man shall eat of this bread he shall live forever." And again, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." (John 2:19; 6:51, 53) Having in mind such unusual language, the apostles would be entirely excusable in doubting the proper meaning to be attached to our Lord's declaration, "The Son of man must be lifted up," and other similar expressions foretelling his death.

Before coming to the consideration of the Bethany supper and the anointing on that Sabbath evening, let us have before our minds the incidents of the days following it, that we may be able to appreciate our Lord's declaration that the anointing with the spikenard was preparatory to his burial. The next morning (the first day of the week, now usually called Sunday), having sent after the ass, our Lord rode upon it to Jerusalem. The people, recognizing the wonderful miracle wrought upon Lazarus, congregated and hailed him as Messiah, the Son of David, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah (9:9), and strewed clothing and palm branches in the way; (hence this is generally known as Palm Sunday). It was on this occasion that our Lord wept over Jerusalem and declared, "Your house is left unto you desolate."—Matt. 23:38.

It is supposed that it was on the second day (Monday) that our Lord scourged the money-changers out of the Temple, and taught the people there; and we gather from the narrative that it was in his journey on this day that he pronounced the curse upon "the barren fig tree," supposed to represent the Jewish nation—barren of fruit, and therefore rejected. It would appear that the third day (Tuesday) was again spent teaching in the Temple, answering questions, etc., and that evening, as they returned again to Bethany, he discoursed with his disciples respecting the great events near at hand. The fourth day (Wednesday) apparently was spent quietly at Bethany, and on the fifth day (Thursday) the disciples made ready the Passover supper, which was eaten after 6 o'clock that evening—the beginning of the sixth day (Friday) according to Jewish reckoning—the 14th of Nisan. The Gethsemane experiences followed that night and the trial before Pilate the next morning, and the crucifixion and death a few hours later.

Now we come back to witness the hospitalities extended to our Lord six days before the crucifixion, at the house of Simon the leper, the home of Martha and Mary and Lazarus. We are to remember that our Lord was a visitor in those parts, his home, to the extent that he ever had one, being in Galilee, and the most of his time spent there. "He would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him." (John 7:1) But now the time for his sacrifice had come, and in harmony therewith he came amongst his enemies—although it was known that prominent Jews sought to kill him, and also sought the death of Lazarus, who was a living witness to his Messianic power.

We may suppose that this was no ordinary supper, but in the nature of a feast or banquet in our Lord's honor. Nevertheless, one incident connected with it so outshone all its other features that the narrator mentions it alone—the anointing of our Lord with the "spikenard ointment, very costly." Our Lord himself declared, "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." (Mark 14:9) It is entirely proper, therefore, that we should examine with some particularity the details of this service so highly esteemed by the Master.

Professor Shaff says, "By the 'ointment' we are to understand rather a liquid perfume than what we commonly know as ointment." The alabaster box was rather in the shape of a flask or vase, and the breaking of the box (Mark 14:3) signifies the opening of its tyings and seals by which the precious odors were confined. Judas' words of dissatisfaction furnish us a clew respecting the costliness of this perfume, for he says that it "might have been sold for three hundred *denarii.*" A *denarius*, translated "penny" in verse 5, is represented as being the average daily wages at that time—"a penny [*denarius*] a day." (Matt. 20:2) If we compare these values with present money values, counting farm labor at fifty cents a day (which is certainly a moderate valuation), the three hundred *denarii* would be the equivalent in wages of one hundred and fifty dollars of our money. Thus we see that the perfume was indeed "very costly." There was nearly a pint of the perfume, a Roman pound being twelve ounces. Nor need we question the possibility of perfumes being so expensive, for even today we have a counterpart in value in the attar of roses made in the Far East. It is claimed that four hundred thousand full-grown roses are used to produce one ounce of this perfume, which, in its purity, sells as high as one hundred dollars an ounce, or twelve hundred dollars for the quantity used by Mary in anointing our Lord. It is said that Nero was the first of the Emperors to indulge in the use of costly perfumes for his anointing; but one much more worthy of tribute, homage and anointing with a sweet perfume was the "Prince of the kings of the earth," whom Mary had the honor to anoint.

Judas was first to object to this as a waste—the difficulty with him being that he loved the Lord too little and money too much. The amount that love is willing to expend for others is, to some extent at least, a measure of the love. Another Evangelist informs us that several of the disciples, under the influence of Judas' words, took the same view of the matter, and spoke disapprovingly of Mary's action. The Apostle John, however, takes this opportunity to throw a little sidelight upon the character of Judas—more than is apparent in the common translation of verse 6. His declaration is, "Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the box, and stole what things were deposited in it."—*Diaglott.*

Our Lord's words, "Let her alone!" are in the nature of a severe reproof to those whose sentiments of love had no other measure than that of money. It was indeed true that there were plenty of poor, and there would still be plenty of poor, and plenty of opportunities to minister to them; but the opportunity to specially honor the Lord, and to pour upon him the fragrant odors so beautifully expressive of Mary's love and devotion, would not be for long, and our Lord declares that the circumstances fully justified the costly expenditure. He shows himself out of sympathy with the sentiments which balance themselves too accurately with money values. Moreover, we may esteem that in many instances like the one here recorded the persons who are so careful lest money should be spent except for the poor are often like Judas, so avaricious that whatever money gets into their possession very little of it gets to the poor.

On the contrary, it is the deep, loving, benevolent hearts, like that of Mary, which delight in costly sacrifices at times, which also are likely to be deeply sympathetic and helpful to the physically poor. And in our ministrations to others we are not to forget that money is not the only thing of which people are sorely in need—some need love and sympathy, who do not need money. Our Lord was one of those: his own heart, full of love, found comparatively little companionship in the more or less sordid minds of even the noblest of the fallen race represented amongst his apostles. In Mary he seemed to find the depth of love and devotion which was to him an odor of sweet incense, of refreshment, of reinvigoration, a tonic: and Mary apparently appreciated, more than did others, the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Master's character; she not only delighted to sit at his feet to learn of him, but now delighted, at a great cost, to give him some manifestation of her devotion, her love.

She poured the perfume first upon our Lord's head (Mark 14:3), the usual custom, and then the remainder she poured upon his feet. But the Apostle John, in recording the matter, seems to have forgotten entirely the anointing of our Lord's head, so deeply was he impressed with the still more expressive devotion manifested in the anointing of the feet and the wiping of them with the hairs of her head. It is indeed a picture of love—a devotion well worthy of being told as a memorial. Some one has said:

"She took 'woman's chief ornament' and devoted it to wiping the travel-stained feet of her Teacher; she devoted the best she had to even the least honorable service for him. It was the strongest possible expression of her love and devotion. She gave her choicest treasures in the most self-devoted manner. She was bashful and retiring, and could not speak her feelings, and therefore she expressed them in this manner."

We are not surprised to learn that the whole house was filled with the odor; and we doubt not that the odor remained for a long time: but far more precious than that was the sweet odor of Mary's heart-affections, which the Lord accepted and will never forget, and the sweet odor of her devotion which has come down through the centuries to us, bringing blessing to all true hearts who have honored her service and desired to emulate her conduct.

It is not our privilege to come into personal contact with our dear Redeemer, but we have, nevertheless, many opportunities for doing that which to some extent will correspond to Mary's act—it is our privilege to anoint the Lord's "brethren" with the sweet perfume of love, sympathy, joy and peace, and the more costly this may be as respects our self-denials, the more precious it will be in the estimation of our Elder Brother, who declared that in proportion as we do or do not unto his brethren, we do or do not unto him. (Matt. 25:40, 45) Moreover, he represents these "brethren" in a figure as "members of his body;" and from this standpoint we see that, while it is not our privilege to pour the perfume upon the Head of the body, now highly exalted far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named—next to the Father—it is our privilege to pour the perfume upon the feet of Christ—the last living members of his church of this Gospel age.

We know not to what extent the closing years of this Gospel age may correspond to the closing days of our Lord's ministry—we know not how similar may be the experiences of the "feet" of the body of Christ to the experiences of the Head of the body; we do know, however, that in any event it is our blessed privilege to comfort one another, to encourage one another, to sustain one another, in the trials incident to our "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24) And to whatever extent we would improve these opportunities, as did Mary, we must first appreciate them as she did.

Nothing in this suggestion is intended to imply any neglect of the members of our natural families "according to the flesh;" attentions to these are proper always, and are generally so understood, and should more and more be appreciated and used in proportion as the Lord's people receive freely and fully of his spirit of love—kindness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering. But we emphasize that which the Scriptures emphasize, namely, that our interest and efforts are not to be confined to those of fleshly tie, but, on the contrary, are to be "especially to the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10) There will be other and future opportunities of doing good to mankind in general, but the opportunity for serving "the body of Christ" is limited to the present age.

Apropos of this propriety of doing good to others—expressing our love by our conduct, as well as by our words to the members of our families as well as to the members of the body of Christ, we quote the words of another:

"The sweetest perfume that the home circle ever knows arises from deeds of loving service which its members do for each other. The sweetest perfumes of our homes do not arise from elegant furniture, soft carpets, elegant pictures, or luxurious viands. Many a home, having all these, is pervaded by an atmosphere as tasteless and odorless as bouquets of waxen flowers."

Another has said:

"If my friends have alabaster boxes full of fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away, which they intend to break over my body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours and open them, that I might be refreshed and cheered with them while I need them. . . . I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. . . . Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward on the weary road."

"I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE"

April 16.—John 13:1-17.

Our Lord's ministry was about ended. He had met with his twelve chosen disciples to celebrate the Passover supper, declaring, "I have greatly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15) The passover lamb which they were to eat *typified* our Lord himself, and the eating of it by his disciples represented how believers of the Gospel age were to feed upon Christ in their hearts, and by faith appropriate to themselves the blessings secured to them through his death, "For even Christ our Passover [Lamb] is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast." (1 Cor. 5:7, 8) But, inasmuch as Jesus was the antitypical Lamb, it was appropriate that the type should be discontinued; and hence it was that our Lord, following this typical supper, instituted the Memorial Supper of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine as representing the *antitype*—his broken body and shed blood.

According to the Jewish custom the Passover supper was celebrated by families, and the twelve apostles, specially chosen by our Lord and giving their allegiance to him as their Head, constituted the nucleus of the family of God—whose hearts and hopes and aims were one—for "ye are all called in one hope of your calling" (Eph. 4:4) Judas was not excluded, although our Lord evidently knew beforehand that it was he who would betray him. This furnishes us the lesson that, as followers of Christ, we should not judge one another's hearts, nor surmise evil. After the evil of the heart has manifested itself in words or deeds is quite time enough to separate ourselves from others who profess the Lord's name and desire to fellowship with us. True, the evil begins in the heart, before the outward act, but we should always hope that the brethren may gain the victory and should seek to do nothing to stumble any, but everything to help them to overcome the influence of the adversary, and the weaknesses of their own flesh.

John does not give a particular account of the Passover supper, but seems merely to bring in certain valuable features and lessons connected therewith, omitted by the other Evangelists. His declaration is that our Lord knew beforehand that he had reached the end of his earthly career, and was specially solicitous of improving the closing hours with his particular, chosen friends and companions, by inculcating some good lessons. "He loved them to the end"—completely, fully: his own sharp trials, present and approaching, did not distract him, nor absorb his attention. He was, as heretofore, still thinking of and endeavoring to bless others. Nor need we suppose that this love for the twelve applied to them exclusively; rather, that he viewed the twelve as the representatives of "them also which should believe on him through their word"—as he expressed the matter in his prayer to the Father. With this view in mind we can realize that what our Lord said and did to the apostles was intended to be applicable and instructive to all who are his since then.—John 17:20.

From Luke's account it would appear that on this occasion there was a strife amongst the apostles, a contention, respecting which of them should be esteemed greatest. (Luke 22:24-31) This strife may not have been solely one of selfishness, in the evil sense of the word, but partially prompted by love for the Master—it may have been in respect to their several positions at the table, the coveted position possibly being closeness to our Lord's person. We remember how James and John had made request that they might be on the right and on the left of our Lord in the kingdom, and we remember that in connection with this narrative it is declared that John was next to our Lord, and leaned upon his bosom.

Quite possibly this dispute respecting greatness arose in part from the fact that they were not in this instance treated as guests, but merely had the upper room put at their disposal; having no host, no provision was thereby made for the usual washing of the feet, and it was neglected. The matter of feet-washing in eastern countries, when sandals were worn, was not merely a compliment, but a necessity, the heat of the climate, the openness of the sandals and the dust of the roads making it almost indispensable to comfort that the feet be bathed on arriving at the house after a journey. Apparently this question of who of the twelve was greatest, and of which should perform the menial service of feet-washing for the others, had developed the fact that none of them were anxious to take the servant's position.

Apparently our Lord permitted them to thus disagree, without settling their dispute, without appointing any of their number to the menial service. He allowed them to think the matter over—time to relent and reconsider, and they even proceeded to eat the supper, contrary to custom, with unwashed feet.

Then it was that Jesus arose from the supper, laid aside his outer garment, and attaching a towel to the girdle of his under-garments, took a basin and a ewer for the water, and began to pour the water and wash the feet of his disciples. It was not the custom of the East to pour the water into the basin and put the foot into the water, but to pour the water upon the foot being washed; thus each had clean water, and little was wasted—for water is much more scarce and precious there than with us. We are to remember also that in the East at that time tables and chairs such as we use were not in vogue. On the contrary, the tables were low and shaped somewhat like a horseshoe, and those who sat really reclined, lying upon the table, with the left elbow resting upon a pillow or divan, their heads toward the inside of the horseshoe, where there was a space provided for the food, and also a space for a servant to enter and place the food. Thus it will be seen that the feet extended backward, and could quite easily be reached without disturbing those who were eating.

Our Lord very evidently had already washed the feet of several of the disciples before he came in turn to Peter. Seemingly none of them offered objection, although no doubt the thought of their own contentions upon this subject, and unwillingness to serve one another, brought them blushes of shame and confusion of face. But when it came to Peter's turn, he protested. It would never do, he thought, to permit our Lord to perform so menial a service. He asks, "Lord, dost *thou* wash *my* feet?" But our Lord did not stop to reprimand Peter—to give him a thorough "setting down" and scolding, as some of his followers might be inclined to do under such circumstances. He merely insisted on continuing, and treating Peter the same as the others, saying that he would explain the matter later, and that if he washed him not, he could have no part with him.

One cannot help admiring the noble traits in Peter's conduct, even though with the same breath we be forced to acknowledge some of his weaknesses, and herein all the Lord's followers find a lesson of encouragement, for though they find weaknesses and imperfections, if they find also the heart-loyalty to the Lord which was in Peter, they may continue to have courage and hope to press on as he did, from victory to victory, and at last to have the prize, the reward of faithfulness.

When Peter learned that there was more meaning to the washing of the feet than merely its kindness and comfort, and its reproof of the lack of the spirit of humility amongst the disciples, he wanted, not only his feet, but also his hands and his head washed. Noble, thorough-going, whole-hearted, fervent Peter! But our Lord explained that this was not necessary, saying, "He who has been bathed has no need except to wash his feet, but is wholly clean." (Verse 10—*Diaglott*) Public baths were in use at that time, but even after having taken a general bath, on return to the home it was customary to complete the matter by washing the feet; and this seems to be the inference of our Lord's remark. The apostles had been with our Lord, and under the influence of his spirit of love, meekness, gentleness, patience, humility, for three years, and had been greatly blessed by "the washing of water through the word" spoken unto them.—John 15:3; Eph. 5:26.

There is an intimation in the Lord's words, too, that this spirit of pride which had manifested itself among them had been inspired to some extent by their treasurer, Judas—as evil communications always are corrupting. (1 Cor. 13:33) This final lesson from their great Teacher was a very impressive one upon the eleven, whose hearts probably were in the right condition to receive the reproof and the lesson, but upon Judas, although his feet also were washed, the effect evidently was not favorable. The spirit of evil which had entered into him before the supper—the desire to obtain money, and the proposition to obtain it by betraying the Lord, evidently continued with him, and instead of being moved aright by our Lord's humility and service, he was the more moved in the opposite direction—to think little of him. So it is with all who have professed the Lord's name in every time. Those instructions, examples and experiences, which are working out blessing and proving beneficial to some, are proving injurious to others. The Gospel, in its every phase, is either "a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death." As it was God's goodness and mercy that hardened Pharaoh's heart, so it was the love and humility of Jesus that hardened Judas' heart, and these principles are still at work, and may be witnessed in the harvest siftings today.—2 Cor. 2:16; Exod. 7:13.

After accomplishing the work of washing the feet of all, our Lord resumed his outer garment and reclined again at the supper (this was the Passover Supper—the Memorial Supper of bread and wine being instituted afterward). Our Lord now improved his opportunity and explained to them the meaning of what he had done. He pointed out to them that this menial service did not signify that he was not the Lord and Master, but did signify that as Lord and Master he was not unwilling to serve the lesser members of Jehovah's family, and to minister to their comfort, even in the most menial service; and that they should not have been unwilling, but glad, to have rendered such service one to another.

The example which our Lord set was not so much in the kind of service (feet-washing) as in the fact of service. Nothing in this example, as we understand it, was in the nature of a ceremony to be performed by the Lord's people, annually, weekly, monthly, or at any other time; but the principle of his service constituted the *example*, and is to be observed amongst his followers at all times—they are to love one another and to serve one another, and to consider no service too menial to be performed for each other's comfort and good.

Those who have interpreted this to signify a ceremony similar to the symbolical ceremony of the Memorial Supper and the symbolical ceremony of Baptism are, we think, in error. There seems to be nothing symbolical in it. It is merely an illustration of the principle of humility which is to attach to every affair of life. If any of the Lord's people need washing, or need any other assistance of a menial character, their brethren should gladly and joyfully serve them; and whoever possesses the spirit of the Lord will surely render such service; but to insist, as some do, that each of the Lord's people should first wash his own feet and have them clean, and then that each should wash one another's feet ceremoniously, is contrary to his *example* which he instructs us to follow. The example was a *service*, and not an inconvenience and ceremony.

Once a year, on the day before "Good Friday," the pope washes the feet of twelve aged paupers, who are brought from the streets and duly prepared by a preliminary washing in private. The pope's ceremonious washing is done in the presence of many notables. A similar ceremony is performed annually by Emperor Joseph of Austro-Hungary. Neither of these ceremonies, however, is, to our understanding, according to our Lord's example, but contrary to it—likewise the ceremonious washing performed by some denominations of Christians.

All who are truly the Lord's followers should heed carefully and follow exactly the true example of the Master's spirit of meekness, humility and service to the members of his body. The whole thought is contained in his words, "The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things [if you appreciate these principles applicable to all the affairs of life], happy are ye if ye do them [if you live according to this rule, loving and serving one another]."—Verses 16, 17.

Feelings of emulation, strife and vain-glory seem to specially beset many of the Lord's people who are possessed of any degree of talent or ability or honorable situation in life, and especially those who are in influential places in the church; and while these, therefore, need to be specially on guard against this besetment of the flesh, it should not be forgotten that, as some one has said, "There is a pride that looks *up* with envy, as well as a pride that looks *down* with scorn." The Lord's followers are to remember that pride in any person, in any station, respecting any matter, is highly reprehensible in God's sight and displeasing to him. "The Lord resisteth the proud, but showeth his favor to the humble." Hence all who would abide in the Lord's love have need to be very careful along this line—to keep very humble, very lowly in conduct, and particularly in mind.—Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5.

"LO, I AM WITH THEE!"

The "Lord of the harvest" be near thee,
To comfort, and strengthen, and aid:
His "presence" be with thee to cheer thee,
In sickness, and sorrow, and shade!

May he lead thee to heights of ambition:
To *service* for great and for small;
The "fire" of the Christ-life within thee,
Consuming the sacrifice all.

—J. W. WATTS.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

As pointed out in these columns as long ago as 1880, "Christendom," since 1878, is passing through the sifting and testing of the close or "harvest" time of the Gospel age, foretold by the apostles: a sifting which is to result in the fall of many in nominal Spiritual Israel. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee [the true saints, the *body* of Christ], only with thine eyes [enlightened by the spirit of the truth] shalt thou behold the reward of the unfaithful,"—Psa. 91:7, 8.

The prophet describes the testings of this evil day, or day of falling. Its "*pestilence*" of infidelity he describes as operating secretly, hidden, as in the night darkness—spreading spiritual sickness and death among the millions who outwardly confess, saying, Lord, Lord, while their hearts are far from him. Its "arrows" of "bitter words" (Psa. 64:3), slanders and misrepresentations of the faithful, he shows will be open as at "noonday;" yet these "arrows" will not harm the faithful, for they "shall never fall" (2 Pet. 1:10-11), but, glancing off them, all others than the pure in heart will be caused to fall. The real enemy, as the prophet shows, is the great adversary, Satan, the "fowler," the ensnarer—his human agents being found amongst the deceived ones: and he prefers the most talented and influential he can obtain.

He is finding thousands of these amongst the professed ministers of Christ who, seeking honor one of another and not solely divine approval, are anxious to pose as "advanced thinkers," "higher critics," etc. These read, more correctly than do the masses, the trend of sentiment, the revolution of religious thought from faith in the *ransom* for sinners paid by the precious blood of Christ, to a theory of Evolution and self-development. They perceive that a large proportion of the "best educated" laymen as well as themselves already are Evolutionists and anti-ransomists: they are anxious to be considered *leaders* in thought among their flocks, but not anxious to alarm and drive off any of the "sheep," and especially are they thoughtful of those who have the long golden fleece.

Cases like that of Prof. Charles A. Briggs of the Presbyterian church, who stated himself so plainly as to arouse the laity to demand his trial for "heresy," are exceptional and purely accidental—the results of miscalculation. Professor Briggs, finding the Evolution and higher criticism ideas so popular amongst the theological students, miscalculated the general ripeness and readiness of Presbyterianism on this line. He supposed that he would be famous in a night—he *knew* correctly the sentiments of his own presbytery and the "upper classes" of Presbyterians with whom he came in contact: he did not realize that the Presbyterians of the "back-woods" were so unprepared to welcome him as a new Moses. Others more cautious, not only in Presbyterianism but in all denominations, waited to note the effect. The public did not applaud Professor Briggs, and hence he was deserted, and in the interest of peace became a heretical "scape-goat," and was allowed to wander off unhonored into the fold of the Episcopal church and into silence.

But the heresy which Professor Briggs expressed *too soon* is growing, spreading everywhere, in all denominations: it is being "wisely," secretly, presented by ministers and Sunday-School teachers everywhere, and if we understand the Scriptures aright, it will not be long until all but the heart-consecrated children of God will be poisoned by it.

But when we say that nearly all will *fall*—"a thousand shall fall at thy side"—we do not mean that they will all fall into open immorality, nor that they will abandon church organizations, nor that the fallen ones will even know that they have fallen. On the contrary, the fallen ones as usual will think that they are rising higher and higher—getting rid of error, etc. They will be thoroughly blind to the fact that with the errors and superstitions they are getting rid also of the truths and the faith which alone constituted them Christians in God's sight. This is the sense in which Babylon is falling, since 1878, and hence God's call, "Come out of her, *my people*, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. 18:4.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM AMONG METHODISTS

The public was surprised indeed to read among the press dispatches of March 7th, published in the leading journals, under startling head lines—

"The Rev. S. P. Cadman Applauded, When He Reads a Paper Holding that the Good Book Cannot be the Rule of Faith. He Calls Attention to its Discrepancies and Says the Church Will Have to Make a New Ruling on Inspiration"

It seems that the Methodist ministers of New York and vicinity have of late been discussing at their Monday gatherings some of the Bible's "errors," as viewed by agnostics and "higher critics,"

—That Joshua commanded the sun to stand still.
—That the Red Sea divided before the Israelites.
—That Jonah was in the belly of a fish three days.
—That Aaron's rod turned into a serpent.
—That Moses tapped a rock and waters gushed out.
—That the earth swallowed up Achan and his companions.
—That Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were in the furnace unharmed.
—That God spake to Moses out of a burning bush.
—That Daniel stayed unhurt in a den of lions.

On Monday, March 6th, Rev. Cadman read a paper affirming, *"That the inerrancy and the infallibility of the Bible are no longer possible of belief among reasoning men."*

About four hundred ministers were present, and on the rising of the speaker and the announcement of the topic the clerical audience expressed its sympathy with their brother in that he was willing to champion their views in so bold a statement of it, by hearty applause. The gentleman had not finished when the appointed time expired and "his auditors were so deeply interested in him that they readily voted that he finish. When he sat down the preachers loudly applauded the discourse," says the press report.

We quote from the published reports of the discourse which we have not seen denied in Methodist journals, although a month has since elapsed:

"This bold, portentous utterance—involving the most radical departure from accepted tenets of the Methodist church since its very foundation—was made before the most representative body of Methodist clergy in America. It included the vast majority of the preachers of Greater New York. It is the first announcement of an impending controversy, which may shake the Methodist church to its very foundation stones.

"The acceptance of Dr. Cadman's proposition, heard with respect and applause by the New York ministers, is comparable to the adoption of a new constitution for the United States. It places the Bible on the basis of historical works on other than divine subjects: it rejects the authenticity of all parts of Holy Scripture which are repugnant to human reason.

"Undermining the Basis of their Faith

"As Mr. Cadman himself said yesterday, the Bible was accepted as the true source of authority and inspiration by Martin Luther when he established the Protestant church. Luther made the Scripture the base of all faith. It is now proposed to abandon the teachings of the early fathers of the Protestant church.

"The speaker referred to the Old Testament, half of whose pages, he said, were of unknown authorship. The New Testament likewise contained contradictions. The Bible, the church, the ministry, he said, were agencies. The true source of inspiration was neither a book, nor a church, nor a ministry, but the living Christ himself.

"The weekly meetings of the Methodist ministers take place in the Methodist Book Concern building, on Fifth avenue. They are held in secret. The congregations have not known anything concerning the discussion of this vital change in doctrine. This publication will be the first intimation they will have had that the faith in which they have been reared is threatened with an organic change that will make it no longer the faith of Wesley.

"It also goes without saying that the enunciation of this proposition will not tend to heal the differences between the Methodist Church North and the Methodist Church South, which were rent apart by the civil war, for the Southern church has rejected time and time again kindred innovations.

"But Mr. Cadman insists that whatever the church may decide on the question in the future, it will not destroy the belief in the chief and final source of Christian inspiration, a belief in Christ, the Son of God.

"In taking up his subject the preacher stated the proposition which he would prove:

"'That the inerrancy and the infallibility of the Bible are no longer possible of belief among reasoning men.'

"The Two Criticisms

"The speaker referred to the great change which had taken place in the methods of Bible criticism within the last fifty years. There should no longer be any confusion between literary criticism and the criticism of inspiration. It had been said in former times by authorities of weight that the two criticisms conflicted. This was not true. They were not on the same plane. Inspiration appealed to the spiritual ear. Literary criticism was addressed to an ascertainment of facts from a human standpoint. Mr. Cadman illustrated his meaning by saying that it was one thing to examine, classify and discuss the mechanism of a great organ, and another to pass judgment upon the music which proceeded from it. No literary criticism could affect the divine music breathed into the soul of man by the life of Jesus Christ.

"The Bible, he said, was compiled much as is any other book. It was written from the records and witnesses of the time. It had been impossible to determine the authorship of much of the Old Testament. Half of its pages, said Mr. Cadman, were of unknown authorship. The same was in a measure true of the New Testament. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John differed in quoting words said to have been pronounced by Christ upon a given occasion. Parallel passages were not alike.

"Mr. Cadman referred to that much-discussed question of Christ's reference to the miracle of Jonah and the whale. Those who have taken the Old Testament in its entirety, believing all and every part of it, have based their theology in part upon Christ's reference to Jonah, when, in Matthew 12:39, 40, he said:

"'But he answered and said unto them: An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the Prophet Jonas.

"'For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and nights in the heart of the earth.'*

"There had been, the preacher said, a great conflict upon this speech of Christ. It had been particularly a bone of contention, because as a matter of fact Christ did not remain in the earth three days and three nights, but two nights and a day. Mr. Cadman said that he had settled the matter in his own mind by saying that he was willing to suffer from the disease of suspended judgment so long as he knew that Christ did arise. It would always be impossible to reconcile the facts of Christ's burial with the facts of his alleged statement, and it would be forever useless to discuss whether he had ever said what St. Matthew attributed to him, or whether he had lain as St. Matthew quoted Christ as saying he would lie. But this should never deter Christian men from believing in the Christ and in his life.

"When Luther separated his followers from Papacy he had turned from priests and priestly interpretations of the Bible to the Book itself. He had placed the Bible before mankind as the source and authority for inspiration. Mr. Cadman said he regretted that these early fathers of Protestantism had not gone further and urged as the highest source of inspiration Christ himself.

"The speaker said that the trend of thought among the best minds in the Methodist church during the last fifty years had been toward a better knowledge and a newer view of Christ himself rather than of the Bible. He said that there had been a vast increase in the number of the 'Lives of Christ' in the last decade: that the energy and force of Christ as the incarnation of God was becoming better understood every day. *He regarded as inevitable a restatement and a rejudgment of the church upon the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible.*

"The Bible itself gave authority for a belief that God was in the ocean, in the firmament, in the rocks. Science's contribution to the knowledge of mankind went hand in hand with a belief in God. By this statement he did not mean to agree with those philosophers who had used the word God as a peg on which to hang their vagaries; but nevertheless he believed in the demonstration of God in the seas, in the mountains, in the various forms of life on this planet.

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* See explanation in our issues of April 1, '97, and March 1, '98.

"There were means of salvation outside of and beyond and before the Bible was written. That must be conceded by every one. The Bible was an agency, the church was an agency, the ministry was an agency.

"The church had dabbled too much in the distant streams of theology. It had examined the streams, but not the source, which was alone pure. The streams had been polluted by conflict and dissension.

"The ministry had taken up too much time in unraveling knots of theology to the neglect of God himself.

"The leading authorities of the church had discussed the questions involved in the parables of Christ. It had been urged that even if the events named in the illustrations the Lord used were not of actual fact, that did not destroy their value as moral lessons. So, also it had been urged that if the story of Jonah and the whale had been an allegory like Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress,' it nevertheless had force and effect, for the Prophet Jonah without doubt stood on a very high spiritual ground.

"But whatever position the church took—whether it held that the Bible must be accepted, as it stands, as the revealed truth, as the Word of God, as compelling faith because it was the Word of God, or as a historical document, valuable, ineffably valuable, because of its real substance—the decision would never affect the faith of Christian men in the Holy Trinity—in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost."

With more zeal than discretion the Rev. J. B. Gallaway of the Third Presbyterian Church of Paterson, N. J., put in an appearance among the Methodist ministers the following Monday, apparently to criticize Rev. Cadman's position, but he was soon identified and his voice drowned by applause for Rev. Cadman, and amid cries of "Put him out!" the gentleman was gently hustled out "in a decidedly ruffled condition."

When the press reports were published the New York M. E. "divines" were astonished that their views should be considered extreme—Rev. Cadman no less than the others. They had been so united in their views that they were surprised that the reporter should think them strange. It was another case of honesty among preachers to an extent the public cannot yet appreciate. But the public of "Christendom" is following these leaders rapidly: if only the leaders have yet *lost* faith in the Bible and its doctrine of the ransom, the others are rapidly *losing* this—the saving "faith once delivered to the saints."—Jude 3.

Interviewed by a reporter, Bishop E. G. Andrews, who was present during the address, said, "I do not care to discuss the question." Bishop Stephen M. Merrill, who was not present, said, "I don't want to think of it. It will not amount to much, anyway. I have nothing to say either of Cadman or his nonsense." Rev. Cadman himself said of the matter:

"I was surprised when I saw the article in the Journal. I regard my paper as a *conservative statement of the trend of modern Methodist theology*. The questions I have discussed must be settled sooner or later. I have no objection, under the circumstances, to the publication of my views."

We are to understand, then, that, bold as these words may appear to some, they were not half the truth, but a *"conservative"* statement. And they represent the *"trend* [or tendency] of modern Methodism." This is just what we are emphasizing—the movement is going on and on, in the same direction with increasing momentum, not only among Methodists, but among all classes of Christians who do not now receive the sealing in their foreheads.—Rev. 7:3.

* * *

When we remember how nearly our own feet came to slipping in this same manner thirty-one years ago, it gives us great sympathy for others. At that time, confused by the contrary doctrines of Christendom and the irreconcilable antagonism of many of its chief teachings (*in re* hell, etc.) to the simplest kind of justice and reason and love, the writer concluded, much against his will, that he must abandon the Bible as an *inspired standard:* he would regard its writers not as knaves, but as well-intentioned though deceived men. He would give most credence to the New Testament writers, yet could not regard them as inspired or reliable, because they believed the Old Testament prophets to have been inspired and quoted their words as inspired. He reasoned, as others are doing today, that if the New Testament writers had been inspired, they could not have been deceived *in re* the Old Testament writings; and that the inspiration of the apostles could not have been plenary or direct, but merely an inspiration in a secondary sense, as we sometimes use the word, when we say that music is inspiring, or that the truth is inspiring to all who receive it into honest hearts.

Exactly like Rev. Cadman, his mind centered upon Christ as the great revelation of God to men, and he would hold to Christ, even though he felt that he must drop the Bible as a standard.

But *what* should he believe respecting Christ? was the next question. How could he determine which of the apostolic statements were true, and which were their "mistakes?" He soon saw that, if he considered himself able, *qualified* to select the wheat and reject the chaff of apostolic testimony, he would be obliged to consider himself *greater* than the apostles—more inspired than they. Of humble mind, he could not do this which many today have no hesitancy in doing. He looked again at the plain, unvarnished tale of the New Testament and noted that the apostles displayed no evidences of fanaticism, and that all their reasonings and deductions were eminently moderate and logical. He noted also their purity of life and of teachings, their unselfishness and self-sacrificing zeal, and concluded that these matters must be given weight; and that such cool, noble, zealous men should not be accused either of knavery or fanaticism, when they claimed special endowment with power and wisdom for their particular work.

Coming to the consideration of our Lord Jesus, he concluded that he was dependent upon these witnesses for all that he knew respecting him who "spake as never man spake," and that he could not consistently accept a part of their testimony as truthful and reject another part. Further reflection pointed out that our Lord himself, according to these honorable witnesses, quoted from the Old Testament in a manner which clearly testified his faith in the divine, plenary inspiration of the prophets and in the general correctness or truthfulness of its merely historical portions—Jonah and the great fish; Noah and the flood; the destruction of Sodom and of "Lot's wife," etc.

The question then was between rejecting *all* or accepting *all*. Carefully and prayerfully he considered the matter and reached the conclusion that he had never yet examined the Scriptures purely on the merits of their own testimony. He had followed the usual custom of judging the Bible in the light of what the various creeds of Christendom *say* it teaches: and yet he was aware that these various creeds in many particulars directly antagonize each other. He resolved to thoroughly investigate the Bible, to see what *its* theory might be, interpreted by itself to a mind stripped of all reverence for human tradition, and willing, yea desirous to find in the Scriptures a divine revelation. He felt his need of a standard or test of truth; he felt that he dare not trust or lean to his own understanding—nor yet to the understanding of others, on questions so wholly beyond human knowledge and experience. He felt, moreover, that it is but reasonable that we should expect that God, having wise, just and loving plans and purposes respecting mankind, should make some *revelation* thereof, that would be reasonable and understandable to those in harmony with him and desirous of knowing and doing his will, however hidden and obscured from others.

The results of these investigations are well known to WATCH TOWER readers, and are set forth in the volumes of the MILLENNIAL DAWN series. We found that for centuries various sects and parties had split up the Bible doctrines amongst them, blending them with more or less of human speculation and error; and that the misplacement of the truth frequently made of it gross error. We found the important doctrine of justification by faith and not by works had been clearly enunciated by Luther and more recently by many Christians; that divine justice and power and wisdom were carefully guarded, though not clearly discerned by Presbyterians; that Methodists appreciated and extolled the love and sympathy of God; that Adventists held the precious doctrine of the Lord's return; that Baptists amongst other points held the doctrine of baptism symbolically correctly, even though they had lost sight of the real baptism; that some Universalists had long held vaguely some thoughts respecting "restitution." And so, nearly all denominations gave evidence that their founders had been feeling after truth; but quite evidently the great adversary had fought against them and had wrongly divided the Word of God which he could not wholly destroy.

Our work since has been to bring together these long scattered fragments of truth and present them to the Lord's people—not as *new*, not as *our own*, but as the Lord's. So far from desiring to *make* something new, we are most careful to avoid both in letter and spirit either taking from or adding to the Word of the Lord; for we are fully convinced that "the Word of God is sufficient," "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. 3:17.

What blessings, what riches of grace, have come to us and to others of the household of faith through this bringing together of the jewels of divine truth so long scattered amongst various denominations and misset in tarnished human theories! What harmony, what beauty, what refreshment we now have in that which before was insipid, incongruous and distracting! How firm a foundation we now have for faith, hope and love! What a contrast to our former vague hopes, dim faith or credulity, and cold love—three-fourths fear!

But as we claim that what we present is not *our own*, not *new*, but "The Old Theology"—so old that it had been lost sight of for centuries—we must disclaim any credit even for the finding and reärrangement of the jewels of truth. "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." The writer wholly disclaims superior ability or qualification for the reorganization of the truth in its present solidarity. As the time had come for the bringing together of the scattered thoughts of past centuries in the marvelous inventions of our day—so the time had come for the bringing together of the fragmentary hopes and promises of God's Word scattered through Christendom. To deny that the Lord has simply "poured out" this harvest time blessing of "present truth" in his own due time and in his own way, would be as wrong as to claim it as of our own invention. "Poured out" exactly expresses the truth on this point, too, for he neither "burned the midnight oil," nor racked his brain, nor otherwise forged the chain of truth with heavy sledge blows of human reason on the anvil of knowledge. On the contrary, it came gradually, silently, as comes the morning dawn: the only effort necessary was to keep *awake* and face in the right direction. And the greatest aid in so doing was the effort put forth to awaken others of the "household of faith" and point them to the light and in turn to urge upon them the necessity for serving also, if they would overcome the lethargic "spirit of the world," and be ready to go in to the marriage of the Lamb.

To deny that the "marvelous light" of present truth is of the Lord's providence as truly as was the light of the Jewish "harvest," and the lesser light of the period of "The Great Reformation" would be to deny that we are in the "harvest" of this age, in which the Lord specially promised his people just such refreshment—"meat in due season," "things new and old"—set forth afresh under his own supervision.

In view of the fact that we are in the testing time, when (in the church) every man's faith and works are to be tested "so as by fire" (1 Cor. 3:15); in view of the fact that we are now in "the evil day" when the question is not so much, Who shall fall? but, "Who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6:17) what shall we conclude respecting the *conditions* on which one may "never fall," but have an abundant entrance to the kingdom now near at hand?—2 Pet. 1:11.

Several conditions are laid down in the Scriptures.

(1) All of the "brethren" will be awakened in season to put on "the *whole* armor of God" as in contrast with the small pieces of the armor worn by various denominations in the past —"in the night." Whoever shall be left asleep and in darkness and thus not prepared to "stand" in this evil day, will thereby make it evident, whatever his professions, that God who readeth the heart did not find him worthy of the light of present truth. "Light is sown for the righteous, gladness for the upright in heart."—Psa. 97:11.

(2) All once awakened must be sufficiently appreciative of the "marvelous light" to rejoice greatly therein. They must also take heed, lest they become overcharged and spiritually drowsy by "the cares of this life," etc.; and must use energy in putting on the whole armor of God—not only the "helmet" to protect the intellect from the "fiery darts" of Evolution and agnosticism, but also the "breast-plate" of righteousness to protect the heart, and the "shield" of faith for use on all occasions as necessity demands; and besides these they must have the "sword" of the truth, the Word of the Lord—grasping it by the handle and not by the blade, that they may defend themselves and others in this conflict with the powers of darkness, with which this age ends. Lastly they must prepare for the rough pathway by putting on the "sandals" of full consecration to the Lord, even unto death.—Eph. 6:11-17.

(3) All such soldiers of the cross will be fiercely assaulted by the adversary, and, to be able to stand, must "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."

(4) One of the final and most searching tests of these "brethren," and the one under which probably the most of those once awakened and armed will fall, will be—love for the brethren. Seemingly many will fail at this point and be therefore accounted unworthy of an abundant entrance to the kingdom on this score. Whoever has the spirit of love according to the pattern (Rom. 8:29), is expected to agree with the Apostle John's statement—"Because he laid down his life for us, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:14, 16; 1 Pet. 1:22; 3:8.

This, like all other tests, will be most pointed and conspicuous during this time of special privilege and special trial in the end of the age. (Rev. 3:10) Let us consider how it will come that we may be the better prepared to meet it successfully. (*a*) It will recognize brotherhood neither along the narrow channels of sectarianism, nor on the unlimited plane of worldly disregard for the divine Word which declares for "the brotherhood of man." It will recognize children of the Evil One and children of God: and all of the latter will be esteemed and loved and served as "brethren"—all trusting in the precious blood of Christ for forgiveness, and fully consecrated to the Lord's service.

(*b*) If such are seen anywhere, in "Babylon" or out of her, asleep, fettered and blinded by false doctrines and superstitions, by a soldier of the cross, who has gotten awake and put on the armor, it is his duty, as it should be his pleasure, to speed to his relief in the wisest and best and quickest manner. Self-ease, self-repute nor any other self-ish spirit must hinder him; the spirit of love must energize him to do all in his power—even to the laying down of his life—for the brethren. All who have this spirit must yearn to help those in danger of losing their hold upon the Lord after the manner of those now blindly leading them into unbelief.

(*c*) The same spirit of the "Captain" (Heb. 2:10) will lead him not only to so love the brethren that are still asleep, but if possible to be still more ready to lay down life for brethren who, like himself, have gotten awake and are putting on the armor. He will sympathize with their trials by the way and assist them to put on the sandals and to adjust every piece of the armor. Should any be specially weak and liable to stumble he will not despise him, nor revile him, even as the elder brother, the Captain, would not do so. On the contrary, he will be the more watchful and helpful toward the weaker, even though he most enjoy himself in the company of the stronger. This is not the time for the strong to gather by themselves for mutual admiration and enjoyment—that will come later on to all such who so love the brethren as to lay down their lives on their behalf. These will hear the Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter into the joys of thy Lord."

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Only in the light of present truth is the Bible explainable to reason. In its light we see that certain books are inspired directly, others, historical, needed not inspiration, but merely supervision of the Lord, that the truths appropriate for each age might be so stated as to be understood by the consecrated class, the "brethren," under the guidance of the spirit in due time.

Only from the *inside* can the great plan of God be seen and appreciated, and only the "brethren" are admitted to this inside view. "If any man will do his [the Father's] will, he shall know of the doctrine."—John 7:17.

"I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE"

April 23.—John 14:1-14.

After washing the disciples' feet, and after the sop had been given to Judas, and he had gone out; and after telling the disciples that they all would be offended that night because of him, and answering Peter that he would deny him thrice before the cock crew, we may well suppose that the hearts of the eleven were heavy, disturbed, troubled with fearful forebodings. Had they indeed been deluded, or had they misunderstood the Master when he told them that he was the Messiah, the heir of the kingdom, and that they should sit with him in his throne? How would they interpret his language, seeing that only five days before he had received the hosannas of the multitude as the Son of David, the King of Israel, when riding on the ass? What could it mean that the Master was now "exceeding sorrowful" and spoke of betrayal, and of their dispersion and of his own death?

It was in answer to these their troubled thoughts that our Lord spoke to them the beautiful words of comfort and consolation recorded in the 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th chapters of John's Gospel, beginning—"Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

The apostles were already consecrated to God as his servants, before they came in contact with Jesus; they already believed in God, trusted in him, were Israelites indeed without guile. This is testified to further by our Lord's prayer, in which he says, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." The trouble in their hearts was not in respect to the foundations of their hopes, for these were all established. They not only knew and trusted God, but knew and trusted also the promises of God respecting the kingdom and the blessing that should come to all the families of the earth through it. The whole question before their minds was respecting Jesus:—Was he indeed the Messiah, or had they built some false expectations upon his wonderful words and deeds? How should they understand it if now, after three and a half years of ministry he should die at the hands of his enemies, instead of establishing his kingdom and subduing all things to himself, as they had expected? He had said that he was going away, and that whither he went they could not come. How could they understand these matters, and harmonize them?

They had not yet learned the meaning of the words which early in his ministry our Lord had addressed to Nicodemus—"Except a man be born again, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God;" "Except a man be born of water and of spirit, he cannot *enter into* the kingdom of God." (John 3:3, 5) But these were spiritual truths, and could not be appreciated until Pentecost would bring them the anointing of the holy Spirit, and permit them to "comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths" of the divine plan. But they did need some comfort, and the Master proceeded to give them the best and the strongest spiritual food, instruction, that they were able to receive. He had many things to tell them, but they could not bear them then, could not understand them, until the anointing of the holy Spirit would prepare their hearts.

Our Lord began by reviving in them their faith in the Father and in his plan, saying, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," recognize the fact that all of the Father's plan will be accomplished, and inasmuch as you have seen my loyalty to the Father in word and in deed, and inasmuch as you have seen the Father's power unto good works manifested in me, let faith's anchor hold; continue to trust me, continue to have confidence, and you shall have a blessing; wait for the development of the divine plan, and it will more than satisfy your highest expectations. You are perplexed because I said that I am going away—going to the Father, but let me explain to you that my going is in your interest: I go to prepare a place for you in my Father's house of many apartments; and as surely as I do this I will come again and receive you unto myself, that we may henceforth be together forever.

Thus, in a few words, the Master declared the work of the Gospel age, pointing to his second advent and the glorification of the church at the end of the age. He did not here stop to give them detailed explanations of the trials of faith and of patience through which they must pass; this he had done on other occasions, warning and cautioning them (Matt. 24); now their hearts were troubled, and he would merely console them with the assurance that his going away was necessary, that his second coming would be certain, and that the gathering of all to everlasting fellowship with him in the mansions prepared was assured.

The Father's house is really the universe, and figuratively speaking heaven is his throne, the earth his footstool. Divine providence has made abundant arrangement for the everlasting blessedness of all the sons of God. In the divine arrangement a provision had been made for man when in harmony with God, before the fall, but by reason of sin all of man's rights to a place in the everlasting abode of the just had been forfeited, and at the time of our dear Redeemer's discourse he was in the world for the very purpose of redeeming man and all his forfeited rights and possessions. (Luke 19:10; Eph. 1:14) The purchase had not yet been completed—our Lord intended to finish the arrangements therefor within a few hours at Calvary. But this would cost the sacrifice of himself—the full surrender of the man Christ Jesus as a man, and he could be with them no longer as a man. The hope was that by his obedience to the divine will he should not only redeem Adam and his race by the sacrifice of himself, the man Christ Jesus, but that he would be raised from death to a new nature on a higher plane—the divine nature. Thus it was necessary that he should go away from them as the man Christ Jesus, and that they should see him no more as the man, but that in due time, at his second coming, they also should be "changed" from human conditions to spirit conditions, and "be like him and see him as he *is*."—1 John 3:2.

It was necessary also that, after laying down his life, he should ascend to the Father and present his sacrifice as on man's behalf, as man's ransom, and this he did. The Pentecostal blessing was the divine attestation that the sacrifice for sins was accepted of the Father on man's behalf, and that hence the resulting blessing came forth upon all who accepted Jesus as their Redeemer.

The interim between our Lord's death and his second advent is not long from any standpoint of faith. (1) It is not long from God's standpoint, for, as the Apostle Peter declares, "A thousand years are as one day" with the Lord. (2 Pet. 3:8) (2) It is not long from the standpoint of true believers, for to none of them is the average of life and waiting above fifty years. We are not to take the longest and most incongruous view of this period—not to feel as though we had been living for eighteeen hundred years in waiting expectancy: "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," and sufficient to each individual is his own share in the trials, polishing and preparations for the coming of the Bridegroom to receive him unto himself. While it is an affair of the church as a whole in one sense of the word, it is an individual affair in the most important sense of the word to each of the Lord's followers.

"And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." For three years our Lord had been making himself known to his disciples, and also making them acquainted with the Father's character; and hence, when he now informed them that he was going home to the Father, they were to feel that they knew the Father better than ever, and could better than ever appreciate such a home of righteousness and true happiness as he would provide and maintain. Moreover, their experience with the Lord, and under his instructions and leading, had made them acquainted with the way to God, even though they did not recognize it as such. Hence our Lord's declaration, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life: No man cometh to the Father but by me."

Our Lord was the "Way" in that only through his sacrifice, the "ransom," imputing his merit to sinners, could they be made acceptable to the Father or be received back again into fellowship with him. He was the "Truth" in the sense that only through his words, his instructions, his guidance, could there be any hope of coming into harmony with the spirit of God, the spirit of truth. He was the "Life" in that all the race was dead, under divine sentence—had forfeited the rights of life—and none could come again into life conditions except through him—through the life which he gave for ours. Thus he is our Ransom, or Way; our Teacher or Instructor in righteousness, in the truth, and our Life-giver; "Neither is their salvation in any other." "No man cometh unto the Father but by me"—no man need hope for any place in any of the mansions of the Father's house by any other way, by any other truth, by any other life.—Acts 4:12; John 14:6.

And so also Christ will be the Way, the Truth and the Life to the world of mankind in the Millennial age. And as the Lord, by his sacrifice and offering, opened for the Gospel church, his bride, an abode in the heavenly division of God's mansion, or house, so by the same sacrifice he redeemed and will restore and give to mankind (to as many as obey him—Acts 3:23) a home in the earthly divisions of the Father's house, which will then again become a Paradise of God.

Much as the apostles esteemed the Master, it was difficult for them to grasp the thought of his perfection—that he was the very image of God in flesh. (1 Tim. 3:16) They had heard him tell, and indeed knew also from the Law that "God is a spirit"—not flesh, and hence not visible. They had heard him declare previously, also, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, . . . he hath revealed him." (John 1:18) But they had never grasped the thought that in seeing Jesus they saw the most that was possible to be seen of the divine character—its likeness, its *perfect image* in flesh. It was therefore necessary that the Master should call their attention to this fact, saying, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He did not mean them to understand that he was the Father, for this he had distinctly disclaimed repeatedly, telling them that the Father was greater, and that the works which he did were done by the Father's power. (John 14:28, 10) Nor did he mean them to understand that in seeing him they had seen an invisible being, as God is invisible. He did mean them to understand that in seeing his character, his motives, his love, they had seen a true expression that most faithfully represented the Father in all these particulars.

He would have them understand the unity subsisting between the Father and himself, his will was buried into the Father's will, he would have no other—"Not my will, but thine, be done." He would have them understand that the Father, by his power, by his spirit, dwelt in him also, so that his words and works fully and completely represented the Father. He declared to them that the works which they had witnessed during his ministry fully attested this power of the Highest resting upon him and operating through him. And this seems to have satisfied the apostles, bringing rest to their hearts.

As a further explanation of the necessity for his going to the Father, our Lord declares that as a result of his going his followers should do greater works than he had done. It may perhaps be proper to think that some of these "greater works" will occur after the kingdom has been established—the great work of awakening the world of mankind from the sleep of death and restoring the willing and obedient to the full perfection of human life. That, truly, will be a greater work than our Lord Jesus accomplished at his first advent, for then his greatest work was the awakening of the sleeping ones without bringing them to the full perfection of human nature.

But in our opinion this is not the only sense in which the Lord's followers are to understand that their works shall be greater than those of the Master. The Lord's works were on a fleshly plane as a matter of necessity. The holy Spirit had not yet come—could not come until after he had given the *ransom price* and had presented it to the Father, and it had been accepted. Consequently, those to whom he ministered (even his disciples, not being begotten of the Spirit) could not be instructed from that standpoint. Their ears were heavy as respected earthly things, but in regard to heavenly things they could understand nothing; for, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It is since Pentecost that "God hath revealed them [spiritual things] unto us by his spirit," which "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. 2:10, 14; John 3:12.

In the midst of the house of servants, not yet begotten of the Spirit—not yet granted the privilege of sonship (John 1:12), our Lord could do and teach on no higher plane than the earthly, except as he "spoke unto the people in parables and dark sayings," which in due time the church would understand, under the leading of the holy Spirit. It was in consequence of this that our Lord's miracles were all physical, and his plain understandable teachings were all on a plane appreciable by the natural man.

But when the holy Spirit was come, after Pentecost, the Lord's people, in his name, and as his representatives, began to do greater, more wonderful works than those which he himself had performed. Did the Lord open the eyes of the blind? His followers were privileged to open the eyes of men's understandings. Did the Lord heal the physically sick? His disciples were permitted to heal the spiritually diseased. Did the Lord cure physical leprosy? It was the privilege of his followers to heal spiritual leprosy, sin. Did our Lord revive the dead? It was the privilege of his followers to preach a Gospel by which many "passed from death unto life" in a much higher sense. And these privileges of these still greater works are yet with the Lord's people. Blessed are those who appreciate their great privileges, and are about the Father's business with energy, with zeal. But those who, having received a talent of the Lord, bury it in the earth—in business, in pleasure, in society—cannot expect to be received of the Master at his second coming, nor to hear him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

As indicating how fully he would still continue to be the active agent of the Father in all things relating to the church, our Lord assures us that such things as we ask of the Father he (*Jesus*) *will do for us*, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. The Father hath committed all things into the hands of the Son; nevertheless, in everything the Son acknowledges the Father and gives glory to his name.

WILL MY NAME BE BLOTTED OUT?

If any name, written in the Lamb's book of life, is blotted out, whose fault will it be? Not the Lord's, surely; for he is not only willing but anxious for us to continue in his fellowship.

Similarly, if your name be dropped from the lists of ZION'S WATCH TOWER, remember that it will not be of our intention or desire. Every provision has been made that all of the Lord's people who desire its helping hand along the narrow way to life may have it—for a dollar a year, if they are able to pay, or free, on request, if unable to pay.

Many of "the Lord's poor" deny themselves the visits of the TOWER for various reasons; some, because they "do not wish to go into debt." They overlook the fact that they are already in debt to the Lord, and that the WATCH TOWER is the Lord's, and is held as trust or stewardship for him—for his people.

Others "have a little proper pride," as they would say, and do not desire "charity." It seems to us that any pride which would lead us to starve ourselves spiritually would hardly be a *little* nor a *proper* pride but a very improper pride which would be very offensive in the sight of our Lord. Possibly this is your *test:* possibly the Lord has reduced you to humble you, and if not humbled by his disciplines, you will be rejected. Remember the Apostle's words, "God resisteth [is opposed to] the proud, but giveth grace [favor] unto the humble." Let us, then, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that we may have his grace more abundantly.

Others will say, I am not so poor that I cannot afford to pay the small price, but *just at present* I cannot spare the money. Very well, send us a postal card, saying: Please continue my WATCH TOWER for 1899, and expect remittance later. This will be very agreeable to us. And, if later your prospects should become still less bright, and you write us to that effect, requesting that the debt be *canceled*, we will do so most cheerfully. Any way, so that we do not lose from our list any who love the Lord and his present truth. In times of adversity you specially need spiritual helps, that your experiences may be profitable, and work out such blessings and graces as will prepare you for an inheritance with the saints in light.

Thus we make the way as clear as possible for all to come to the Lord's spiritual table. But we must insist that each one apply for himself yearly—otherwise our list would be made up largely of persons who cared little for the truth, and persons removed to other localities, and of the dead.

"HE SHALL GIVE YOU ANOTHER COMFORTER"

APRIL 30.—JOHN 14:15-27.

Continuing his discourse to his troubled disciples at the time of his instituting the Memorial of his own death, our Lord not only promised to come again and receive them to himself in due time, but additionally he promised the Comforter, the holy Spirit, during the interim of his absence. Since he was about to lay down the human nature he could no longer be with them as the man Christ Jesus—in his resurrection he would become again a spirt being like unto the Father, and could no more be seen by his disciples than the Father could be seen by them, until the time would come when the entire church, complete, would be "changed," made "like him" (and like the Father) and see him, and be with him, and share his glory. His resurrection "change" made necessary either the leaving of his disciples alone, without any help or aid during the Gospel age, or else that help be granted them in some other manner. The few occasions on which our Lord appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, for a few moments each, were miraculous manifestations, simply for the purpose of assuring them that he was no longer dead, and that having risen from the dead he was no longer controlled by human conditions. Hence, as a part of the lesson, the flesh bodies in which he manifested himself appeared miraculously and disappeared likewise—he came and went as the wind.—John 3:8; Luke 24:26, 31; Acts 1:3, 4.

The holy Spirit would be another Comforter, but the comfort would be of the same kind. Indeed, our word "comfort" does not properly represent the thought of the text, which rather is, to strengthen, to sustain. The holy Spirit would not be merely a consoler of woes, a soother of fears, in the sense of our word comfort, but it would quicken their understandings, strengthen their zeal, and energize them for doing and enduring such things as divine providence might permit to come upon them for their correction in righteousness, and in order to make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

The holy Spirit or holy influence that should come to the church and abide with it through the age, to supervise and direct in the interest of the faithful, was to be a representative of both the Father and the Son. Indeed, the thought that the holy Spirit is the representative of the Lord Jesus with the church is so strongly put that sometimes the Lord himself and his spirit or influence are spoken of interchangeably; as for instance, when he said to them: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." (Matt. 28:20) And again, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you [through the holy Spirit]." And again, "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I [through the holy Spirit] in you, . . . and I will manifest myself to him [through the holy Spirit]. . . . And we [the Father and the Son] will come unto him, and make our abode with him [through the holy Spirit."—Verses 18, 20, 23.

Thus it is that those who receive the holy Spirit, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love, the spirit of the Father, the spirit of Christ, are enabled to *see* Jesus, and have a new life begun in them. (Verse 19) They *see* with the eyes of their understanding, and do not walk in darkness. They *hear* the voice of the Lord, saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." They *taste* the good Word of God, and realize that he is very gracious. They *feel* the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, producing in them love for the brethren and all the good fruits of the spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.—Isa. 30:21; 1 Pet. 2:3; Rom. 5:5; Col. 3:12, 13.

These experiences, however, are promised conditionally—they are not promised to those who have never heard of the grace of God, but to those who have heard, to "as many as the Lord our God shall call," who, hearing his commandments, are moved by responsive love to do them. Such have the Father's love, such have the love of the Son, and such shall have the fellowship both of the Father and the Son through the medium or channel of the holy Spirit. This is declared in the 15th and 16th verses, and again in the 21st, 23rd and 24th. Not only are faith and obedience of the heart necessary, before any can come into the spirit-begotten condition, but a continuance and growth in faith and in obedience are necessary in order to a continuance and growth in the spirit of holiness, or the holy Spirit, the spirit of fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

It is one thing to have a begetting of the Spirit, and quite another matter to attain to that condition urged by the Apostle, saying, "Be ye *filled* with the Spirit." (Eph. 5:18) The measure of our filling will correspond with the measure of our emptying of the spirit of self-will, and filling with the spirit of faith and obedience. And although the obedience cannot do otherwise than manifest itself in the daily life, nevertheless it is the obedience of the *intention*, of the *will*, of the *heart*, that the Lord regards in his consecrated people, and not merely the control of the earthen vessel. Hence, some whose hearts are thoroughly loyal to the Lord may be pleasing to him, while not the most pleasing to some of those with whom they come in contact; while others, "highly esteemed amongst men" because of outward moralities, may be an "abomination" in the sight of God, because of coldness or dishonesty of heart. (Luke 16:15) Nevertheless, he that hath the new hope in him, and the new spirit, will seek to purify himself, not only in his thoughts, but also in his words and deeds and all his affairs, inward and outward.—1 John 3:3.

It should not be overlooked that, although the holy Spirit, like all other favors, is of the Father, it, like all others of his gifts, comes to us through the Son, and not by any direct relationship between the Father and us. As we saw in our previous lesson that our prayers addressed to the Father are to be answered by the Son,—"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son: If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it;" so we see in this lesson that the gift of the holy Spirit comes to us, not because of any direct relationship between the Father and us, but at the instance of our Lord Jesus. "*I* will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter"—at my request and on my account the Father will do this for you. (Verse 16) The same thought is again expressed in verse 26, "The holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name."

The lesson to us here is, that our only standing before the Father as yet is a *reckoned one*—in Christ, as members of his body—our Lord Jesus represents the Father to us and represents us to the Father. The comfort and strength of the holy Spirit imparted to us is the Father's, the spirit of truth, all of which emanates from the Father. It reaches us not directly, but only through our Lord and Head, Jesus. In a word, we have no standing whatever with the Father, and will not have any, until by his grace, through our Lord Jesus, we shall have been "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," and by the "change" of the first resurrection shall be perfected in his likeness, which is the divine likeness: then and thereafter, being actually perfect, and not merely reckonedly perfect, we may have an individual standing with the Father, but not before.

Hence it is that if any one lose his relationship to Christ through the loss of his faith in the precious blood, or through the loss of the holy Spirit, through wilful sin, such an one falls out of the protection, the care, the covering of Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant*—and falls into the hands of the living God, which means a judgment according to facts and works; and to all imperfect creatures this means death. (Heb. 10:31) Hence also the exhortation of the Scriptures, that we abide in him, that we remain under the blood of sprinkling, that we abide in his love.—John 15:4, 6, 10; 1 John 2:24-29.

Our Lord pointedly declares that he who does not seek to please him by conforming to his instructions, thereby manifests that he does not love him. (Verses 23, 24) Surely there can be no better test of love than devotion, and no better test of devotion than obedience. Our enlightened consciences render hearty assent to the Master's words, and with the Apostle we exclaim, "The love of Christ constraineth us, for we thus judge that if one died for all, then all were dead, and that he died for all, that they who live [justified and begotten to newness of life] should thenceforth not live unto themselves, but unto him who died for us, and rose again."—2 Cor. 5:14, 15.

The Master pointed out to us distinctly that in keeping his sayings we are not merely pleasing and obeying him, but that he is in all this matter the mouthpiece of Jehovah, the Father, and consequently that in pleasing and obeying him we are pleasing and obeying the Father. This much he could tell them while still with them, but he had many things that he desired to make known to them, and that were necessary for them to know, but that they could not receive as yet, because the holy Spirit had not yet come upon them, and could not until after the ransom sacrifice had been made at Calvary and offered in the Holy of Holies, after he ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us.—John 7:39; Heb. 9:24.

Our Lord's assurance is that this Comforter or strengthener, the holy Spirit of the Father, sent on account of and at the instance of Jesus our Redeemer, Mediator and Head, will be our instructor—using various instrumentalities for bringing the instruction to us—the Word of truth, the writings of the apostles, and the various helps and agencies which the Lord, through the holy Spirit, has and shall from time to time, as needed, provide to his flock.

How beautiful, how consoling to their troubled hearts, and how refreshing to ours, is the legacy of love and peace left to us by our dear Redeemer, as expressed in the 27th verse! "Peace I leave with you, *my peace* I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This peace and joy which surpasseth all human understanding, was not given to the world, nor is it given to the nominal Christian professor, nor to the formalist and ritualist, however zealous they may be. It is intended for and can be had only by those who receive riches of grace through the holy Spirit—those who by obedience to the truth and its spirit grow up into Christ their living Head in all things. Such have peace, deep and abiding, and ever increasing proportionately as they come to comprehend with all saints through faith and obedience the riches of divine grace—the lengths, breadths, heights and depths of the love of God.

This is not worldly peace, not the peace of indifference and carelessness, not the peace of sloth, not the peace of self-indulgence, not the peace of fatalism; but it is the peace of Christ—"my peace." Looking back we can see that the Master preserved his peace with God under all conditions. It is a peace which implicitly trusts to the divne wisdom, love, justice and power, a peace which remembers the gracious promise made to the Lord's faithful—that nothing shall by any means hurt his faithful, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. This peace can accept by faith whatever divine providence permits, and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy for the ultimate blessings which the Master has promised, and of which the present peace and joy are merely foretastes.

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* See June 15, 1919, for critical examination of Covenants.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

"We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:16.

VOLUNTEERS FOR HOME DUTY—male and female—are called for: those who can give about two hours every Sunday, and who are willing to *give* these in the Lord's service and as part of their "living sacrifice" (Rom. 12:1)—together with the best they have of *influence*, and good personal appearance. The service is such as any person in health can render: it is an unusual but dignified and very successful preaching of the truth, which we will explain hereinafter.

The necessity for this service is that "brethren" are in danger; and love of the brethren and the Elder Brother's approval are the incentives to enlistment. All whose eyes of understanding are open realize in harmony with the view of this issue that the leaders in religious thought have already lost their anchorage—their faith in the precious blood of Christ as the *ransom price;* and that those under their influence are tending rapidly in that same direction under the doctrinal winds of Evolution and higher criticism. They do not cry for help, because they do not realize their situation. We must not wait our sacrificing until they request it; even as our Lord did not wait for sinners to call him to sacrifice: he *gave* himself for us, and thus should we voluntarily "lay down our lives for the brethren."

There are some faithful brethren enlisted in the *foreign* service, who as colporteurs and pilgrims go from city to city. The Lord is blessing these and sending more such laborers into his vineyard; but through love of the brethren still in Babylon he is stirring us up to arrange a plan of work in which many more can engage of those who are anxious to serve as good soldiers of the cross, but who cannot leave home and family responsibilities, and whose week-day employment leaves little time for special service of the King of kings and the exercise of their Ambassadorship. (2 Cor. 5:20) We will explain the plan proposed—indeed already tried with excellent success in Allegheny and Pittsburgh.

We propose publishing the booklet, "The Bible vs. Evolution," in large quantities (indeed, have already contracted for over 300,000 copies) for free circulation *under restricted conditions*, as follows: These neat, tastefully bound booklets which we sell at five cents each or twenty-five cents per dozen for *general use*, will be supplied free to those who will agree to distribute them to church-goers on Sunday mornings and evenings—one church at a time. The preferable plan of operations is for the friends who will so engage in each city or village to lay out a program which will insure that no congregation be omitted and that none be served twice. All large congregations require at least two or three for proper rapid service as they come out. And generally the effect is better if the distributors locate half a block away from the church building in each direction in which the people go—or according to circumstances.

Unusual—for God's servants to follow the example of the Lord and the apostles and go after the lost sheep? Yes, rather unusual—few are ready to lay down anything for the brethren, though many are willing to toil day and night for wealth or fame or some other selfish consideration. The majority of those who attempt to feed the flock even on unclean provender, and to mislead them, require goodly clippings of their golden fleece for so doing. Hence, some may think of these volunteers as "fools" or "crazy" for giving books away *free*. The black-sheep and the "goats" may do some butting and bah-ing but return them good for evil—kind looks for scowls, kind words for bitter ones.

If there be any of the Lord's true sheep among them, these will take knowledge of you that your methods resemble those of Jesus, and if your manner corresponds, they will know that you have learned of him. And these are the only ones you really need expect to help, anyway. And the more genteel your appearance and graceful and loving your manner, the more will your printed testimony count with your auditors.

The minister inside the chapel has entertained the congregation for half an hour and received from ten to fifty dollars for his services, and his congregation will soon forget most of what he said. You on the outside deliver to each a printed sermon an hour and a half long, which can be thought over carefully and repeatedly, and which under divine blessing may do some more good than all the sermons they ever heard.

You might not be able to get the attention of even one congregation in your city, even if you had superior ability; but by this ministry you can reach *every* congregation. Do you know any better investment of two hours every Sunday in the interest of the "brethren" yet in darkness? Do you know any work that would probably glorify the Lord more or bring you more of his love and blessing? If you do, you should be actively using that better plan and should be wonderfully blessed in the service.

All volunteers in each city should come together at once and lay out the work of their city methodically. Then select one of your number as scribe on this business to write to us stating the number of volunteers, the number of churches in your city and your estimate of the *adult* attendance, and also the number of juniors. For the latter we would furnish *tracts*, to save the more expensive *booklet*. Letters on this subject should be headed "*Volunteers*," and be on a separate sheet of letter paper from your business orders and from your letters to the Editor—though all may be enclosed in same envelope. Care over the volunteer work will be in the hands of an office assistant, though under the Editor's supervision.

Even our smallest services are sure to be blessed and owned by our loving Lord who says: "He that reapeth, receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto eternal life."—John 4:36.

THE MEMORIAL WIDELY CELEBRATED

Reports already received indicate that the Memorial Supper was more generally celebrated than ever before—in modern times—probably one-third more than last year. We are glad of this: it generally indicates good spiritual condition; for those who intelligently and conscientiously memorialize the shed blood of the New Covenant and our Lord's body broken for us are not the ones to fall into the sin of denying that the Lord *bought* them. (2 Pet. 2:1) And in turn, it is those who most heartily realize that they were bought with the precious blood who are most *constrained* by the love thus manifested to resist sin and additionally to consecrate themselves to be "broken" also and to lay down their lives for the brethren.

We have received up to the present 339 reports of meetings, representing 2,501 participants (quite a few of these neglected mentioning the numbers participating). We will not attempt a full tabulation of the various reports received—many of which were from solitary ones and little groups of twos or threes. We will merely give numbers of some of the principal meetings thus far reported from various states, and a few extracts from the letters reporting same:

Massachusetts.—Boston, 71; Springfield, 11.

Rhode Island.—Woonsocket, 8—all French; service in French.

New York.—Binghamton, 11 (and in vicinity, 8); Ballston Spa, 5; Buffalo, 21; Newburgh, 13; Olean, 7; Schenectady, 8; Saugerties, 6; Cohoes, 15; Mamaroneck, 7.

New Jersey.—Jersey City, 7.

Pennsylvania.—Philadelphia, 24; Altoona, 30; Scranton, 21; Butler, 13; Rockland, 9; Tyrone, 9; Washington, 12; Easton, 7; Laughlintown, 6; Oil City, 7; Wheeler, 9; Jefferson, 7; Allentown and Bethlehem, 8; Allegheny, 250.

Delaware.—Wilmington, 7; *Washington, D. C.*, 12.

Maryland.—Cumberland, 9; Baltimore, 17; Oakland, 14.

Virginia.—Reedy, 12; Manchester, 11; Pleasant Grove, 10; Lynchburg, 6; Portsmouth, 7.

West Virginia.—Mount Lookout, 25; Wheeling, 14; McMechin, 10.

Ohio.—Felicity, 7; Newark, 7; Cincinnati, 24; Toledo, 40; Cleveland, 25; Columbus, 30; Dayton, 14; Mansfield, 7; Tiffin, 12; Youngstown, 28; Canton, 17; Oxford, 7; Barnhill, New Philadelphia and Dennison (one meeting), 25.

Indiana.—Oriole, 7; Indianapolis, 27; Boonville, 7; Fort Wayne, 15.

Illinois.—Havana, 6; Hegewisch, 11; Belleville, 7; Decatur, 11; Kewanee, 6; Atlanta, 10; Chicago (North Side), 40; Rockford, 6; Martinsville, 7; Elgin, 19.

Michigan.—Saginaw, 12; Detroit, 8; Wheeler, 7; Kalamazoo, 10; Muskegon, 13; Adrian, 6; Ypsilanti, 11.

Wisconsin.—Waukesha, 6; Milwaukee, 9.

Minnesota.—Minneapolis, 15; Northfield, 7.

Iowa.—Red Oak, 13; Tingley, 9; New Albany, 11; Council Bluffs, 23; Atlanta, 7; Indianola, 8; Lawler, 12.

Nebraska.—Bartlett, 7.

North Dakota.—De Lamere, 10. *South Dakota.*—Verdon, 4; Huron, 14.

Kansas.—Witchita, 7; Williamsburgh, 6; Atwood, 6; Peabody, 7; Abilene, 10.

Missouri.—Kansas City, 8; St. Louis, 28.

Oklahoma.—Perkins, 7.

Kentucky.—Grace, 12.

Tennessee.—Knoxville, 10; Tullahoma, 5.

North Carolina.—Hayne, 24.

Georgia.—Atlanta, 6.

Florida.—Jacksonville, 6.

Alabama.—Randolph, 5.

Mississippi.—McCool, 6.

Arkansas.—Darcy, 8.

Texas.—Dallas, 12; Tyler, 10; Corsicana, 6; Shady Grove, 6; Bass, 9; Vineyard, 8; Snow, 20; San Antonio, 20; Weatherford, 17.

California.—Norwalk and Downey, 7; Visalia, 12; Santa Barbara, 11; Alameda, 13; Oakdale, 5; Sacramento, 10; Ventura, 9; Los Angeles, 61; Los Gatos, 6; Stockton, 5.

Oregon.—Phoenix, 10.

Washington.—Montesano, 6; Seattle, 15; Farmer, 5.

Canada.—Goderich, 4; Meaford, 5; Dorchester, 5; Brantford, 22; Niagara Falls, 7; Hamilton, 10; Toronto, 21; London, 7; (*Ontario*), Truro, *N. S.*, 8; Regina, *N. W. T.*, 7; Rapid City, *Man.*, 10; Brandon, *Man.*, 8; Clive, *Man.*, 4; Wharnock, *B. C.*, 5.

Jamaica.—20. *Switzerland.*—Thun, 14.

Great Britain.—Glasgow, 16; Stratford, 21; Sheffield, 4. *Denmark.*—Copenhagen, 15; Odder, 12.

As a feature of next year's report we propose that the numbers witnessing to full consecration by symbolic immersion in water, *during the year* beginning March 26th, be mentioned in connection with the number participating at the Memorial Supper.

All of the following reports will be read with keen interest and warm love and sympathy by the friends; but we wish to add to your zest in the reading of the Jamaica letter, by explaining that our dear Brother Clarke is a full-blood Jamaica negro: and we doubt not that at least one-half of those who celebrated with him are negroes. We rejoice that our God is "no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."—Acts 10:34, 35.

Brother Clarke was already a Christian when the harvest message reached him: he was serving the Lord to the best of his knowledge and ability and loved the Bible. The American Bible Society made him its agent, and he went hither and thither holding up the "Lamp." God in due time considered him worthy of the light of present truth and poured fresh oil into his heart, as well as into his Lamp, through MILLENNIAL DAWN. Brother Clarke rejoiced in the truth greatly, and enjoyed his work more than ever, because now he could not only take the people the Bible as God's jewel casket, but he could also take them the "keys," also provided by God, by which they could open God's Word and understand and appreciate its wonderful harmony and beauties as never before.

But the American Bible Society was not willing to have the "keys" go with the jewel casket, and informed Brother Clarke that he must either drop the DAWN or leave their employ. He promptly decided that there were already more Bibles circulated than people could understand and that the highest service he could render to the great Giver of all good was to lay down his life in serving the brethren with this "marvelous light," which God has now granted all his people who have eyes to see it. God bless Brother Clarke! His loyalty of heart proves that he has the spirit of the truth.

INTERESTING REPORTS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I make haste to send you the report of our little Convention here: the manifestation of divine love, the rejoicing;—Oh! the blessing. I can scarcely write the things which transpired here on the 26th of March. Scoffers who came to scoff at us were speechless, and many were compelled to join in praising our dear Lord.

We began at 5 A. M., with prayer and praise, and at 8 o'clock we marched to the pool prepared by the Bros. Davidson a few chains from their home, where three hundred people looked on with amazement. A short address was given: believers' baptism was set forth to the best of our knowledge. Three brethren symbolized their consecration "unto death" with their Lord. At 11 o'clock we had public preaching, when the benefit of the "ransom" was set forth to the best of our ability. Eighty-five were present at this service. At 2 P. M., we had refreshments. Many scoffers were surprised at the manifestation of love among us,—so that they apologized for being satisfied with both temporal and spiritual provisions. Invitation was then given to all who are trusting in the merits of the "ransom," and fully consecrated, to partake with us in the "cup" of suffering. At 6:30, twenty of us drew around the Lord's table, with solemnity,—following the suggestions given us in the WATCH TOWER. The blessing received at this service can hardly be expressed by me, in writing. The brethren join in sending their love.

Yours, in the service of the truth,

H. P. CLARKE,—*Jamaica, W. I.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—A number of us met together here yesterday evening to commemorate our Lord's death. We began our service at 7:30 p. m. and had about twenty present, including two or three Christian friends who participated with us.

Some few were hindered from coming out, and others did not care to participate, on the ground that it was only to be observed "till he come," not being able to see that the Apostle Paul evidently included in this expression the complete glorification of every member of the kingdom, and that "we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord" are to commemorate his death, the very basis of our hope, just as the saints did who preceded his coming, until we receive our change from the human to the spiritual—to be with and like our Lord. Blessed hope!

But in all this we bear and forbear one another in love, hoping and praying that each may win the prize of joint-heirship with Christ our Lord.

Those of us who did participate experienced that blessedness expressed in the words—

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend."

We meditated upon our Saviour's great agony in the garden, as he prayed to the Father, when his sweat, as it were great drops of blood, fell down to the ground, and then we saw him before Pilate, being falsely accused of the Chief Priests and Elders, and he answered nothing, but "committed himself unto him that judgeth righteously," and then in our mind's eye we saw him as the soldiers took him into the Prætorium and put a purple robe upon him and a crown of thorns upon his head, and then bowed their knees before him, saying in mockery, "Hail, King of the Jews," and he endured it all patiently, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again," and "who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame." We then read in 1 Pet. 4:1, that, inasmuch as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, we are to arm ourselves "likewise with the same mind"—not that we might have to experience the same amount of suffering, but the thought was with "the same mind," "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, neither was guile found in his mouth," and that thus possessing the "same mind," the "mind of Christ," to the end of our course, we would come off more than victors through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We then saw him as he hung upon the cross, surrounded by his enemies, wagging their heads and saying: "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross and save thyself!" And lastly, we beheld him as his sufferings reached the highest point, when the Father's fellowship of spirit was withdrawn and he uttered those agonizing words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" We could see that he was taking the sinner's place, that he was to die just as if he were the sinner, and that the sinner's place was a separation from God's fellowship and subsequently the surrendering up of life itself in death, and there in his death we appreciated our ransom—the equivalent for all who lost life through the disobedience of father Adam. Oh, how my heart goes out to him, when I think of what he has done for me!

"Nothing to settle? All has been paid.
Nothing to anger? Peace has been made.
Jesus alone is the sinner's resource;
Peace he has made by the blood of his cross."

With love from the brethren and myself, I am, Yours in our Redeemer,

E. J. COWARD, *Texas.*

"A CUP OF COLD WATER"

The Lord of the harvest walked forth one day
Where the fields were white with the ripening wheat,
Where those he had sent in the early morn
Were reaping the grain in the noonday heat,
He had chosen a place for every one,
And bidden them work till the day was done.

Apart from the others, with troubled voice,
Spoke one who had gathered no golden grain;
"The Master has given no work to me,
And my coming hither has been in vain.
The reapers with gladness and song will come,
But no sheaves will be mine in the harvest home."

He heard the complaint and he called her name:
"Dear child why standest thou idle here?
Go fill the cup from the hillside stream,
And bring it to those who are toiling near;
I will bless thy labor and it shall be
Kept in remembrance as done for me."

'Twas a little service, but grateful hearts
Thanked God for the water so cold and clear;
And some who were fainting with thirst and heat
Went forth with new strength to the work so dear;
And many a weary soul looked up,
Revived and cheered by the little cup.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

"IN THE LAST DAYS PERILOUS TIMES"

"This know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."—2 Tim. 3:1-5.

Claiming, as we do, that we are now living in the closing days of the Gospel age, it is quite proper that we should look about us to see whether or not present conditions correspond to the Apostle's inspired descriptions of what must be expected in the last days of this age. We are not to understand this description to relate to the barbarous or half-civilized peoples of the end of the age, but to be a description of the condition of "Christendom." The Apostle explicitly states that he refers to those who have a form of godliness—professedly Christians,—for, since the Jewish age ended, the only godly form that the Scriptures could recognize is Christianity. We see, then, that the foregoing delineation represents "Christendom" in the close of this age.

The Apostle does not say that this description will apply to the saints in the end of this age: quite to the contrary, the implication is that the saints should "turn away" or separate themselves from all who thus have merely the form of piety. (Vs. 5) Nor are we to expect that the world, possessed of this spirit, will recognize its own likeness in the Apostle's words. Upon this, as upon other subjects, we are rather to expect that, as the prophet declares, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." (Dan. 12:10) The merely formalistic Christian, whose highest ideal of duty is to abstain from secular employment on one day of the week, and to go to church, is not to be expected to recognize his own likeness, and to note its deformities and inconsistencies: to do these things would imply such a reformation of sentiment as would transfer him from the lists of churchianity to the smaller list of true Christianity.

We should not be understood as saying, or even implying, that the world is growing worse in every respect day by day. We recognize as a fact that the world in many respects is in better condition than it has ever been before. The civilized nations to-day are better equipped with hospitals, orphanages, asylums, etc., than ever before. All these are very directly traceable to the influence of Christianity, and are neither to be despised nor ignored. We confess with great appreciation and admiration that the spirit of our Master has, during the past eighteen hundred years, so impressed itself upon the world of mankind that the barbarities of olden time would no longer be endured, the sensibilities of civilized man having reached a degree of development which insists upon provision being made for the indigent and helpless; and we are very glad of all these things.

At the same time, it should not be forgotten that mixed with all of these benevolences is a considerable measure of selfishness—they are not all monuments of pure disinterested benevolence. True, benevolence has had to do with the founding of many of them, but as a rule those recently instituted, and much of the support for all of them, is drawn from the taxpayer through political channels, and the party-spoils system has much to do with their maintenance—all feeding at such public cribs being expected to render more or less of party service. However, whether or not these institutions supported at public expense be considered as partially the outgrowth of selfishness, the fact must be conceded that public sentiment favors them, and hence it must be conceded that the principles laid down by the great Teacher eighteen centuries ago have made a favorable impression upon civilized peoples.

But the question before us is not on this point—whether or not Christianity has made any impression upon the world: the question is, What is the real status of those professing to be Christians, now, in the end of this age? We answer that, while benevolences inculcated in the gospel of Christ have appealed to the better sentiments of mankind, and have resulted in a general uplift of social conditions throughout so-called Christendom, yet this uplift of the world of mankind has reacted in some respects against Christianity; for in making Christianity popular it has induced multitudes to nominally adopt Christianity and a form of godliness without appreciating the genuine article or experiencing a true conversion of heart. Hence the necessity of separating the "wheat" from the "tares," the suitable fish from the unsuitable ones in the Gospel net, now that the Gospel age is closing.—Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50.

If we ask ourselves the question, What is the peculiar characteristic of our day? almost every intelligent person could answer, *Selfishness.* And this is the very item which the Apostle puts first in his descriptive list: "Men shall be lovers of their own selves." We do not mean to say that people are more miserly than heretofore: on the contrary, there is probably less of this evil; the tendency is rather to extravagance: but it is an extravagance born of "love of their own selves," love of dress, love of show, love of honor and position. All who come in contact with present-day business, realize that more than ever before it is a battle: not so much a battle for bread as a battle for wealth and luxuries. True, business to-day is in some respects done along more honorable lines and on a more honest basis than ever before, yet these are not so much signs of a greater honesty on the part of merchants, for they are almost compulsory; because business competition has materially cut down profits, and the enlarging of business much beyond the personal oversight of the proprietors has almost compelled one-price arrangements. But all persons associated with commercial business and manufacturing can attest that the growth of business intelligence, the formation of trusts and combinations, etc., have given selfishness great power to injure and even to destroy financially whatever may resist it.

Covetousness is another of the charges. It is a mistake to think of this quality as applicable only to the wealthy. It is just as possible for the man with one dollar to be covetous as for the millionaire. Covetousness is an inordinate desire, whether for wealth or luxuries or what-not. Elsewhere the Apostle designates covetousness as idolatry, which gives us the thought of false worship. (Col. 3:5) It is not wrong for us to seek, in a reasonable, moderate way, for the necessities and the comforts of life for ourselves and those depending upon us; nor would it be wrong to avail ourselves of the opportunities of securing wealth, if the same came to us in a reasonable and honorable manner, not in conflict with our consecration to the Lord. But wherever the *love* of money or honor or luxuries becomes the ruling passion in those who are professedly God's people it has usurped God's place,—such are idolaters. In other words, the covetous person is a mammon-worshiper, and as such should realize that he has abandoned the proper worship of God; and our Lord declared, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."—Matt. 6:24.

Boasting is the third charge which the Apostle brings against nominal Christianity of "the last days." Is it not true? Was there ever a time when people were so boastful as to-day? Boastfulness is the opposite of meekness and humility; boasting accompanies pride, which the Lord declares he resists, showing his favors to the humble.—James 4:6.

Pride is the fourth charge, and, thinking of our fellow-creatures as generously as possible, we cannot deny that the pride of our day is very great, and continually increasing. In some it is the pride of wealth, in others a sectarian pride, in others a family pride, in still others a personal pride. Looking into the future, as revealed in the Lord's Word, and seeing the time of trouble toward which Christendom is hastening, we are reminded of the statement, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."—Prov. 16:18.

Blasphemy is the fifth charge: but this does not necessarily imply that the professed Christians of the present day would be profane swearers more than others of times past. The word "blasphemy" here we understand to be used in its broad sense of slander, and the slandering or blasphemy may either be against God, or against fellow-creatures. As a matter of fact, we find both abounding to-day amongst Christian people. God's character is blasphemed by attributing to him evil deeds, evil motives and evil purposes toward the masses of mankind. Never, more than at present, have nominal Christians been inclined to charge the Almighty with the authorship of the evils that are in the world and which cause the groaning of creation. In times past they were willing to acknowledge that these evils had come in the line of justice because of sin; now many self-complacently claim that God's dealings are wholly unjust, and that the unfavorable conditions of the present time are all chargeable to him, and are injustices toward man. Moreover, the theories which prevail throughout Christendom respecting God's provision for the future (that it will be an eternity of torment—in literal flames, or, say some, "torments of conscience *which will be worse*") are blasphemies, slanders upon God's character and government. These are worse slanders than were held during the Dark Ages, when it was claimed, as Romanists still claim, that the vast majority went for a time only to "Purgatory," from which discipline and suffering they would ultimately be released.

Ours is also a day of slander or blasphemy one against another, on the part of those who have merely the *form* of godliness. Many who outwardly claim to be governed by the law of the New Covenant, love, seem to have a morbid craving to speak evil one of another. This the Apostle elsewhere denominates the spirit of murder. (1 John 3:15) This murderous, slanderous, or blasphemous tendency is manifest everywhere, in the home, in church-gatherings, and in private; those who take no pleasure in speaking words of kindness, approval and love, hunger and thirst for opportunities to speak evil. Nor are they satisfied merely to give out their own evil surmisings, based upon their own perverted view of their fellows; they love such slandering and blasphemy so much that they are willing even to accept it at second-hand, and to retail it out repeatedly.

Disobedience to parents is the sixth charge. How very marked is this trait to-day! Not merely in the younger members of the family, who have not come to years of discretion, but also in those who have even made an outward profession of religion. False views of "liberty" and "rights" seem to disturb the minds even of children, and the divinely arranged family order seems to be entirely lost sight of with the vast majority.

Unthankfulness is the seventh charge. Thankfulness would seem to be one of the least costly of the graces: it implies the reception of favors, and is merely a proper acknowledgment of them. No one can be a true Christian and be unthankful. With the Apostle he will soliloquize, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (1 Cor. 4:7), and the first response of his heart must be gratitude, thankfulness. It is this thankfulness which leads on to service, and to sacrifice in the Lord's cause as a manifestation of gratitude. But with the merely nominal Christian thankfulness to God seems scarcely to be thought of. If he be prosperous, it is his ability or his "luck;" if not prosperous, it is the fault of some one else or his "bad luck." Divine providence scarcely enters his mind in connection with his affairs. This same unthankfulness extends manward, and not infrequently it will be found that one's worst enemies, perhaps indeed his only enemies, are those whom he has endeavored to serve—those in whose interest he has made sacrifices. They do not feel thankful; they do not wish to feel under any obligation of any kind; they fancy that the one who has done them a kindness will consider them under some obligation, and gradually they come to have enmitous and bitter feelings, instead of gratitude, thankfulness.

Unholiness is the eighth charge. The ordinary Christian professor will freely admit that he is unholy, not holy—not fully consecrated to the Lord. Many will admit that their only reason for maintaining even an outward semblance of Christianity is fear—fear of an eternity of torture; and some go so far as to admit that if it were not for fear of eternal torment they would indulge themselves in all manner of evil.

Without natural affection is the ninth charge. It is not the province of true Christianity to destroy the natural affections, but rather to deepen them and to lift them to a higher plane. It is therefore to be greatly regretted that there are to-day, apparently, evidences of the loss of family affection. In the days of the Apostle it was considered proper to exhort Christians to "love the brethren," but to-day this exhortation has comparatively little weight, because of the general loss of natural affection. Verily, "A man's foe shall be they of his own household."

Truce-breaking is the tenth charge. The Greek word here used signifies not merely a breaker of a truce or agreement, but more especially an unwillingness to make a truce or to live in harmony, and to abandon hostilities. Combativeness seems to be considerably on the increase, and not only are people willing to have a fracas for slight cause, but controlled by this implacable disposition, they are less ready than of yore to drop the matter—to forgive and be forgiven. Their hearts not having the spirit of love, but the spirit of selfishness, are not peace-loving but contention-loving. Hence, instead of being "easy to be entreated," they are the reverse, implacable.

False accusers is the eleventh charge. This corresponds closely to the charge of blasphemy, but seems to signify a still more extreme step—a willingness to accuse falsely, knowing that the charges or accusations are false. This surely indicates a very evil condition of heart, and yet we are compelled to admit that it is a very prevalent condition to-day. Let a person of strong will, whose heart is not under control of grace, become your enemy, and following the custom of our time he will probably not only misrepresent you in the matters of which he has knowledge or hearsay, but not infrequently he will deliberately concoct falsehoods. Such a course would not seem so strange on the part of the professedly worldly. It has always been so; the natural heart has always been full of evil, and ready to vilify when it considered itself provoked. The point of the Apostle's argument is that these conditions, so foreign to the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, will prevail in the end of this age amongst those who profess his name and have a form of godliness.

Incontinency is the twelfth charge. This signifies, without self-control, led of passion, rash, impulsive. The Apostle's exhortation to the Church, as its proper condition, is expressed in the words, "Let your moderation be known unto all men"—your self-control. (Phil. 4:5) Keep yourselves well in hand, subject and obedient to the will of God, as expressed in his Word. But to-day, and especially with the rising generation, self-control is little practiced. Some of this is chargeable to the spirit of the times in which we live, with its false conceptions of liberties and rights, and some of it is doubtless attributable to lax training under conditions of comparative worldly prosperity.

Fierceness is the thirteenth charge. This came forcibly to our attention a few days ago, as we noticed a headline of a dispatch from Manila, saying, "The Tenth Pennsylvania Regiment made a fierce charge upon the Filipinos, uttering their terrible yell. The enemy fled, terrified, in all directions." It used to be that the savages pounced upon the civilized, with fierce blood-curdling yells, but now it appears that the rising generation, representatives of Christendom from one of the most civilized states of the world can give so fierce a yell, and in every way manifest so much ferocity, as to strike terror to the uncivilized. Undoubtedly this fierceness explains much of the success of civilized men over the uncivilized in recent wars. Civilization, the handmaid of religion, has given intelligence and courage; but in those not having the power of godliness it inspires ferocity instead of love, kindness, gentleness.

Despisers of those that are good is the fourteenth charge. We are to distinguish between goodness from the standpoint of the Apostle and the Lord's word in general, and goodness from the world's standpoint. The world wants a man good enough to be honest, temperate, trustworthy, and faithful as a servant or contractor; but the world despises the higher forms of goodness to which the Apostle refers. The nominal Christian despises the "saint," and tries to believe that his professions of full consecration to the Lord, and his desire to please the Lord in thought and word and deed, are simply hypocrisies,—because his own heart is not in sympathy with such a condition of consecration, with such ideals of goodness, and he does not desire to be in the presence of so high a standard. As our Lord described the matter, "Everyone that doeth evil hateth the light."—John 3:20.

Treachery is the fifteenth charge. Because the mainspring of the world's efforts in every direction is selfishness, therefore treachery is its inevitable adjunct. Love desires to be just; love may frequently approve of self-sacrifice in the interests of others; but selfishness disapproves of benevolences except where some self-interest attaches. Hence, the one who might be willing to make a contract to-day, and who selfishly might be willing to keep that contract so long as he believed that it would be to his own advantage to do so, would often be willing to break that contract so soon as selfishness indicated that it would be to his advantage to break it. Persons controlled by the selfish spirit here described can never be trusted. Could we think of God as being controlled by selfish motives we could not trust him, except so long as it would be to his interest to fulfill his promises. Only those controlled by the reverse spirit of love can be relied upon in times of extreme trial. This is set forth as one of the special features of the great time of trouble just before us; selfishness and distrust will become general and the motto will be, "Every man for himself." The prophetic declaration shows the loss of confidence, general treachery, saying, "There shall be no peace to him that goeth out nor to him that cometh in; for I have set every man's hand against his neighbor."—Zech. 8:10.

Headiness is the sixteenth charge. How forceful this word, as expressing self-will, impetuousness. Do we not see this quality everywhere amongst those who have the form of godliness, but who lack its power? And we believe that it, as well as these other evils, is steadily on the increase. The true Christian is not "heady;" on the contrary, his consecration to the Lord figuratively decapitated him; he lost his head, renounced his own will and self-rule, and submitted himself, as a *member of the body* of Christ, to the absolute control of Jesus, the Head of the church. (Eph. 1:22, 23) Such, so long as they abide as members of the true body of Christ, cannot be heady, cannot be self-willed. It is this very self-will that first of all they reckoned dead, in order that they might have the mind or will of Christ. To revive the self-will would be to lose the mind of Christ. The true Christian therefore, in every affair of life,—in respect to its pleasures as well as in respect to its burdens and trials,—appeals to his Head for direction, to know how and what to do or say—yea, to have even the very thoughts of his mind in full conformity to the will of God in Christ.

The "heady" class are continually endeavoring to carry out their own wills, and do not submit themselves to the will of God. Their headiness continually brings them into difficulties, and yet, sometimes, with pride and boasting and love of their own selves and fierceness and false accusations, they endeavor to have their own heady way, and perhaps even claim, with forms of godliness, that such a course is under divine leading. How sadly such are deceived! "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." Wherever headiness prevails it is an evidence that such are "not holding the head" (Christ). If they have not already fallen utterly, their fall is certainly near unless they reform.—Col. 2:19; Rom. 8:9.

High-mindedness is the seventh charge. Self-conceit is naturally a virtue in the eyes of the class which the Apostle describes: and how naturally this quality of a large opinion of one's self and one's own talents, or of one's favor with God, or what not, is linked with pride, boastfulness and self-love. There is no more dangerous form of high-mindedness or selfconceit than that which attacks the Christian, and seeks to make him think of himself more highly than he ought to think. Very many of the Lord's people have been ensnared along such lines, and stumbled into all the other evils of this category by first of all getting the impression that for some reason, or for no reason, the Lord had specially taken a fancy to them, and was giving them private lessons and information not vouchsafed to others of his consecrated ones. How appropriate the Apostle's caution along this line, "I say, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Rom. 12:3) Not only is this quality of self-conceit one of the most dangerous to Christians, but also it is one of the most dangerous to the world, for probably more than one-half of the hopelessly insane have lost their reason along this line of self-conceit. All true Christians should be specially on their guard against this snare of the Adversary.

Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God is the eighteenth charge. It is natural for every human being to prefer to be pleased, to be happy, to have pleasure. It is not a sin to love things which minister to our pleasure in proper ways. To be a Christian does not mean to have no pleasure: but the Christian puts God higher than himself, loves God more than he loves himself, consecrates himself to God, and consequently desires to please God rather than to please himself. By such, any pleasure, no matter what, must be sacrificed if it come in conflict with his still higher pleasure and duty and covenant of service to the Lord. It is this that leads the true saints of God to sacrifice: the world being out of harmony with God and his will is out of harmony also with those who are in harmony with God. Hence, as our Lord says, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—John 15:18, 19.

The contest, then, comes between serving God and doing those things which would bring his approval, and serving self after the manner of the world, and doing those things which would bring its approval. The true Christian must invariably decide for the Lord, and thus he often crosses the will, the preferences, the prejudices or the superstitions of those with whom he comes in closest contact in the flesh, and it is in this that he is to be an "overcomer" of the world and its spirit; and by so doing he is to gain ultimately the approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joys of thy Lord." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—Matt. 25:21; Rev. 3:21.

The class described by the Apostle, the mass of Christendom, in the present time are not fully consecrated to the Lord, but are lovers of pleasure *more* than lovers of God. In this sense of the word they are idolaters, rendering love and service to self above God,—covetous of the world's pleasures and honors and emoluments of various kinds. Is it difficult for us to see this very condition of things all about us, amongst those who have merely a form of godliness? No, it is not difficult; it is the confessed condition of the vast majority. Love of God above love of self is proved by our willingness to sacrifice self-loves in order to do those things which would meet the Lord's approval.

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof is the nineteenth charge. It does not follow that this class, in so many words, denies that there is any power to godliness. Rather, we are to understand that their course in life denies or repudiates the power of God. Outwardly they have a religious form; they know that churchianity is popular; they wish to be known as identified with some denomination for decency's sake, and as an *entree* to good social and financial standing for themselves and their families. But that is about all the use they have for Christianity. Their life as a whole denies the power of the gospel of Christ to control the heart and regulate, direct and guide the conduct.

"From such turn away." True Christians are to reprove the false Christians by turning away from them, and from their course or walk in life. Whoever has the spirit of Christ, the spirit of Love, and is seeking to cultivate its grace, and to walk according to its rule, will more and more find his path turning away from the path of churchianity and general worldliness. As they are guided by different spirits or dispositions so they tend to different directions or effort, different loves, different sympathies, different experiences. The true sheep are to walk in the narrow way, led by the true Shepherd, who has gone before, and who calls us to follow him. This means that in this harvest-time in a most natural way a separation will be made between the "wheat" class and the "tare" class, just as our Lord's parable illustrated. Whoever walks in the Lord's way will receive the light that is due in this harvest-time, and be enlightened thereby and led in the footsteps of Jesus. Whoever walks in the evil way, described by the Apostle as the prevalent way in the end of this age, is following Satan's example. The separation of these classes must eventually be thorough and complete. Thus the Lord is by present truth and its spirit or influence calling to his people to separate themselves, to turn away from others who are not really his people, who have merely the form of godliness but not its power, saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. 18:4.

OUTSIDE CORROBORATIONS OF THE FOREGOING

It would be difficult to imagine a more striking corroboration of these facts than is furnished by the recent proclamation of a Fast day by the Governor of the State of New Hampshire. We quote the paper entire, as set forth in the columns of *The Boston Herald*, without endorsing all of its provisions or recommendations, as follows:—

GOVERNOR ROLLINS' PROCLAMATION

Concord, N. H., April 6th, 1899.

"I hereby appoint Thursday, the 13th day of April, as Fast day.

"This custom was inaugurated at a time when all the people of our state placed their trust in the hands of a Supreme Being, and believed firmly in the efficacy of prayer. A goodly number of our people still hold this belief, I am happy to say, and will assemble, as their ancestors have for generations, to invoke the Deity. The decline of the Christian religion, particularly in our rural communities, is a marked feature of the times, and steps should be taken to remedy it.

"No matter what our belief may be in religious matters, every good citizen knows that when the restraining influences of religion are withdrawn from a community, its decay, moral, mental and financial, is swift and sure. To me this is one of the strongest evidences of the fundamental truth of Christianity.

"I suggest that, as far as possible, on Fast day union meetings be held, made up of all shades of belief, including all who are interested in the welfare of our state, and that in your prayers and other devotions, and in your mutual counsels, you remember and consider the problem of the condition of religion in the rural communities.

"There are towns where no church bell sends forth its solemn call from January to January; there are villages where children grow to manhood unchristened; there are communities where the dead are laid away without the benison of the name of Christ, and where marriages are solemnized only by justices of the peace.

"This is a matter worthy of your thoughtful consideration, citizens of New Hampshire. It does not augur well for the future. You can afford to devote one day in the year to your fellow-men—to work and thought and prayer for your children and your children's children."

* * *

That the Governor of New Hampshire is not greatly overstating the situation is evidenced by the following clipping from the *Boston Traveler* of March 8th:—

"As surely as two and two are four the Boston police are incompetent to cope with the rogues, footpads and other outlaws infesting this city, and citizens fear to walk the streets after nightfall in consequence of the prevailing lawlessness. Crime has reached that stage that a citizen is not safe on the street or in his own home after the shadow of evening has taken possession of mother earth."

A very similar statement was recently made respecting lawlessness in St. Louis by one of its leading newspapers.

If we were in the midst of financial depression, and if thousands of "out-of-works" were tramping the country as a few years ago, such statements would excite much less surprise and be much less significant of a moral decline such as the Apostle prophetically indicates must now be expected. But on the contrary, we are in the very midst of "good times"—far better than can be reasonably expected to continue long. And with the spirit of selfishness described by the Apostle constantly increasing, we must expect that each succeeding financial depression will manifest increasing lawlessness until the final catastrophe of anarchy shall crumble present institutions and prepare the way for the reign of Immanuel.

OTHERS SEE IT—JUDGE BURKE'S VIEW

The Governor is not the only person whose eyes are open and who feels it his duty to "cry aloud and spare not." The Rev. Dr. Buckley, editor of the New York *Christian Advocate*, the leading Methodist paper of the world, recently felt called upon to point out the decadence of Methodism. And still more recently at the session of the Rock River Methodist board of examinations the same subject came up and was discussed very boldly by Prof. Small and subsequently by Judge E. W. Burke, the published report of whose speech follows:—

"SEES DARK SKIES

"Judge Burke's Pessimistic Talk Before Methodists—Social Disturbance Ahead—The Jurist Continues in the Strain Adopted by His Predecessors and Gains Congratulations

"The keynote of the midyear session of the Rock River Methodist board of examination, now in session at the Englewood First Church, continues to be social and religious pessimism. Many of the papers read are directly on this subject, and the discussion of the rest generally works around to the same point.

"Tuesday Prof. Small led off in this direction, and yesterday Judge E. W. Burke, in a paper on 'The Church of the Twentieth Century, from a Layman's Standpoint,' went just as far. These sentiments are received by the large congregation of ministers and others who hear them, not only without protest, but with approval. Judge Burke could hardly leave the platform for the handshaking and congratulations that beset him.

"Judge Burke dwelt on the tyranny of capital, the terrible impending conflict between concentrated capital and labor, *the decadence of the Methodist Church*, as depicted by Rev. Dr. Buckley in the New York *Christian Advocate*, and the rumor that the wealthy laymen of the church were threatening to withhold their contributions unless they were granted equal representation in the general conference.

"Judge Burke spoke in part as follows:—

"'The whole creation and all the manifestations of the spiritual, intellectual and even the physical forces are now in a transitional period as never before. Even trade and methods of business that have been pursuing their customary ways for centuries are paralyzing individual effort and puzzling the lawmakers of the earth. Storm centers of labor and capital are gathering over against each other, threatening the very integrity of the industrial firmament of man. The late appearances of the hitherto unsuspected intellectual and physical forces but add Titans of unknown strength to the conflict toward which all the world is consciously or unconsciously rushing. He who observes and reflects on matters of Church and State feels this condition in the very pulsing ether, the like of which history does not disclose.

[We do not know that Judge Burke has read the WATCH TOWER publications bearing on this subject, but thousands of thinking people are now awakening to the truth respecting the great "Day of Vengeance" which for twenty years we have been pointing out and seeking to bring to the attention of the Lord's people. The difficulty with many is, that, seeing these approaching troubles from the outside, they are losing confidence in divine providence, and their hearts are failing them for fear, as they look forward to those things coming upon the earth. (Matt. 24; Luke 21:26) On the contrary, all who learned of the coming troubles from the Lord's Word, before there were outward evidences of them, are strengthened in their faith by every fresh development—for they by the same Word know the object of the troubles and the grand results they are outworking.]

"'No human wisdom can say what mean the great and increasing aggregations of capital, now sufficient to buy kingdoms. If these shall be arrayed against the empty hands of labor, then shall mass collide with mass, and who can predict the end thereof? I see no commanding spirit of compromise in these approaching and threatening avalanches, which seem destined to involve the whole social system in universal ruin before the young men of this audience become three-score and ten years of age. So that the church, as it passes into the twentieth century, meets a perfect whirlwind of world forces which overwhelm the statesman, the philosopher and the historian, and drive them back into the cave of Sinai, while the storms pass the bounds of known law and rush on to a fate that makes the thoughtful tremble.

[As heretofore pointed out,* these *giant trusts* of our day which threaten the liberties and the very existence of the individual laborer, correspond exactly to the giant men of renown of Noah's day, on whose account the flood came. And as those never arose from their watery graves to again harass mankind, so the Lord promises that these giants of the present day, falling in the great time of trouble impending, will never rise again.—Isa. 43:17.]

"DIFFICULTIES MUST COME

"'Now, my friends, after much reflection, I do not believe it is the specific mission of the church to adjust men to the new conditions of life and action, or, in a temporal sense, to safety them against the Atlantic storms of capital and labor. These storms will be terrific, but they must come. They are brewed in the selfishness of the human heart, and each succeeding one shall prove more destructive than its predecessor, until the prince of darkness is chained. I believe the new conditions which shall whirl us into the twentieth century, uncorrected by the gospel, shall forge unbreakable chains for the spirits, minds and bodies of men. I know there is a charm in the power of union and in the exhibition of strength, but, unless it is a union of strength uncemented with selfishness, it will crumble by whatsoever law it may have been formed.

"'It may be true that the task-master in these modern days attempts to compel men to make brick without straw, not to punish men, but to save straw. Formerly it was oppression to gratify the passion for cruelty, while now it is oppression to gratify the passion for gold. Formerly the task-master was a human being with whip in hand, but now he stands with the inexorable forces of nature in his fist, against which no individual in his unaided strength seems able to stand. But this modern task-master is destined to fall, and the David who shall slay this modern Goliath is the church of the twentieth century, not by matching force with force, but by using the weapons with which Christ has armed his followers.

[How true this statement, and yet how untrue as the Judge meant it! It will not be "Babylon," "Christendom," that will smite these giants and all sin and selfishness and deliver the world. No; the same Scriptures declare that "Babylon," mother and daughters, the entire family or system of Churchianity will go down in the general collapse. Yet it will be the church, the true church, the church glorified, that will smite, and deliver the groaning creation. Ah, how true! "There standeth one among you whom you know not!" The King of kings has come! We are even now in the *parousia* of the Son of Man! Soon the last members of his "elect" body, the church, will be gathered to him—glorified and invisible to men,—and then he will begin the rule of the iron rod which shall break the world's vaunted institutions as potters' vessels. (Rev. 2:27) He declares, I will "gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the *fire of my jealously*. And *then* will I turn unto the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." (Zeph. 3:8, 9) This symbolic burning and breaking will be the new missionary method, by which the church glorified will, in the early part of the twentieth century, under and with her glorious Head, "bring in everlasting righteousness." "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. 26:9) Thus, "The glory [majesty] of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together"—Isa. 40:5.]

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* MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV, page 359.

"'I deplore every worldly success of the church, whether it be the raising of $20,000,000 with which to curse the twentieth century church, or the building of many church edifices every time the earth revolves, if this success shall in the least lead men to forget the springs of true power in the church. We seem to be on times when the church may have money enough to convert the world: forbid that it be enough to convert the church to the world. The church should not want one dollar of money except it first be sanctified.

''MUST NOT BARGAIN WITH THE RICH

"'Why, recently I have noticed the threat from high sources that, unless the rich laymen of the Methodist Church are admitted in equal representation as delegates to the next general conference, they will withhold the $20,000,000 which the ambition of the church seeks for the first years of the coming century. Now, much as I favor equal representation in that august lawmaking body, may it never be realized, and perish the money of the rich, in the language of Peter, if it be given, even impliedly, as the consideration price of place and power in the church, and not as the free-will offering of grateful hearts purchased by the blood of Christ. The church, for many reasons, cannot pay court to mere wealth or personal prestige. The poor do not understand the mission of the church when they demand that it feed them and bitterly rail because it does not. But they are half right when the church recognizes men in the least degree because they possess wealth. The great masses of the people stand yonder alienated from our churches because the wedge of gold is hidden with us. It does the church no good: it empties our pews; it frosts our air.

"'One of the closest observers of church life in our land, and one who weighs his words, has written this month for his widely read editorial column that the moral tone of the church is unsatisfactory, and that many societies would be reduced to a few pious women, aged persons and unsophisticated youth if the discipline enforced in the primitive church, or in the earlier days of English and American Methodism, were applied; that many official members never participate actively in the aggressive spiritual work of the church; that this religious and moral condition bodes no good; that in eighty-seven cities in the United States Methodism is scarcely holding its own, regardless of the increase of population and of the fact that so many accessions are received by letter from country churches. He further states that diverse superficial explanations are offered for this humiliating condition, but that whatever influence they may have, it is absolutely certain that, if the laity and clergy were living according to the teachings of the New Testament, it could not be so.

"'When such an alarm as this is sounded with the hammer of facts, beware, not of the rocks or the sea, but of the dangers on board. But in this very alarm lies the hope of safety. It shows that thoughtful Christian men are looking deeply into the causes of the present condition and that they will be removed. This alarm is all the Lord wants, and in answer to prayer he will open the windows of heaven and pour unnumbered blessings on the church of the twentieth century.'"

It would appear, then, that the Judge after all sees that the church nominal of to-day is sadly unprepared for the great work he declares is absolutely necessary. He is prepared even to admit that, so far as Methodism is concerned, it is *less prepared* (so far as personal piety is concerned) than at the opening of the nineteenth century. The Judge *hopes* great things, if everybody can be awakened, and if all "tares" or nominal Christians (300,000,000) will but act as tho they were "wheat" or real Christians. We rejoice with the Judge in his own sincerity as witnessed by his words (and for aught we know by his acts also) and we commend to him a further study of the Word of God's grace which is able to make him wise respecting the divine plan for vanquishing all the foes of the groaning creation and delivering them also from the bondage of corruption. But let him lay off sectarian spectacles which magnify everything which glorifies sectarianism and minimize the grace of our God and the power of his might.

We will submit another testimony, from a high source, going to show that Methodism is far from prepared for the twentieth century work the Judge points out is *imperative*,—if the world would be rescued from the calamity of having its civilization blotted out. Nor are Methodists proportionately in poorer spiritual condition than other sects, so far as we may be able to judge. It just happens that the witnesses at hand are all of that persuasion. There are undoubtedly many true, noble, warm hearts in this quarter of Babylon who feel pressed in spirit to overcome their sectarian pride and in the interest of vital godliness, to "Cry aloud and spare not."

This witness is *The Epworth Herald*, the leading journal among the Methodist "Young People;" it says:

''A CRISIS''

"Methodism is in a crucial place. A crisis has been reached. We need to run up the danger signal. There never has been a time in our eventful history when there was so great need for self-examination.

"Last year the whole denomination was startled by the smallness of our numerical increase. This year [1898] promises to show no better results. Revivals are less frequent and less fruitful. The doctrines which emphasize the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the certainty of an eternal hell, the necessity of repentance, the need of regeneration, and the far-reaching importance of a definite spiritual experience are not preached in many of our pulpits as faithfully as our fathers preached them. The demand for a less heroic gospel is widespread. Sinners can sit in our churches without feeling much discomfort. Formalism increases. The spirit of aggressiveness which so dominated our church for a hundred years begins to wane.

"Multitudes of our people have lost the marks which once distinguished us. They have adopted the social customs of the world. They patronize the theater. They have become familiar with the card-table. The sound of dancing echoes through their homes. Wealth is worshipped. Social position is accounted the principal thing. No wonder that the children of some of our most influential families are lost to Methodism. With their thoughtless and back-slidden parents they are drawn into the whirlpool of social pleasure, and either drift out into a line of infidelity or attach themselves to some church where worldliness is no bar.

"Moreover, beneficence does not keep pace with our increasing wealth. The fact that it required two long years, filled with pitiful pleading, for our great church to raise a paltry missionary debt of $186,000 is one of the saddest experiences of our denomination.

"This is not pessimism. It is fact. And the sooner we wake up to the peril of the situation the better for Methodism to-day and to-morrow. A CRISIS IS HERE. A crisis does not necessarily mean disaster. It will not if we will only see the danger and escape."

''AWAKE, O ZION,

cries the prophet. (Isa. 52:1) He who sleeps now, not only neglects his duty to the "brethren," but puts himself in jeopardy—marks himself as deficient in the very spirit of love which the Lord declares all-essential in his estimation. We remind our readers again of the Call for Volunteers in our last issue. Many responses are already at hand, but our hope is that many more may share the privilege and blessing of this service.

INTROSPECTION NEXT IN ORDER

Having satisfied ourselves respecting the fulfilment of the Apostle's charges against "Christendom" and having found his predictions fully corroborated by facts well witnessed to, the question arises, Can the Lord's truly consecrated people learn any further valuable lessons and what are they?

We have already noted that all such are to "turn away" from those who have merely the form of godliness. And we have seen that it is both our duty and privilege to aid any true "brethren" yet in Babylon to attain the light and liberty wherewith Christ makes free his true followers. But let us not forget personal introspection—to *look within* our own hearts carefully and frequently to make doubly sure that the world's spirit of selfishness does not poison us as it poisonously manifests itself in others.

We are to remember always that we have the treasure of the new mind, the new spirit, in earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4:7), and that these earthen vessels are continually surrounded by selfish tendencies and examples; and that consequently they must be kept well filled with the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love, that the evil spirit of selfishness does not in any of its many forms gain access.

If in our introspections we find traces of self-love, of covetous ambition, of a disposition to boast even of good things, or even a little pride—perhaps "spiritual pride," as some erroneously describe it, or even a slight tendency to slander (blaspheme), or the least tendency to disrespect parents, or any measure of ingratitude toward God or men (unthankfulness), or the slightest sympathy with false accusations, or any lack of moderation (incontinence), or any sympathy with fierce speeches or manners, or anything else than fervent love for all who are "good," or the slightest suggestion to betray a trust or a confidence, or the least tendency to self-will and self-consciousness, or any disposition to weigh our own wills or pleasure against the Lord's will, or the least tendency to mere formalism in worship, or the slightest evidence that the *power* of the truth is not in full control of our hearts, and lives, it should arouse us to energetically seek help from on high and to put away the unclean thing which taints our sacrifice.

Nevertheless let no one feel discouraged even tho he should find *traces* of all these evils in his *flesh*: for as the Apostle declares, so we must all find, "In my flesh dwells no perfection." (Rom. 7:18) We are however to expect no trace of these evils in our *hearts*—no sympathy, no co-operation with any of these evils. As enemies of the Lord, and our enemies because we are the Lord's in spirit and in truth, these evils are to be hunted and shunned to the best of our ability from every nook and corner of our beings. "Be ye holy that bear the vessels of the Lord's house." "As he who has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all things."

VOLUNTEERS IN ALL DIRECTIONS

We rejoice in the hearty responses to the article in our last issue under the caption *"Volunteers Wanted."* The friends in some of the cities have completed arrangements and began the *work* on April 30th. Others notify us that they are preparing and will send full report shortly. The evidences are that "Volunteers" are likely to get as much blessing as those whom they will serve with the bread of life—"present truth."

Meantime we are preparing to increase the edition of "Bible vs. Evolution" to 500.000 copies.

In responding to this call please write on separate sheet of paper, heading it Volunteers. State number of volunteers and number of Protestant Churches, etc.

FORSAKEN—BUT NOT FOREVER

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment: but with agelasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."—Isa. 54:7, 8.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken?
  Hear our first parents despairingly cry:
Had not the tempter their constancy shaken,
  Would they have wandered in exile to die?
Why, since life's stream was defiled at its fountain,
  Was it not dried, ere the flood ran so deep?
Why, lest iniquity grow to a mountain,
  Should the first infant be cradled to weep?

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken?
  Groaneth the slave as he curses his chain:
Stung by the lash, and his last loved one taken,
  Doomed to a life of enslavement and pain.
Long has the despot his tyranny wielded,
  Long robbed his fellow of freedom and home;
Long have the humble their hard earnings yielded,
  Starving themselves to build turret or dome.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken?
  Hear the fond mother in agony moan;
Babe on her bosom will presently waken,
  Waken to find that dear guardian flown.
Merciful God! Who will care for the mourner?
  Who'll guard the orphan from hunger and cold?
Who'll guide the feet of the youthful sojourner
  Past haunts of vice to the Savior's pure fold?

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken?
  Questions my spirit in sorrow's lone hour;
Terrors and anguish my doubtings awaken,
  Doubts of our Father's compassion and power.
Louder the thunder-peals answer my wailing,
  Darker the stormcloud casts o'er me its pall;
Friends cannot comfort, and demons are railing,
  Heaven seems deaf to my piteous call.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken?
  Echoes from Calvary scatter my gloom;
Veils have been rent, and death's prison-house shaken,
  Answer I find at the dismantled tomb.
Know thou, O friend, saith the angel that lingers,
  Jesus hath risen a lost world to save;
Holdeth the issues of life in his fingers,
  Beareth the keys of a powerless grave.

God unto all men assurance has given,
  Sworn by himself all his creatures to bless;
Soon will the bonds of corruption be riven,
  Soon comes his Kingdom of righteousness.
After earth's night dawns a morning of gladness,
  Rainbows of glory shall cover our tears;
Truth will deliver from error and madness,
  Blessings will crown earth's Millennial years.

"For as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be restored to life." "Because creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 8:21; Acts 3:23.

—G. M. BILLS.

"I AM THE VINE—YE ARE THE BRANCHES"

MAY 7.—JOHN 15:1-11, 15.

The Apostle gives this as one of our Lord's discourses following the Memorial Supper on the last night of his earthly life. It was probably suggested by the drinking of the "cup," representing the blood of the New Covenant, and may have been uttered after Judas had gone out, and before the Lord and the eleven went to Gethsemane. Or it may have been suggested by the vineyards which they passed on their way to Gethsemane. Or possibly it may have been suggested by the great golden vine over the door of the golden gate of the temple (the "Beautiful Gate"), which Josephus says was very large and "had clusters as long as a man." Another writer says, "Leaves and buds were wrought of gleaming reddish gold, but its clusters of yellow gold, and its grapestones of precious stones." The moon being at its full would display this vine to good effect. The statement of Chap. 18:1, "When Jesus had spoken these words he went forth with his disciples," seems to favor the first supposition. This view would imply a considerable tarrying in the upper room after the supper was ended, probably to near midnight—after our Lord said, "Arise, let us go hence."—John 14:31.

"I am the *true* vine," institutes a comparison, and suggests to the mind a counterfeit or false vine; and this reminds us of the fact that our Lord, through this same writer, subsequently explained that there would be two harvests—a gathering of the fruit of the true Vine, and subsequently a gathering of the clusters of the "vine of the earth." (Rev. 14:18-20) If, as we shall see, the true Vine represents the true church, then the vine of the earth represents a false church, an untrue, ungenuine one.

The heavenly Father is the husbandman who planted, who owns, who cares for the true Vine, and to him it yields its fruit. The word "husbandman" here does not signify merely caretaker, but rather the vineyard-owner. This is in accordance with all the presentations of Scriptures. God is therein set forth as the author of man's hope, his Savior, through whom alone comes the deliverance from sin and death. The fact that God accomplishes this through an honored agent and representative, his beloved Son, and the further fact that he proposes to use an elect church as a royal priesthood, under his Son, the appointed Chief Priest, does not alter the fact that he himself is the fountain from which proceeds every good and every perfect gift.—1 Cor. 8:6; Jas. 1:17.

"Every branch in me, should not be understood to signify every nominal Christian, every professor, nor even those who render a nominal assent to the facts of Christianity, and who are in sympathy therewith. The *"justified"* believer is just ready *to become* a branch in the Vine, but his faith, and justification by that faith, do not make him a branch. The branches are those only who have first taken the step of justification through faith, and who subsequently have presented themselves to God as living sacrifices, and thus by consecration have been "immersed into Christ" by being "immersed into his death."

This procedure, by which we are inducted into *membership* in Christ (as branches of the Vine), is clearly expressed by the Apostle in Rom. 6:3-5. Be it noted that we, no more than the Apostle, are here making an immersion in water the condition of entry into the body of Christ (as our Baptist brethren mistakenly do); but we are insisting, as the Apostle insists, that none enter the body of Christ except by the immersion of their wills into the will of Christ—their consecration to be dead with him—a self-surrender as justified human beings to death and to be henceforth new creatures in Christ Jesus, under and controlled by him, as their Head or Guide in all things.

Amongst those who thus, according to divine arrangement, now become branches of the true Vine, there are two classes—fruit-bearing branches and non-fruit-bearing branches known as "suckers." But both of these conditions are developments: every branch begins as a very small shoot; every branch develops leaves; every branch has the same opportunities for nourishment, sap from the main stem, Christ, and from the same root of divine purpose and promise. All the branches of the Vine have a *tendency* to spend their strength upon themselves—in branch-making rather than in fruit-producing, and yet there is a difference. Vine-dressers tell us that they can very early discern the fruit-buds on the proper branches, and that the suckers lack these fruit-buds.

Just so it is with the Lord's consecrated people; he does not expect of them much and fine fruit immediately, but he does look for the buds or evidences of effort in the direction of fruit-bearing; and these fruit-buds will manifest themselves early in those who are proper branches of the true vine. And those who do not manifest a desire to bring forth fruitage to the Lord's glory, by serving him and his cause, but who on the contrary make use of the knowledge and blessings derived through union with Christ simply to advance themselves before men, and make a fair show in the flesh, are counted unworthy of retention, and are cut off, taken away—cease to be recognized in any sense of the word as branches. They may retain their freshness, green leaves, etc., for quite a little time after being rejected of the Lord, but it is only a question of time until they lose every evidence of fidelity—they wither away. Nor does the fact that they were branches avail anything after they cease to be branches, for the wood of the vine is of no practical value. They are burned, destroyed.

But as even the best branches in the vine, which give evidence of fruit-bearing, require pruning, so even the most honest and earnest of the Lord's people require the Lord's discipline and providential care—otherwise they might soon run to woodmaking also, and fail to bring forth much fruit. The husbandman's skill recognizes how much of the branch and sprout and leaf are necessary to the bringing forth and proper maturing of the fruit which he seeks, and so our heavenly Father knows perfectly the conditions, etc., most favorable to us that we may bring forth much good fruit. He sees the sprouts of our ambitions in various directions, and knows, as we do not, whereunto these might lead us; and by his providence nips in the bud many of our propositions, deeming it better that the strength and energy which we thus intend to put forth should be expended rather in other directions—in bringing to maturity our good fruits already started and in progress.

The true child of God whose will has been entirely immersed into the will of the Lord is neither offended nor discouraged by these prunings. He has learned something at least of his own unwisdom, and has confidence in the wisdom of the great Husbandman; hence when divine providence estops his efforts in some directions he takes the thwarting of his plans joyfully, assured that the Lord's will and the Lord's way are the best, and intended to work out a blessing.

As the Father's representative, Jesus had been keeping the first branches of the Vine. He had purged or pruned by his reproofs or counsels, so that now, at the close of his three and a half years' ministry, he could say, "Now ye are clean through the word [teaching] which I have spoken unto you." As he again said, in his prayer to the Father, "Those that thou gavest me I have kept [as branches, disciples, members], and none of them is lost save the son of perdition." But henceforth, as the same prayer expressed the matter, the pruning and care of the branches would not be done by our Lord Jesus in the same manner, but through the operation of the holy Spirit—the Spirit of the Father and of the Son.

But it is not sufficient that we be first justified, and then sanctified through a consecration to the Lord; nor is it sufficient that we get into the body of Christ and become branches of the Vine. It is good to be a little shoot, it is good to have buds of promise, it is good to grow as a branch and put forth tendrils, but however large or small the branch may be, however old or young, we must remember that the sap which produces the fruit can only be obtained by *continued* union with the Vine and its root of promise. If ever separated, all hopes must wither. Only as we are in Christ, and through him heirs of God, have we part or lot in this matter; and only so can we bring forth the fruits which the great Husbandman seeks. It would be folly for the branch to say, I needed at first to be united with Christ the Vine, but now I can stand alone. Whoever stands alone, whoever is separated from the Vine and from the other branches, will speedily wither away; and whoever abides in the Vine must surely continue to have *fidelity* to the Vine, must be at one with all the other true branches of the same Vine. And here we see the importance of being in the *true* Vine and at-one with the *true* branches.

The wrong thought on this subject of the Vine and the branches is frequently expressed by our friends of various denominations, who claim that the branches of the vine are the various denominations of Christians. This inculcates a serious error, namely, that it is the duty of every individual Christian to get into membership in one of these branches—as for instance, the Presbyterian branch, or the Methodist branch, or the Lutheran branch, or the Roman Catholic branch, or the Greek Catholic branch. The correct thought, on the contrary, is that each individual Christian in consecrating himself to the Lord becomes an individual branch in the *true* Vine: and his labors thenceforth should be not to bring forth denominational and sectarian fruits, but to bring forth the fruits or graces of the spirit of God in his own character and life.

One writer, in pursuing this wrong thought respecting the branches, says, "God does not desire to have fruitless churches large and prosperous; he lets them wither away. The churches that keep nearest to Christ will grow the fastest." It should not be difficult for any to discern the fallacy of such reasoning. If this were the correct view it would imply that the church organizations which are the largest in numbers and most prosperous in wealth and honor amongst men are those which have the most truth and which most directly receive the sap of the holy Spirit from the Lord. But let us see: amongst Christians this would constitute Roman Catholicism the holiest and best and nearest to the Lord; Greek Catholicism would claim to be second; Methodism third, and so on. Intelligent people scarcely need to have the fallacies of such an interpretation pointed out.

But what is incongruous when applied to denominations as branches, is thoroughly logical and in harmony with the facts when applied to the individual Christian and his spiritual life. Those who abide in Christ in faith and trust and consecration to his service—to the bringing forth of the fruits which are pleasing in the sight of the great Husbandman—find themselves in a narrow way indeed, often hedged up by providence, and their efforts in various directions changed, or rather, their intentions thwarted; but they find, as a result of all this experience, rightly received, that they are growing in grace—in the knowledge and in the love of God, the fruits of the spirit.—Rom. 8:28.

The close union between the Vine and the branches is brought to our attention by our Lord's words, "He that abideth in me and I in him:" the Vine and its branches have such a oneness that wherever we touch a branch we touch the Vine itself. It is one vine *composed* of branches, and so is the body of Christ one body, composed of many members. Wherever a member or branch of the body of Christ is found, all the various characteristics of Christ himself are found—in spirit, in intention, as "new creatures." This oneness in Christ is the secret of the power and of the fruit-bearing and of the acceptableness of the branches with the Father, the Husbandman.

"Without me ye can do nothing," is a statement well worthy of being deeply engraved in the heart of every truly consecrated member of the body of Christ. But to abide in Christ means to be subject to all the will of the great Husbandman, and gladly and meekly submit to all the prunings which his wisdom sees best to permit. Respecting this necessity for pruning and discipline, Trench, the celebrated theologian, has well said:

"It fares exactly so with God and some of his elect servants. Men seeing their graces, which so far exceed the graces of common men, wonder sometimes why they should suffer still, why they seem to be ever falling from one trial to another. But he sees in them—what no other eye can see—the grace which is capable of becoming more gracious still; and in his far-looking love for his own, who shall praise him, not for a day, but for an eternity, he will not suffer them to stop short of the best whereof they are capable. They are fruitbearing branches, and just because they are such, he prunes them that they may bring forth more fruit."

Remarking upon the fact that sometimes a vine or tree may attempt more fruit than it is capable of bringing to perfection, and likening this to Christian experience and efforts, another writer (H. L. Hastings) suggests:—

"The best way is to *shake the tree*, and free it of extra fruit. Prune, clip, cut, pluck, and reduce the fruit, until it becomes manageable, and until the tree can support its burden, and then let every branch be loaded with fruit that comes to perfection, but not *overloaded* with fruit which never will reach its full development."

This is a very correct thought, as relates to the fruitage of efforts put forth in the Lord's service on behalf of others; for many waste their efforts because they do not concentrate them sufficiently.

The talented Apostle Paul gives his testimony as to the wisdom of shaking off some of our plans and arrangements and efforts for which we have little talent, and concentrating our efforts upon those which we can best bring to perfection, ripeness, saying, "This one thing I do." (Phil. 3:13) The Apostle's one business in life was to be, so far as he was able, acceptable to the Lord personally, and to do with his might what he could to assist others into the same condition. But the fruit-bearing of works for others we do not understand to be the principal thought in this lesson. The first thought is that we should have the fruits of the Lord's spirit in our own hearts, the graces of the spirit well developed. This, however, implies activity and self-sacrifice in the Lord's service, for only so by the Lord's arrangement can our personal fruits and graces be brought to maturity.

Our Lord gives us an intimation that the growing of much fruit is not wholly dependent upon ourselves, and that even while we abide in him as fruit-bearing branches the quality and quantity of the fruit is to be improved by our having proper ideals before our minds, and earnestly seeking their realization. Thus he says, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." The intimation is that the desire and the asking of the Father at the throne of the heavenly grace is a means by which we may more and more receive of the sap of the Vine, the holy Spirit, and be enabled to develop the fruits of the Spirit. It will be noticed that nothing here implies the seeking or finding of earthly good things. These are to be left wholly to the Lord's wisdom and providence, and his people, the true branches of the Vine, are to desire and to seek for the holy spirit, which the Father is more willing to give to them than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children.—Luke 11:13.

Incidentally the Lord here points out the value of the Scriptures to his true branches or disciples, when he says, "If my words abide in you." It is not only necessary and proper that we seek divine grace, but it is equally proper that we avail ourselves of the divine revelation respecting what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God our Father, the Husbandman of the true Vine. Hence it will be found that those who bear much fruit and good fruit not only have been justified through faith, and sanctified through consecration, and thus accepted into membership in the true Vine, but that additionally they are seeking to be fruit-bearers,—seeking to abide in the Vine, and to have all the characteristics of the Vine, seeking grace to help in every time of need, and availing themselves not only of the sap which flows through the roots, but also of the light of truth and grace which shines upon them through the Word of the Lord. And only by following these conditions can we be fruit-bearers, and only by being bearers of fruit can we be the Lord's disciples—to the end; for we are to remember that the church of the present time is merely the probationary church, a company of those who have professed loyalty, love and obedience. The Lord will bring testing to prove the sincerity of their professions, and only those who thus prove the sincerity of their professions will be accepted as members of the church glorified, symbolized by the golden vine of the Beautiful Gate of the Temple.

Our Lord would have all the true branches realize his love, his interest, his care for them, his desire that they might make their calling and their election sure by compliance with the conditions of membership in the Vine: hence he assures them of his love in the strongest possible language. He tells them that his love for them is of the same kind as the Father's love for him. Even with all the various evidences of the truthfulness of this statement, corroborated by the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the Lord's Word, it is far too wonderful for us to fully comprehend. We can readily see how and why our Lord Jesus was greatly beloved of the Father, and called his well-beloved Son, but it astounds us to know that this same love is exercised by our Lord in turn toward us. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God;" for our Lord Jesus expressed and fully manifested the Father's love.—1 John 3:1; John 14:7.

But then comes a limitation, namely, that this intense love is only for the "little flock." True, "God so loved the world," and our Lord Jesus loved the world also, in the sense of sympathetic love, and a desire to do them good. But the love which the Lord is here declaring is a different one. It is only for those who have made a full consecration to him—indeed, that consecration is the secret of his special love. The Father loved the only begotten Son because he was full of faith and trust and obedience—"unto death, even the death of the cross." And likewise this same love extends to those justified ones who, filled with the Master's spirit, desire to walk in his footsteps, to take up their cross and follow him. God's love, of the same kind that went out toward our dear Redeemer, goes out to all such; and the Redeemer's love goes out to them; and the good message comes to them, "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justified. . . . It is Christ that died."—1 Cor. 3:22, 23; Rom. 8:33, 34.

But as this special love is in view of the consecration and obedience of this class, so it depends upon the continuation of that spirit of consecration and obedience. If their loving devotion grow cold, and they become filled with self-love and the spirit of the world, to that extent they grieve the holy Spirit,—they turn from them this special love of the Lord: and hence the injunction of our Lord, "Continue ye in my love." These words show that it is possible for us to forfeit the Lord's love and to become castaways—to fail to make sure our calling and election to the exceeding great things which God hath in reservation for them that love him with this supreme love.—2 Pet. 1:4-11; 1 Cor. 9:27.

It is important that we keep in mind that true love on our part will manifest itself in obedience, and hence that disobedience is an evidence of the loss of love as viewed from the Lord's standpoint; and we must all agree that this is a reasonable standpoint of judgment. Some may say, How would it be if we disobeyed through ignorance? We answer that the Lord has made provision against our ignorance: first, he has given us the Word of truth, "that the man of God may be perfect [perfectly informed], thoroughly furnished unto every good work;" and secondly, he has promised to supply such helps in the spirit of holiness, and the understanding of his Word as will enable us to do those things which are pleasing in his sight. (2 Tim. 3:17; John 16:13) Thus, carelessness respecting the Word of the Lord is one evidence of the lack of love. Our Lord points out that his continuance in the Father's love, as the well-beloved Son, with all that this implies, was because of his obedience to the Father's will, and that following the same line he must require that we shall be obedient to him if we would abide in his love, share his throne and glory.

"These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might be in you, and that your joy might be full." Our Lord's instructions and commandments are not intended to terrify us, nor to deprive us of happiness. On the contrary, as the most fruitful branches well know, obedience to the Lord's words, and the privilege thus obtained of abiding in him and his love, is the greatest joy—a joy which wholly outweighs all the trifling pleasures which the world has to offer. It is the joy and peace that passeth all understanding, which rules in the heart, and which brings with it the promise, the assurance, not only of the life which now is, but also of that which is to come.

THE LORD BETRAYED

MAY 14.—JOHN 18:1-14.

"He is despised and rejected of men."—Isa. 53:3.

After the last supper, and after his discourse to the disciples respecting the Vine and the branches, came our Lord's beautiful prayer recorded in John's 17th chapter. Then, probably about midnight, Jesus, with the eleven, passed outside the gate of Jerusalem, crossed the little brook called Cedron, and on the farther hill above it entered the olive orchard known as the Garden of Gethsemane: perhaps it was a public garden, or possibly the property of some one friendly to our Lord. What purports to be its site is now maintained as a garden, and has been for centuries. It is in charge of monks who take pleasure in receiving visitors to view it. There are about six or eight very large and evidently very old olive trees in this garden at the present—they give evidence of being at least one thousand years old, but possibly are much older.

While talking with his disciples and praying for them our Lord seemingly was full of good courage: while exhorting them that their hearts be not troubled evidently his own heart was not cast down. But as the little company wended its way to Gethsemane we may well suppose that a great weight fell upon our dear Redeemer's sensibilities. We can imagine him saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." (Matt. 26:38) The present visit to Gethsemane, therefore, was evidently very different from previous visits. Some appreciation of the momentous occasion was no doubt inspired in the hearts of the apostles by the Master's dejection, and yet they probably but slightly comprehended what was about to come to pass.

Arrived at the garden, we glean from other Evangelists that our Lord left eight of the apostles near the gate, taking Peter, James and John, his closest companions, a little farther with him, and cautioning them all to watch and pray, because it was an hour of special trial. Going a little farther by himself, he communed with the Father in secret. His feelings were not and could not be shared even by his beloved disciples; they could not appreciate the trial through which he was passing; they had not yet been begotten of the spirit. Thus in his most trying hour Jesus was alone—"Of the people there was none with me."—Isa. 63:3.

It is difficult for the majority, even of Christian people, to appreciate the true character of our dear Lord's trial, which in this instance so wrought upon his nervous system as to produce a bloody sweat. Many compare our Lord's course with that of some of his martyr followers who have gone forth into death with remarkable courage, and in contrasting matters they are inclined to wonder why our Lord, who was perfect, should have endured so much more a passion of suffering than his imperfect followers. To grasp the true situation it is necessary that several things be borne in mind:—

(1) For our Lord, who had a perfect right to life, to lay it down in death, was a very different matter from the laying down of a forfeited and impaired life on the part of those who could not hope to keep it long anyway. (2) Our race, already nine-tenths dead, has but a feeble appreciation of the great value of life—all of its experience having been in connection with dying, it has come to regard death with equanimity. But not so our Lord, the "prince of life," who had been with the Father from the beginning, and by whom all things were made—he realized life as a very precious boon, privilege, enjoyment. To him, therefore, death must have been much more terrible than to us who are already nine-tenths dead, and correspondingly blunted in all of our sensibilities. True he had the Father's assurance that if faithful unto death he should have a resurrection, and unquestionably he believed the Father's promise—all of his course in life gives abundant evidence of his implicit faith in the Father. And yet in his case this must have been a crucial trial to faith, much more so than with us. As we have only a shred of a forfeited life to lay down, so we have on the other hand, not only the Father's promise of a future life through Christ, but we have the example of the Father's power in the resurrection of our dear Redeemer: but our Lord Jesus had no such evidence of the divine power; he himself, according to the divine promise, was to be the "first-born from the dead," a first-fruit unto God of his creatures.—Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 15:20.

But all this had already been counted, weighed and accepted from the very beginning of his ministry. He had already informed the disciples that it was necessary that he should lay down his life for the sheep, and that he was about to do so. (John 10:15) We are not to assume, therefore, when our dear Redeemer prayed, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me," that he meant if it were possible he might escape dying. He well knew, and had already explained to the apostles, that the drawing of the world could not take place except he were lifted up as the sin-offering —that it was absolutely necessary that he should die for our sins and enter into his glory.—John 3:14; 12:32.

The cup which he prayed might pass from him, if possible, we must therefore suppose to have been the shame and ignominy of arrest as a law-breaker; a public trial and conviction, and subsequent crucifixion as a malefactor. It was one thing to die for our sins, as men generally die, without special shame or contumely; it was another thing that he should die with such extreme shame, dishonor and contempt. Quite probably in the Father's wisdom this last feature was kept more or less hidden from our dear Redeemer until just about the time of its accomplishment. And apparently our Lord Jesus did not see any absolute *necessity* for his suffering more than the sinner suffered, in order to pay man's ransom price. Hence his prayer for a time was, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The Apostle also notes this distinction, saying, he "became obedient unto death," and then adds "even the death of the cross."—Phil. 2:8.

The death of the cross, with its attendant dishonor, reproach, etc., so far as we may be able to judge, was not necessary as our ransom price, because the penalty did not read, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die with public reprobation and dishonor by crucifixion. Since the penalty was death (Gen. 2:17), we may suppose that our Lord's death by any means would have fully paid man's ransom price. However, the additional features were deemed necessary by the Father, and the "cup" did not pass. The Father required this extreme of obedience as a test, a proof not only to himself but before all his intelligent creatures of the absolute loyalty of heart of his "well beloved Son," upon whom he designed shortly thereafter to confer the great blessing and high exaltation of his own divine nature and joint-heirship in his Kingdom. And the loyalty of our dear Redeemer was fully attested, as the Apostle declares; he "depised the shame," that is to say, the shame was as nothing in his sight in comparison with the accomplishment of the Father's purposes, the pleasing of the Father. (Heb. 12:2) So long as he thought there was a possibility of the elimination of the shame feature, he was nervously anxious to have it so, if possible; but as soon as he realized that this was not the Father's will his heart instantly responded, "Not my will but thine be done." Decision respecting the Father's will immediately brought strength; he was now prepared for any experience, "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."

Meanwhile Judas, who some days before had engaged with the high-priest to betray Jesus, and who left the upper room immediately after the Supper to carry out his nefarious plan, had received of the chief priests and Pharisees a band of men, with a person in charge as an officer, whose mission it was to arrest Jesus in the night and to secure his execution before the Passover. We must wholly disagree with the common thought that this "band" consisted of an army of three to six hundred Roman soldiers. They certainly acted very differently from soldiers ordinarily under such circumstances. Besides, the record by all of the Evangelists is that this band was sent, not by Pilate nor by Herod, the Roman representatives, but by the chief priests and Pharisees, who we know had no command whatever of the Roman garrison. To our understanding this band which apprehended Jesus was very similar to the one mentioned in John 7:32-46.

It would appear that the Jewish Sanhedrin exercised a certain amount of authority in respect to religious matters, and were permitted to make arrests, but not to execute criminals without the consent of the Roman governor. We remember that the apostles were arrested on several occasions by such officers of the Jews.—See Acts 5:17, 18, 22, 25-40.

Both Matthew and Mark speak of this aggregation, under officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, as a "multitude," and our Lord's words indicate that they were armed with sticks and swords such as were common to the people in general, and he does not mention spears, which would probably have been a part of the armament of a band of Roman soldiers. This thought is further emphasized by the fact that it was the high priest's servant who evidently made the first assault upon Jesus, and received a blow from Peter's sword. If Roman soldiers had the matter in charge the high priest's servant no doubt would have been less officious.

It is presumed, and apparently on good grounds, that this company seeking Jesus, under the guidance of Judas, went first to the upper room which our Lord and the apostles had left probably less than an hour before. Finding that Jesus and the eleven were gone, Judas knew that he would be most likely to find them in the Garden of Gethsemane, for "Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples." John's account omits the particulars of the betrayal given by the other Evangelists: possibly the loving disciple felt so much ashamed of the facts that he preferred not to mention them. Certainly very few acts of treachery ever paralleled this one, and all mankind, even in their perverted condition of mind, seem to realize that the position of traitor is amongst the most despicable on the calendar, and such treachery as that of Judas, against such kindness and love and goodness as that of his Master, we may be thankful is not so very common. And yet there are correspondencies in the experiences of the Lord's people, "in perils amongst false brethren." It behooves us each to look to it that we permit nothing akin to the spirit of Judas to rankle in our hearts. Our Lord puts the "members of his body" in such matters on a plane with himself, and assures us that whoever shall injure one of the least of these his brethren, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.—Matt. 18:6.

Of course there will always be a *motive*, good or bad, back of every deed done to the under-members of his body as well as to the Head. To find strong motives is not to find valid excuses for treacheries. So far as our experience and judgment go, the lesson is that such treachery from "false brethren" usually has its spring in covetousness, lust for influence, power or position, and the desire to glorify such unholy ambitions cannot fail to corrupt any heart which entertains them. As one has said:—

"Sow a thought, you reap an act;
Sow an act, you reap a habit;
Sow a habit, you reap a character;
Sow a character, you reap a destiny."

Judas had been doing some of this sowing of evil thoughts for a considerable time before his thoughts took outward shape in evil acts. He was covetous of wealth and of influence; he became the treasurer of the little group of disciples, and the intimation of the Scriptures is that he purloined to his own private uses a portion of the contributions. As usual, his love for money increased the more he exercised it, until he was willing to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver—equivalent to about twenty dollars of our money, tho representing in value of labor a much larger sum. It would seem, too, that Judas was looking forward to the promised kingdom, and probably anticipated a high position as royal treasurer of that kingdom.

It is quite possible, indeed probable, we think, that Judas was seriously disappointed in respect to the result of his betrayal. Apparently he expected that our Lord would deliver himself by miraculous power from the hands of his enemies. This is the most charitable view we would know how to take of his treacherous conduct: it relieves the blackness of the act only a very little, however, for he who would be willing to despitefully use his best friend, even temporarily, for a money consideration, gives evidence of having prostituted every good and noble sentiment of his being to his love of money. Indeed, the love of honor may have had considerable to do with the matter, for he may have hoped by bringing about this crisis that our Lord would be compelled to set up the long-promised kingdom, or else to own that all his claims and promises were fraudulent.

Judas surely did succeed in expediting matters and in bringing about the installation of the embryo kingdom of God; but not in the manner he expected, nor in any degree to his own honor or advantage. Thus it must be with those who receive the truth and who profess discipleship under it—not in the love of the truth, but in the love of honors hoped for, either present or future. Let us all who have named the name of Christ take heed and watch and pray lest there should be in any of us any of the elements of this vile character. And let us remember that there are various secret ways, as well as the more outward ones, in which we may betray the Lord and the "brethren."

The evangelist declares that Jesus knew in advance all things that would come upon him. We are elsewhere told that while he prayed, "There appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." (Luke 22:43) This ministry may have consisted in informing him of the Father's will in respect to what things he should suffer, and how they were to be expected, and this knowledge that the matter was settled, and the assurance that the Father would overrule it all, strengthened his heart and gave him the great calmness which we observe in all his subesequent course.

The "band" sent to apprehend him evidently expected that they might be obliged to seek for him in the shadows of the trees, etc., and hence they were provided with torches and lanterns. Unquestionably they were greatly surprised that our Lord, instead of fleeing from them, advanced to them, and inquired whom they sought. Quite possibly some of those in the "band" had previous knowledge of the Lord—of his miracles, power over devils, etc., and this may have been the reason for their manifestation of weakness in retreat and falling to the ground. Or it is possible that our Lord exercised over them a superior mental power which produced this effect, for the purpose of showing that he had full power to resist them if he had chosen to use it.

The same lesson, we believe, is taught by Peter's use of the sword upon the high priest's servant. We are to remember that one of the Evangelists records that our Lord instructed the apostles to take swords with them, and that when two were found he said. "It is enough." (Luke 22:36, 38) Our Lord had no thought of having his disciples war a carnal warfare on his behalf, as he subsequently stated, "If my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." (John 18:36) The two swords were sufficient to show that our Lord's apprehension was not because there were no means of defense, nor because of cowardice on the part of his disciples, but merely because of his submission—knowing that his hour was come, and that thus it behooved him to suffer for our sins and to enter into his glory.—Luke 24:46.

After this one manifestation of power, as indicating his full ability to cope with that multitude, and indeed his power to have more than twelve legions of angels to defend him, had he so desired (Matt. 26:53), we find our Lord fully submitting himself to capture, merely making condition that the disciples might go their way. How grand the character which at such a moment, under such trying conditions, could so fully forget self and feel interested merely in the welfare of others! How like what we should expect of him!

"That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me I have lost none." We understand the writer to mean that here again in the Master's course we find an exemplification of his care for his disciples, as enunciated in his prayer just before leaving the upper room. While the thought of his prayer was chiefly in respect to their spiritual interests, that none of them should be lost, we do well to notice this as a corroborative illustration of our Lord's care of the physical interests of all who become his disciples. Not a hair of their heads shall fall; nothing shall be permitted to injure them—every event and affair of life will be overruled for their highest good.—Matt. 6:32, 33.

It was probably when Jesus began to be bound that Peter drew his sword in his defense; perhaps he remembered the Lord's words of a few hours previous, to the effect that his followers would all forsake him, and his own promise, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." (Mark 14:29) Noble, zealous Peter! We love him for his noble expression of sentiment, and for his heroic defense of the Master with the sword against superior numbers. It is the custom of many to decry Peter's action, as another of his rash errors. We are to remember, however, that the apostles had not yet received the holy Spirit and therefore could not clearly appreciate the fact that the kingdom to which they were called is a spiritual kingdom. Besides, as we have seen, he was merely following the Lord's counsel in taking the sword with him, and evidently also carrying out the divine purpose in using it. We see nothing to blame, everything to commend. It was a sign of larger import than Peter and the others there realized.

But having permitted the matter to go thus for, our Lord restrained Peter, saying, "Suffer yet thus far. Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" And so saying he touched his wounded enemy and healed him. The disciples were to see, understand, be fully assured, that our Lord, in delivering himself to his enemies, did it voluntarily, and hence the proceedings were so pantomimed as to enforce this lesson.

How the grace of humility shines out in all the little affairs of our dear Redeemer's ministry; even at this moment of his surrender to his enemies he does not boast that his course is a voluntary one, nor seek praise as a martyr! He declares the simple truth, that the Father required this of him as an evidence of his personal loyalty to him. He confesses himself a servant of God, a son who learned obedience by the things which he suffered. "The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Indeed, this was the strength of his victory—his will was fully submitted to the Father's will, and his faith grasped the fact that the Father permitted no unnecessary evils to come upon him, but only such as he could and would overrule for good.

There is a valuable lesson here for all who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of the great High Priest,—for all the royal priesthood. We also are to remember that so long as we abide in Christ, and seek to walk in his footsteps, all the trying experiences of life are carefully measured for us by the Lord—that he does not pour into our cup of sorrow and trial any bitter experiences that are not needful to us, and that will not subsequently work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. (2 Cor. 4:17) With these assurances, and with the evidences of the Father's faithfulness to our glorified Master and Forerunner, we indeed may have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to the hope set before us in the Gospel.—Heb. 6:18-20.

The healing of the smitten ear, our Lord's last miracle, was most beautifully illustrative of his character and teachings. It exemplified his words, "Love your enemies, do good to them that persecute you." It showed that he was filled with the divine love which his teachings inculcated, and that he had no bitterness toward those who despitefully used and persecuted him.

The binding of our Lord seems to have been entirely unnecessary, except as the "band" might desire to make an exhibition of their prowess to those who had sent them. Our Lord seems to have remonstrated in respect to this, as per the account given in Mark 14:48, 49: "Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and with staves, to take me? I was daily with you in the Temple, teaching, and ye took me not. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." It was then that the eleven forsook him and fled. Judas continuing with the band went to the house of Annas the priest, who doubtless had bargained with Judas, and no doubt it was at this time that the thirty pieces of silver were paid over, Judas having now shown a fulfilment of the contract. Poor wretched man! The Son of man indeed went to death, as it had been written of him, but this made none the less horrible the treachery, the covetousness and murderous spirit that delivered him up to his enemies. So with the members of the body of Christ: it must needs be that offences come—it is a part of the divine plan that the body of Christ should fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of the Head (Col. 1:24)—but this makes none the less sinful the conduct of those who have to do with such betrayals—especially if they be "false brethren" who have enjoyed some knowledge of the truth. In every instance, however, it will be observed that altho the trials worked out blessing for the Lord and will do so also for all the faithful who suffer with him, the rewards of unrighteousness sought by those who take Judas' course never yield them the honors and blessings they coveted, and for which they sold themselves to work evil.

THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST ARRAIGNED

May 21.—John 18:15-27.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."—John 1:11.

Altho it is declared that all the disciples fled, John points out that Peter and himself followed at a distance. Their deep interest in the Master would not permit them to go to their homes; they must keep him in sight, and note how things would go with him to the very last. They were powerless to assist him against such great odds, and in the face of his own refusal to be assisted, but they were not powerless to love still. John, it seems, was somewhat acquainted at the high priest's palace, and readily gained entrance, not only for himself but for Peter.

But these favors and privileges became tests to Peter, and led to his denial of the Lord. And so it is with some of the Lord's followers of to-day. When they are by themselves, or with others of like precious faith, they are bold and courageous to confess the Lord and to serve him, but if perchance they get into palaces or amongst the servants and officers and high priests of nominal Christianity they are ashamed of the Master and fear to confess him, lest they should be cast out of the privileges enjoyed in the society of those who have not yet recognized the truth. Far better would it have been for poor Peter had he openly declared, "Yes, I am one of his disciples, and since I presume that none such are wanted here I will go out." How much so honorable and proper a course would have reflected to his credit in the eyes of all just persons, and how much blessing it would have brought to him!

Peter's failure to take the proper course brought him later to a still more trying situation, when a kinsman of the man whose ear he had cut off asked him point-blank the question, "Did not I see thee in the garden with him?" Matters were getting pretty close for poor Peter. It was more now than a question of leaving the fire and the privileges and honor of the high priest's court: it was now a question of his identity as the one who had defended Jesus with a sword, and hence a question of his own arrest and trial at the same tribunal with the Master. One false step leads naturally to another; to have now declared for Jesus would have been a public testimony that he was a liar, in addition to leading to his apprehension, and so Peter concluded that in self-defence he must not only repeat the lie, and again deny his Master, but to make the matter more strong before his accusers he began to curse and to swear that he knew not Jesus.

Poor Peter! Truly, as our Lord told him, Satan had desired to have him, to sift him, and surely he was being severely sifted at this time. It seems almost a miracle that he recovered his balance and repented and found forgiveness for his sins. It would seem that our Lord's prayer on his behalf operated through his previous announcement to Peter of this denial, for after he had thus denied, and after he had noticed the cock crow, Peter remembered the Lord's words, "The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." With feelings better imagined than they can be described, Peter hastily left the High Priest's apartments now of his own accord, going out into the shadows of early morning, that he might weep bitterly and entreat the Lord's forgiveness.

There is a lesson for us in the fact that Peter's failure was along the very line of his strength. He was naturally courageous, had boasted of it, and yet failed for lack of courage. "When I am weak then I am strong," implies that he who feels himself strong is really weak, as in Peter's case. Let us all learn to specially guard our supposedly strong points of character, remembering that we have a wily foe. We are to realize our weakness, our vulnerableness at any point, except as we keep watch at every point and rely upon the great Captain of our salvation to assist us.

John does not tell the whole of the story; he omits reference to Peter's cursing and swearing. His love for Brother Peter evidently influenced him to omit that portion of the narrative not absolutely necessary to confirm the Lord's prediction. The account of the cursing and swearing is given by Mark, whose Gospel record is supposed to have been indited by Peter himself, Mark being in a large measure Peter's amanuensis.—Mark 14:66-72.

Jesus was examined of the high priest: that functionary, however evil and murderously disposed at heart, felt bound to at least preserve the forms of justice, altho from the records elsewhere we know that himself and his associates amongst the priests and Pharisees had already determined that Jesus must be put to death because his influence amongst the people was inimical to their own;—because his teachings cast theirs into the shade and exposed their hollowness, bigotry and hypocrisy. Our Lord answered his questions accordingly; refusing to make any specific explanations he merely referred to his teachings, appealing thus to his rights as a Jew. His answer was the perfectly proper and legal one; he had been arrested without just cause, and the judge was now seeking to *find* a cause. Our Lord merely pointed out that the cause for the arrest must be shown to have been something which preceded the arrest.

It is not necessary for us to suppose that the officer who struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, and reproved him for improper language toward the chief priest, was intentionally unjust in the matter. Rather we may suppose that, influenced by his desire to appear zealous in support of the high priest's position and judgment, this accentuated his mental unbalance as a fallen man, and led him to imagine evil where there was none. This circumstance, however, gives us the opportunity for discerning just what our Lord meant by his expression in the sermon on the mount, "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also." (Matt. 5:39) Our Lord did not literally turn the other cheek to the man and ask him to smite that also, nor did he even receive the smiting in silence. He was not willing that his good conduct and proper language should be evil spoken of without at least a proper endeavor to correct the matter. Hence he asked his smiter to point out wherein he had spoken evil, and suggested to him that if he could not point out the evil he should acknowledge his wrong in having improperly smitten for an evil which could not be pointed out.

In the light of this illustration the Lord's people are to understand the command, to turn the other cheek, to mean simply that they are not to resist evil with evil; rather, they are to receive more evil than return it in kind. On the contrary, however, they are to resist evil with good; they are to expostulate with evil-doers, as the Master did, endeavoring with kindness and gentleness to have them see the right and the wrong of the questions in dispute.

It would appear that our Lord's trial by the Jews was held before Caiaphas, the acting high priest, the son-in-law of Annas, the proper high priest according to the Jewish law; and the fourteenth verse identifies Caiaphas as the one who had previously declared, "'It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.' And this spake he not of himself, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."—John 11:50-53.

Here is an illustration of how a great truth may be seen from two opposite standpoints. The prophecy of Caiaphas was strictly true, in strict accord with all the declarations of the Lord's Word, and was sent through one of the channels which the Lord had been in the habit of using (the high priest's office) yet the person occupying that office, being out of heart-harmony with the Lord, was out of harmony also with the various features of the divine plan, and became an instigator and co-operator in an evil work, which nevertheless was working out in harmony with the divine foreknowledge and program.

There is a lesson in this also for all of the Lord's people in respect to every feature of divine truth. It is not sufficient that we see certain facts; it is necessary also that we be in heart-harmony with the Lord, else we might, like Caiaphas, aid in fulfilling the Lord's plan but nevertheless taking a wrong position may be bringing ourselves, with others, under a curse, while still co-operating in the fulfilment of the divine plan. Let all who are of the light, and who have received the truth, seek more and more to walk in the light and in the Master's footsteps, carefully avoiding the evils which we see illustrated in the cases of Judas, Peter and Caiaphas.

The trial before the Jews was of three parts:—

(1) The examination before Annas the *legal* high priest, which was wholly unofficial. He sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas the *official* high priest of Roman appointment, and as such the president of the Sanhedrin, whose court room was probably in the same palace, across the corridor, where Peter stood warming himself.

(2) The preliminary trial before Caiaphas is supposed to have been held between two or three o'clock on Friday morning—the members of the Sanhedrin or Jewish Court having been summoned by messengers as soon as Jesus was apprehended. This hearing was preliminary in the sense that it examined Jesus and formulated and decided upon the charges on which it would convict at the formal meeting at dawn, about five o'clock. For the Jewish law forbade a trial by night.—Luke 22:66-71.

(3) The formal trial before the Sanhedrin at dawn was merely a ceremony—a farce. The determination to kill Jesus having been reached long before his arrest, the matter of his condemnation was rushed through for two reasons. (a) The great Jews feared the common people would defend Jesus against their trumped up charges, which were the only ones even they could formulate. (b) The Passover was at hand and they wanted him killed before it. Ah! how little did they realize that they were being permitted of God to exercise the evil desires of their hearts and thus to fulfil types and prophecies to the very day.

A lesson in this for God's people is, that it is not sufficient that we go through a form or ceremony of justice; nor is it sufficient that we know in advance that we cannot circumvent the divine plan or hinder its fulfilment. Many will find in the day of reckoning and revealing, that they have served God's purposes without honor or profit—in a manner that brought upon them condemnation instead of approval. Even the great adversary Satan will ultimately find (but not in any degree to his credit or blessing) that all his opposition to God, to Christ, and to "the brethren," has been overruled by divine wisdom and power for *good*, by him who "maketh the wrath of man to praise him."

It is all-important then, that we have more than forms of justice, of righteousness; we must have the *spirit* of righteousness, a *love* of righteousness—a sincere desire to know and to do God's will, else like as the Jews condemned and killed the Just One we might with forms of justice condemn and injure his "brethren." And to have the desirable condition of *love* for God and for righteousness implies a full consecration of heart to the Lord. Thus every examination of the subject brings us back to the fact that *full* consecration to the Lord, *full* self-surrender to his will as revealed in his Word, is the only proper and only safe course for any to pursue if they would hope to hear the Master's words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

It was during the interim between the 3 A. M. examination and the 5 A. M. formal conviction of our Lord by his influential enemies, that he was subjected for two hours to the mockery and insults described by three of the Evangelists. (Matt. 26:67, 68; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63-65) These insults were committed by the "servants" and well illustrate the fact that low minds delight in the misfortunes of those whom they realize to be their superiors. These servants manifested the *same spirit* as their masters—the chief priests and Pharisees—their methods were ruder because they were more ignorant and coarse. The spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, on the contrary, whether in the educated or in the ignorant is a spirit of love, of gentleness, of sympathy, of kindness. By their fruits both spirits may be known. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his."

THE "GOOD CONFESSION" BEFORE PILATE

MAY 28.—JOHN 18:28-40; 1 TIM. 6:13.

"I find no fault in him."—John 19:4.

Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, had in his hands the power of life and death. The Jewish Sanhedrin was permitted to govern the country in a religious way, according to Jewish law and custom, but had no power to order public execution. Apparently they did have the power to stone to death for blasphemy (the charge on which they condemned Jesus) as in the case of Stephen (Acts 7:58); and hence we may suppose that they had such a power in respect to Jesus, but failed to exercise it lest the people should resent the injustice. Moreover, quite possibly they realized the wide influence already attained by his teachings, and desired to make his execution as public and as disgraceful as possible—to the intent that his followers might be chagrined and humiliated, as well as himself, because few would care to confess themselves disciples of one who had been publicly executed as a criminal,—condemned by both civil and ecclesiastical judges. Thus they hoped to nip in the bud the new system of religious teaching, which, if it continued, would evidently entirely subvert their own influence with the people. Thus unwittingly these evil-doers were carrying out the very arrangements foreordained of God—and doing so in the full exercise of their own evil volition.

As already noted, the formal condemnation of our Lord before the Jewish Sanhedrin occurred at dawn, five to six o'clock, and immediately they hurried him to Pilate's judgment hall, intent on getting him into the hands of the Roman soldiers for execution at the earliest possible moment, so that the multitudes might realize his case as beyond the power of their intervention. Nor had the Jewish rulers any particular reason to suspect that Pilate would hesitate at all to order an execution. Pilate seems to have had a reputation for cruelty. Philo speaks of "his corruption, his acts of insolence, his habit of insulting the people, his cruelty, his continual murders of people untried and uncondemned, and his never-ending and most grievous inhumanity at all times—a man of most ferocious passions, very merciless as well as very obstinate." Apparently the rulers of the Jews had frequent cause to appeal to Pilate to be merciful, and generally without effect; they seem to have taken for granted that if any prisoner were brought to him with a request for execution he would take pleasure in complying.

We are reminded of our Lord's words to the Pharisees, "Ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity," when we read that these very persons who murderously were scheming for the destruction of the Just One would not enter into Pilate's judgment hall, "lest they should be defiled," and thus be hindered from celebrating the Passover. How wretchedly inconsistent and hypocritical they were! They feared that Pilate's judgment hall, being under jurisdiction of the Gentiles, might have in it some *leaven* (a symbol of sin), and realized not that the real leaven of sin had permeated and thoroughly saturated their own hearts—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife.

What a lesson the Lord's people have here: for we are to remember that these heart-corrupted conspirators were the professed holiness people of their day and church. While it is not in the power of any to-day to crucify the Lord and put him to an open shame, it is within our power to put to shame, to crucify, his "brethren"—the members of his body. And we fear that some to-day are doing this with as much self-deception as was exercised by these chief priests and Pharisees who secured our Lord's crucifixion. True, the Pharisees knew not what they did, as Peter says, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17) And so likewise to-day any who put to shame the members of "the body of Christ" probably are ignorant of what they do. Nevertheless they put themselves under the Lord's sentence, "It were better that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea." (Luke 17:2) Let us each therefore beware, and keep the heart, out of which are the issues of life.

Had the hearts of those Pharisees been in proper condition, full of love of righteousness and truth, and appreciative of whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, they could not have made the mistake of rejecting and crucifying the Lamb of God. Similarly, those who have the spirit of love for the brethren will be hindered from becoming in any manner their persecutors. Only such can properly eat of the antitypical Passover.

The Roman governor, knowing of the peculiar custom of the Jews in respect to their Passover time, accommodated himself to their theory and had his chair of state brought outside the judgment hall to what was known as the Place of the Pavement, an elevated platform. Jesus was called up on this platform for examination, while the Jews standing outside of the unhallowed ground made known to Pilate their accusation. They evidently expected that the mere presentation of Jesus as a prisoner for crucifixion would be sufficient. Apparently they had not even expected to be required to make an accusation; hence their answer, "If he were not a malefactor [evil-doer] we would not have delivered him up unto thee." Some have suggested, in harmony with the character of Pilate and his probable disrespect for the Pharisees, that his question rather was, "What accusation do *you* bring against *him?*" as tho he would give the implication that Jesus rather had ground for making accusation against the Pharisees—which of course was the case. The hardened Roman no doubt had become an expert reader of human character, and could readily see that there were no criminal features in our Lord's countenance, and many in those of his accusers.

To the surprise of the priests and Pharisees, Pilate turned Jesus over again to them, saying in substance, This is some petty religious quarrel with which I care to have nothing to do; take the prisoner and do with him according to your own laws and customs—imprisoning him, or causing him to be beaten, or whatever you may think proper, according to your law. But, thirsting for our Lord's death, his persecutors revealed their real condition of heart, saying, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death."

Hard, cruel, unmerciful tho he was, Pilate realized the true situation—that the guilty were pursuing the innocent to death. That he might have the better opportunity for thinking quietly, and also for hearing what Jesus would say in self-defense, Pilate left the Jews and called Jesus unto him into the judgment hall, where they conversed. There must have been something very striking in our Lord's personal appearance to have caused Pilate to consider for a moment the rejection of the demands of the Jewish Court or Sanhedrin, for altho he had full power of life and death it was incumbent upon him, as his first duty, to preserve the peace and tranquility of his dominion; and this implied that in a general way at least he must keep on the popular side, especially when the popular side embraced the chief men of the province, and particularly when those chief men desired the execution of one whom they denounced as a disturber of the peace. Pilate's position was in many respects a delicate one: he must please the government at Rome, and he must avoid unnecessary disputes with the local authorities, who in the present instance were evidently so determined that they would have created a general disturbance rather than that their evil scheme should come to naught. The fact is that six years later these people did send to the Roman emperor such complaints against Pilate as secured his removal.

Alone with Jesus, Pilate's question was, "Art thou King of the Jews?" The Jews had not made such a charge against Jesus; indeed, they were far from wishing to acknowledge the Galilean as King of the Jews, or as being thus recognized by any number; they had thus far merely charged that Jesus was an evil-doer, an insurrectionist, whose death was necessary to the peace of the nation. It would seem therefore that Pilate had previously heard from some quarter about the riding of Jesus on the ass, and as being hailed by the people as the Son of David a few days previously. That this was not part of the accusation of the Jews seems evident from our Lord's reply to Pilate, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" Are you an interested inquirer after the truth on this subject, or are you merely calling up a matter of which you have heard? Pilate's reply, "Am I a Jew?" was tantamount to saying, "What do I know about your Jewish hopes and expectations? I am the Roman governor, and if you are a king it is your own nation and its chief representatives that have delivered you to me. What have you done, if you are their king, that makes your subjects thus disloyal to you? Apparently there is no great danger of your exercising any power against the Roman empire; you are meek, gentle, lowly, unresisting yourself, and your people are crying out against you. King of the Jews, explain this peculiar situation!"

Then Jesus explained that his kingdom is not of this order of things, otherwise he would have servants to fight and to defend him, and would not be as at present, at the mercy of his enemies; and that his kingdom had not yet commenced. Astonished, and perhaps with some degree of sympathy for a great ruler under such humiliating conditions, Pilate asks, "Do you then claim that you are a king?" Our Lord answers, "Thou sayest," that is, "Your statement is correct; I am a king." "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice."

This was the good confession which our Lord witnessed before Pontius Pilate, to which the Apostle refers. (1 Tim. 6:13) He confessed his kingship and its divine authority. We are not to wonder that Pilate was incredulous of our Lord's claims to kingship, and that he probably thought him a fanatic. We are rather to remember that remarkably few of those who have heard of Jesus have recognized the truth of this statement that he is *a king*. How few, even amongst professed Christians, recognize the kingly office of our Lord! Many who realize that Jesus was indeed the Man of Sorrows, acquainted with grief, and some who realize that he died for our sins, have never yet seen that he purchased not only man but the empire originally given to the first Adam. Many can realize our Lord in the attitude of priest who fail to realize that he is also to be a king, and that throughout the Millennial age he will be a priest upon his *throne*, "after the order of Melchizedec," his Church and Bride being associated with him and sharing in both his priestly and his kingly offices.

The priestly office speaks mercy, forgiveness and grace to help; but the kingly office is no less essential to the world's salvation—men must be *delivered* from the bondage of sin and death—and must be *ruled* with the iron rod in order to develop them and fit them for life everlasting; and all of this work belongs to him who redeemed us as with his own precious blood. It is well that we remember, too, that a very large proportion of our Lord's parables related to the kingdom in its various stages—now embryotic, by and by to be set up with full power and authority to overthrow evil and to bring in everlasting righteousness.

This kingdom is to be a kingdom of truth, of righteousness and of love, working well for its subjects, and our Lord's mission at the first advent was to lay the foundation for that kingdom by witnessing to the truth—the truth that God is both just and loving, and is willing to receive back into harmony with himself all who love truth and righteousness. It was our Lord's faithfulness to the truth that brought upon him the opposition of those who were blinded by the Adversary, hence his statement that he came to bear witness to the truth is a brief statement of his mission. It was his witness to the truth that cost him his life, and it was the giving of his life in defense of the truth that constituted the redemption price. Similarly all of the Lord's followers are to bear witness to the truth—the truth in respect to God's character and plan—the features of that plan accomplished at the first advent in the redemption of the world, and the features of that plan yet to be accomplished in the second advent, in the deliverance of the world from the bondage of sin and corruption. It is such witness to the truth that is to cost all the true followers of Jesus their lives in presenting themselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through Christ Jesus. Let each one who hopes to be a joint-heir with the Prince of Life in the kingdom witness to the truth—a good confession respecting the kingdom, its foundation and ultimate superstructure in glory.

A very short discourse on such a text was quite sufficient for Pilate. He had no desire to enter into a theological discussion, which could only reflect unfavorably upon his own past record. He broke off the conversation suddenly, saying, "What is truth?"—as tho he would say, Who is truthful? Where is absolute justice to be found, absolute truth, absolute probity? And without waiting for an answer he left Jesus in the judgment hall, went forth to the Place of the Pavement, and addressed the waiting Sanhedrin and their multitude of servants and hangers-on, brought with them to give evidence of popular clamor.

Pilate announced his decision, "I find in him no fault at all." Then the Jews, fearing that their prey was about to escape, began to bethink themselves of charges to be formulated. They did not mention the charge on which they themselves had convicted Jesus, falsely, namely, blasphemy; for this would have been no crime whatever in the eyes of the Roman governor. Instead, they made three charges, *viz.*, (1) sedition—agitation of the people against the existing order of things; (2) that he interfered with the collection of taxes, teaching the people that it was improper to pay tribute-money to a foreign power; and (3) that he made claims of being a king.—Luke 23:2.

But now learning that Jesus' home and principal ministry was in Galilee, Pilate thought to relieve himself by referring the entire matter to Herod, who had charge of the province of Galilee, and who was then at Jerusalem, at a palace not far distant. This was the Herod who had caused the death of John the Baptist. Luke tells us (23:8) that Herod was very glad to see Jesus, for having heard much respecting him he hoped also to see some miracle performed by him. Herod questioned our Lord with many words, but received no response whatever, while the chief priests and scribes grew the more vehement in their accusations, seeing that Jesus denied nothing that they said, and that thus they were not called upon for proofs.

Herod no doubt was piqued as well as disappointed by our Lord's conduct, and unable to gain entertainment from him as expected, he and his guard took sport in mocking the Redeemer's claims of dignity and kingship.

But with a desire to return Pilate's compliment, and perhaps with some little touch of remorse of conscience in respect to the beheading of John the Baptist, Herod disposed of his responsibilities in the case by returning our Lord to Pilate. It was after our Lord's return to Pilate's judgment hall that the latter, apparently as a final effort to appease the Jews, to preserve the peace of the country, and yet to let go one whom he clearly discerned to be innocent, announced that in view of the clamor against Jesus he would cause him to be scourged, altho he found no fault in him. He evidently hoped that by the infliction of the scourging (whipping) and incidental humiliation, that the spirit of malice on the part of the accusers would be satisfied, and that they would peaceably agree to his release. Apparently the scourging was done in some interior apartment by the Roman soldiers; and probably with the full consent of Pilate a cast-off royal robe and a crown of thorns were put upon our Lord. Evidently this proceeding would furnish amusement to the unsympathetic soldiery, and so much shame and contempt cast upon our Lord might at least satisfy his persecutors, if it did not awaken sympathy.

Acting in harmony with this thought, Pilate came again before the Jews, and caused our Lord to be led forth, weak, exhausted and miserable-looking, from the trying experiences of the night, supplemented by the painful and weakening influence of the scourging just received. With his crown of thorns and soiled purple robe he must have been a pitiable sight indeed, and yet the noble outlines of his perfect manhood must still have been striking, and no doubt suggested the words of Pilate which have echoed down the centuries since, "Behold the man!" (John 19:5) Pilate evidently was impressed with our Lord's personality; never before had he seen so splendid a specimen of the human race. He was such an one as any people might have been glad to honor as their king. He evidently hoped that some impression would be made upon the clamoring throng which accused Jesus. But he was mistaken; they clamored so much the more, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Meantime Pilate's wife had heard of the trial and had sent Pilate word respecting her dream, and advice that he have no part in doing injury to this just person.—Matt. 27:19.

RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR LORD'S DEATH

Pilate immediately said to the Jews, "Take him and crucify him, if that is your law." But altho thus assured that the Roman governor would not interfere in the matter, the Pharisees hesitated about accepting the proposition; they much preferred that the crucifixion should be in the hands of the Roman governor and his soldiers, lest the friends of Jesus and the multitudes who had been healed and taught by him should come to his assistance and overpower them; hence they answered Pilate that according to their law Jesus should die, because he made himself the Son of God. They perverted the truth in their endeavor to uphold their course, for the law did not prescribe death as a penalty for the claim of being the ***Son*** of God. Had our Lord claimed to be the Father he would have come under the terms of the death penalty for blasphemy, but there was no such penalty, nor was it blasphemy, to call himself, as he did, the Son of God.

When Pilate heard of this he was the more alarmed. The features of Jesus were impressive of themselves, but if one possessing such features made the claim of relationship to God there certainly was some ground for fear. Pilate still withstood the Jewish clamor, and sought to release our Lord. Then the Jews, as a last resort, threatened Pilate by implication, crying out, "If thou let this man go thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar." They thus intimated that if Pilate frustrated their designs, and refused to crucify Jesus as they demanded, they would report him to Caesar as an enemy of his empire, a succorer of seditious persons, a fosterer of rival kings in the empire. Pilate could not stand against this argument, and washed his hands in the presence of the multitude, saying by this act, as well as in words, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." And when the Jews cried out, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," Pilate delivered him to be crucified.—Matt 27:24, 25.

We are not of those who condemn Pilate; he was a servant of the empire, charged with doing everything reasonable to preserve peace in his dominions, and only a clearly enlightened and fully consecrated saint could have been expected to do more than Pilate did for the release of Jesus. Our Lord in no sense intimated guilt on the part of Pilate. The responsibility was assumed by the Jews, and surely its penalty has rested heavily upon them and upon their children for the past eighteen centuries, and even yet their cup of anguish is not filled to the full. "Jacob's trouble" will be no unimportant one in the great time of trouble that is just approaching; but we thank God on their behalf that deliverance is nigh for them, as well as for all others of the groaning creation. How blessed the thought that when they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and wail because of him, it will not be with tears of hopeless sorrow; for the Lord "shall pour upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his first-born.—Zech. 12:10.

A "PILGRIM" IN THE WEST

Friends in Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Iowa who desire a visit from one of the "Pilgrims" will please report to us by letter immediately in order that we may make up the route accordingly.

"LOOKING UNTO JESUS"

Look unto Christ, O church of God,
  Fear not, nor be distressed;
'Twas he who gave his precious blood—
  In him you now are blessed.

Look unto Christ, O groaning race,
  Thy burden to remove;
Jehovah's all-sufficient grace
  The "King of kings" shall prove.

—*J. M. Blose.*

"HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS"

JUNE 4.—JOHN 19:17-30.

"The Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."—Gal. 2:20.

Crucifixion was the horrible method of execution in olden times for the vilest of criminals—its severity being intended to intimidate and deter evil-doers, rather than as a gratification of cruel sentiments. Farrar says of it:—

"Death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death *can* have of the horrible and ghastly dizziness, cramp, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of untended wounds—all intensified just up to the point at which they can be endured at all, but all stopping just short of the point which would give to the sufferer the relief of unconsciousness. Such was the death to which Christ was doomed."

As already noted, the envious and murderous chief priests and doctors of Judaism desired just such a public denunciation of the great Teacher who so fearlessly had exposed their hypocrisies and inconsistencies, and who was fast making an impression upon the common people. For them to have stoned him to death as a blasphemer they probably feared would leave him a martyr in the eyes of many, while to have him publicly executed as a criminal, sentenced by the Sanhedrin and executed by the highest civil power in the world, would, they hoped, brand Jesus, his teachings and his followers, forever with infamy. We may imagine, therefore, how their evil hearts exulted, when finally they had coerced Pilate into signing the warrant for the execution of Jesus.

According to Mark's account (15:25) the death-warrant was signed by Pilate about nine o'clock in the morning—the trial of Jesus, and Pilate's various attempts to secure his release from his enemies, having occupied three hours. At once they started, the two robbers bearing their crosses, and Jesus bearing his cross, taking the place of Barabbas, who was to have been executed, but who was released. It was the custom in olden times to compel the convicts to bear the instruments of their own torture. Nor were the crosses so large and heavy as they are generally illustrated in modern paintings. On the contrary, the evidence is that the feet of the crucified were usually only twelve to eighteen inches from the ground. Altho small, these crosses constituted a good burden for a reasonably strong man; but our Lord, after passing through his Gethsemane experiences and the night of buffeting and scourging, and his further scourging by Pilate's orders, was sick, exhausted, weak, sore. Apparently even the hardened soldiers took pity upon him, and meeting Simon the Cyrenian on the way, they compelled him to relieve Jesus.

We know nothing respecting Simon, except that Mark relates that he was the father of Alexander and Rufus, which gives the suggestion that these, his two sons, may subsequently have became the followers of Jesus and well known amongst the disciples. In any event Simon himself enjoyed a great privilege which thousands since have almost envied. How the apostles, Peter, James and John and others, must have regretted the fearfulness of heart which kept them all at a distance, and hindered them from proffering their aid to the Master in his trying hour! John, we know, was not far off, probably the others were near also; but what an opportunity they missed!

And very similar opportunities are still with us all—opportunities to serve the Christ—opportunities for serving the members of the body of Christ. As everyone who follows the Master's footsteps must needs have some Gethsemane experiences, so also each must have a taste at least of all the Master's experiences. Let us not forget, then, to look about us for opportunities for serving the "brethren," the "little ones," the members of the body of Christ. Let each be careful not to add to the reproaches that must fall upon all the followers of the Lamb, but on the contrary to offer words of sympathy, and to help bear each other's crosses, difficulties and trials by the way. Thus can we best show to our Lord and Head how we would have appreciated the opportunity of helping him bear his cross on the way to Calvary.

The place of crucifixion was called Golgotha, the Hebrew word signifying a skull, the Latin name for a skull being Calvary. This name was given to the locality probably because the general contour of the hill, which was just outside of Jerusalem, closely resembles a skull when viewed at a distance. It was on the way to this place, Golgotha, Calvary, that some of the charitable women of Jerusalem, according to their general custom, offered the condemned ones sour wine mixed with bitter myrrh—a draught which had a tendency to stupefy the nerves, thus rendering the execution the less agonizing. The two robbers quite probably drank of the potion, but Mark (15:23) declares that our Lord refused it—having learned that his experiences were the Father's will, he would do nothing whatever to hinder himself from receiving them to the full.

Probably Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, the mother of James and John, and Salome, the wife of Cleophas (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40) and others of the friends of Jesus, by this time gained courage and mingled with the women who offered the wine and myrrh, so that Luke says, "There followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."—Luke 23:27, 28.

Thus, and with other words recorded, our Lord foreshadowed the great time of trouble coming upon the Jewish nation. By the expression, "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" he implies that, altho the nation of Israel had been given up only five days previously, when he exclaimed, "Your house is left unto you desolate," if their rulers could sanction such injustice and lawlessness while their greenness, freshness and religious vitality remained, what might be expected in the future, after the religious vitality had dried out and the nation as a whole had become ready for the great "burning" of their day of trouble, which was designed to, and had been prophesied should, utterly consume their polity. And how literally our Lord's prophecy was fulfilled: Josephus, without a thought of corroborating this testimony, tells us with explicitness of detail of the terrible sufferings which came upon the women and children during the great time of trouble which ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70.

When we reflect upon the prophecy, "He was numbered with the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12), and then consider the terrible persistency with which the leading Jews pursued the dear Redeemer to secure his execution, it furnishes us fresh evidence of divine foreknowledge which, without interfering with the free moral agency of any man, is nevertheless working all things according to the counsel of God's will. We see afresh how God causes the wrath of man to praise him, and to testify to his wisdom and foreknowledge.

It was customary to have four soldiers attend each prisoner to execution; foremost went one who bore a white board on which was written the crime for which the prisoner was to be executed, and which was fastened above his head on the cross; then followed three soldiers with the hammer and nails, etc., and these all were under the command of a captain or centurion. The board placed above Jesus, on the cross, declared him to be the King of the Jews, and was written in three languages—in Hebrew, the language of the country, in Greek, because it was the language of the visitors and of the educated from all quarters, and in Latin, because it was the language of the empire and of the soldiers. There is a slight difference in the statements of the different Evangelists respecting the words used on this tablet, which may be accounted for by supposing that the words differed slightly in the different languages, and that the Evangelists quoted from the different originals.

Little did Pilate comprehend the great truth which he set before the world in the words, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Few yet realize the truth of this statement that Jesus is a King; comparatively few have yet rendered him allegiance, bowing the knee of their hearts in sincerity and truth: and yet so surely as the Lord has spoken it, the time is coming when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess him Lord, Master, King, to the glory of God the Father. And to this end it shall come to pass that after full knowledge of the matter has been given to all, he that will not obey this Prophet shall be cut off from among the people in the second death. (Acts 3:23) He was indeed rejected of the Jews, but nevertheless the full elect number for the twelve tribes of Israelites indeed shall yet be found, who, as the seed of Abraham, shall accept Messiah as King and, faithfully serving him in the present life, and laying down their lives in his service and for the brethren, shall be accepted of him as joint-heirs in his kingdom. Since there were not enough of the natural Israelites to complete these twelve tribes of Israelites indeed, God is completing the number by adoptions from amongst the Gentiles during the past eighteen centuries. Ultimately the entire number shall be completed.—Rev. 7:4-8.

The Jewish doctors of divinity were willing enough to have Jesus condemned as the king of the Jews, but were quite unwilling to have this sentence publicly recorded, and thus to imply that they had so feared his claim and influence as to seek his death. Pilate's refusal to amend the charge was a just one; if there was no merit in the claim, why should they have feared him, and why should he have been crucified? If there was enough merit in the claim to lead to his crucifixion, the matter should be plainly stated.

The division of the spoil was customary at every crucifixion, and gave evidence of the indifference and hard-heartedness of the soldiers in the presence of suffering. The raiment divided consisted of headdress, outer robe, girdle and sandals; the garment here called a "coat" and "vesture" was an undergarment which reached from the neck to the feet. It was evidently of fine quality and texture, as indicated by the fact that it was woven throughout, seamless. The casting of lots for this robe marked the fulfilment of a prophecy to which John calls attention. (Psa. 22:18) The seamless robe appears to symbolize the righteousness of Christ, which can be appropriated only as a whole; it is of one piece, and may not be marred. Whoever may get it, gets a most valuable robe, and whoever may fail to get it, fails to obtain the righteousness which is of God in Christ. But not by lot or accident or chance does this robe come to the Lord's people. As the scriptures clearly point out, it is obtained only through the exercise of faith, and held only by the obedience of faith. We might perhaps consider it a symbol of the wedding-garment which falls to the lot of one class only, a little flock, who through faith and perseverance shall inherit the Kingdom as members of the body of Christ, covered by his seamless and spotless robe of righteousness.

The Apostle John had grown bolder as the day advanced, and while our Lord was crucified he drew near and was within speaking distance—quite possibly encouraged by seeing "the wife of Cleophas." who is supposed to have been a relative. It was a sorrowful gathering for these whose hearts went out with sympathy for the Master whom they loved but were powerless to comfort or relieve. They were weeping and sorrowing while others jeered and taunted, saying, "If thou be Messiah, come down from the cross"—thinking doubtless that our Lord's crucifixion by his enemies was the best possible proof that his claim to Messiahship was a fraudulent one,—proving that he was an impostor.

With the members of the body of Christ it has been true at times also that the Father has permitted experiences to come to them in such manner as might imply that they did not have his favor, and were really impostors. But as the true disciples had a heart-union with the Lord, which outward circumstances and misfortunes could not break, a love which adversity could not chill, so with all his "brethren," those who are in heart-harmony, in oneness of spirit, will be found faithful under the most trying circumstances and adversities, because they have one spirit, a spirit of love for the brethren, by which they are enabled to identify one another as members of the one body.

How it gives us an insight into our Lord's sympathetic nature, to find him thinking in the interest of others at the very time when he himself is overwhelmed in trouble? His own agony did not hinder him from thinking of his mother, and making provision for her comfort, commending her to the care of the loving disciple John. We thus see exemplified in the Master the teaching of the Scriptures that each should seek to make provision for his own dependent ones and, as the Apostle says, "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." (1 Tim. 5:8) *"The faith"* includes thoughts of love, sympathy, interest and care for others, especially for them of the household of faith. We note the choice of John: it was doubtless because, first of all, of his loving tender disposition; secondly, his zeal for the Lord and the truth, and thirdly, his courage in pressing near to be with his dying Master in his closing hours, at the risk of his own life. Let us note these characteristics, as being those which the Lord approves, that noting them we may cultivate them in ourselves, and be granted special opportunities for service by this same Master.

It was about the close of our Lord's agony that he said, "I thirst," and this gave opportunity for the fulfilment of the prophecy which declared, "They gave me vinegar to drink." (Psa. 69:21) This was not the ordinary vinegar, but more properly sour wine, the common, cheap drink of the soldiers. The sponge filled with the sour wine, and reached up to our Lord's mouth on a hyssop branch, served to moisten his lips and tongue, and was evidently intended as an act of kindness, mercy.

The different accounts give altogether what are known as "The seven words on the cross."

The first word from the cross: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34) While these words undoubtedly represent truly our Lord's sentiments as respected his enemies, nevertheless it is proper here to remark that the oldest Greek MSS. do not contain these words.

The second word from the cross: Our Lord's message to the robber, "Verily I say to thee today, Thou shalt be with me in Paradise."—Luke 23:43.

The third word from the cross: "Woman, behold thy son! . . . . Behold thy mother!"

The fourth word from the cross: "My God! my God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34) Of this expression a noted theologian has said, "In the entire Bible there is no other sentence so difficult to explain." Yet the meaning of this, and the reason for it, are very easily seen when once we have the correct view of the ransom. From this standpoint we see that the Logos became a man, "was made flesh," in order that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man. (Heb. 2:9) We see also that the death penalty upon father Adam was the one which Jesus must experience in order to the satisfaction of Justice and the release of Adam and those who came under condemnation in and through Adam. As the penalty against Adam was death in the fullest and most complete sense, so Christ died for our sins, suffering the Just for the unjust, that he might release us from the death penalty and make possible a resurrection of the dead. As the penalty against Adam included his isolation from the Father as a condemned rebel, so it was necessary that our Lord Jesus, in taking Adam's place, should experience (if only for a short time) the full meaning of a sinner's *separation from God.*

Very mercifully, the Father did not permit this feature of Adam's penalty to rest upon our Redeemer throughout the entire period of his sacrificial ministry, but only at its very close. It was the fact of his communion with the Father that permitted Jesus to pass through all the trying experiences of that day and the preceding night with such great courage, but now, when the Father's sustaining grace and fellowship and communion of spirit with him were withdrawn, and our Redeemer, with all his fine sensibilities, was utterly bereft of solace from his dearest friend, it led his breaking heart to cry out these words of anguish. Evidently it had been hidden from him up to this time that he must suffer this phase of the punishment of Adam's transgression.

The fifth word from the cross: "I thirst," we have already considered.

The sixth word from the cross: "It is finished," suggests to us that our Lord's earthly mission had been accomplished. He came to die, to redeem the death condemned race of Adam, to purchase it with his own precious blood, his life. He had consecrated himself to this work in harmony with the Father's plan, and with his dying breath, expiring, he could say that he had finished the work which the Father had given him to do. How it rejoices us to know that our dear Redeemer did complete the work, that he did not resent the taunts of those who said, "If thou be Messiah, come down from the cross;" "Save thyself!" We rejoice to think that since the great sacrifice has been *finished* (and especially in view of the fact that the heavenly Father subsequently declared that it was finished acceptably), we may realize that there is now, therefore, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.—Rom. 8:1.

But although the sin-offering was finished eighteen hundred years ago by the sacrifice of our Lord, the Lamb of God, there is another part that is not yet finished; but in harmony with the divine plan our Lord is waiting for the Church, which is his body, to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24) And looking all about us, in the light of the Lord's Word, we may say that this work is almost finished too. Very soon the last member of the body of Christ will have suffered with the Head for righteousness' sake: then the entire work of sacrifice apportioned for this Gospel age, or Day of Atonement, will be ended, and the Millennial age of glory and blessing, ruling and uplifting, will begin; ushering in for the world of mankind the great blessing, the *purchase-price of which was finished at Calvary.* Let each dear follower in the Master's footsteps keep patiently and perseveringly on in the way of self-denial until his course shall be finished—until the Master shall say, It is enough; "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Matt. 25:21.

The seventh word from the cross: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." (Luke 23:46) These our Lord's last words were a quotation from the Scriptures. (Psa. 31:5) In other words, it had already been declared of him that thus he would commend himself to the Father's grace and truth. Our Lord was finishing laying down his human life a ransom for many sinners, but the Father had promised him a new life on a higher plane, as a reward for his faith, obedience and sacrifice. This new life, or life as a "new creature" was reckoned as begun at the time of our Lord's baptism when he received the holy Spirit; this new life was reckoned as continuing and growing during the years of his ministry while he was daily dying according to the flesh; the outward man was perishing, but the inward new creature was being renewed day by day. Now the outward man was about to cease entirely—fully surrendered, the sacrifice finished.

Our Lord's interest in and hope for a future life looked forward, in harmony with the Father's promise, to the new or resurrection life; the new mind or spirit reckoned as begun at the moment of his baptism and consecration, having the divine promise of being perfected in a resurrection, in a spirit-body suitable for and in harmony with the new mind, the new will. But this change could not take place instantly: the divine law had arranged that not until the third day could he be quickened as the new creature of spiritual body. He must take this by faith; no one had ever passed this way before: yet with full confidence our dear Redeemer looked up to the Father, and full of faith declared that he committed all of life and all of these blessed hopes for the future to the Father's love and to the Father's power,—to be provided in harmony with the Father's plan and Word. And so must we, as followers in our Master's footsteps, look forward with faith, and in our dying hour commit all our interests to the keeping of him who has manifested his love for us, not only in the gift of his Son as our Redeemer, but all our journey through,—in his providential care, as well as in the exceeding great and precious promises which go before us and surround us and give us strength, comfort and assurance.

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VIEW FROM THE WATCH TOWER

Austria-Hungary is called "the dual kingdom," but really it represents three distinct races:—Germans (Austrians), Czechs (Slavs, Bohemians) and Hungarians (Magyars). The Germans occupy the northern Austrian provinces nearest to Germany. The Slavs are most numerous but have long been subservient to the Magyars or real Hungarians, who are in the minority as compared with both the others. All are Roman Catholics, tho the Slavs have quite a sympathy for the Greek Catholics or Church of Russia, to which most of their race residing in Russia give adherence.

The progress of education during the last twenty-five years has had a great influence upon the subject race—the Bohemians, giving them new ideas of their "rights," "liberties," etc. This has caused no end of trouble to the government, precipitating bitter race-contentions in their Parliament, the Germans and Hungarians being unwilling to concede the demands of the Czechs who are in the majority. Seemingly only the loyalty of all to the Emperor has prevented a civil war; and serious results are feared in the event of the death of the now aged ruler. He is nearly seventy.

Once the Papacy had so firm a hold that to be a Protestant meant death—this being the land of John Huss, the martyr; but a change of sentiment came gradually with greater enlightenment. The Czechs were first to discuss the wisdom of leaving the Church of Rome and affiliating themselves with the Greek Catholic Church. This led to Roman concessions to the Czechs to placate them. This, however, has gradually led to a coolness toward the Church of Rome on the part of the Germans, and it is this that specially interests us now.

The German Catholic element looks with admiration toward the German Empire to the North and West, where German influence is supremely dominant, and annexation to these their brethren is earnestly craved—leaving the balance of Austria to the Hungarians and Bohemians. But Germany has already so many Roman Catholics that they trouble her in her Reichstag or Parliament as an opposition party, and more are not wanted: it was for this reason that Bismarck ignored and declined these pro-Catholic provinces of Austria when forming the Empire.

The new move of the Germans of northern Austria is to renounce adhesion to the Church of Rome and become Protestants, with a view to making themselves acceptable to so-styled "Protestant Germany." The movement has been in progress only a short time, but is spreading rapidly and means some awakening at least amongst these people long bounden under priestcraft and superstition; later it may mean the disintegration of Austria, and points to growing race prejudices the world over.

What influence this may have upon the impending "time of trouble" and distress of nations is hard to say; but surely it marks decline to despotic Papacy—as in France, Italy, Mexico and Spain's colonies. The extent of this Austrian movement may be judged from the following extracts from foreign newspapers:—

"LOS VON ROM"—AWAY FROM ROME

The *Schwaebische Mercur* says:—

"The 'Los von Rom' movement is increasing, especially in German Bohemia, where it occasions no little worry to the authorities. The Government has nowadays no means at hand to prevent this wholesale desertion, as the Protestant churches, or rather the Evangelical church, has legally the same status with the Church of Rome. In Eger 1100 Catholics have joined Protestantism, in Carlsbad 100, and another 1000 will become Protestants together. Within a short time half of German Bohemia will be Protestant."

The *Tageblatt* of Vienna says:—

"The Germans on the whole will not renounce their right to make use of their intellectual powers. This the church will not and can not permit. The Slavs, as the case of Russia shows, are patterns of submissiveness, hence the church prefers that Slavs should have all power. For a long time the Slav clergy has preached the doctrine that German is synonymous with Lutheran. 'Very well,' say now the Germans, 'we will become Lutheran to emphasize our nationality. Los von Rom!' How much the church is responsible for this the case of Bohemia shows. In the mixed districts only 23 priests are German, 262 are Czech. In the purely German districts 618 are German and 562 Czech."

The London *Outlook* says:—

"The Pan-Germanic movement is one of the disintegrating forces at work upon Austro-Hungary. The events of 1871, says one of its leaders, were but a step in the right direction, and the movement will not be complete, the Altdeutsche Verband will not have achieved its aims, until all the members of the Teutonic race on the continent of Europe have been welded into one state. Not until this is accomplished can Germany assert herself with success as a world power."

The London *Saturday Review*, referring to Baron Schönerer, the head of the new movement, says:—

"His last theatrical stroke of organizing secessions, ten thousand at a time, from the Church of Rome, while naturally exasperating to his opponents, emphasizes his strength beyond previous belief."

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Linz said, at a recent church conference in Austria,—

"In open meetings and in the press our holy faith is attacked in the most violent manner; openly and secretly the people are solicited to desert our holy church."

Herr Wolff, a leader among German Austrians, with his entire family, was recently baptized a Protestant; and in consequence he is now denounced as "a servant of Satan," by the Catholic press, which is extremely bitter on the entire subject.

In a time of such shaking up there should be some with ears for the present truth, and any who have the opportunity should be prompt to use it in serving the King and his "brethren."

A VISIT TO THE HEAVENLY COURT

INVITATION TO THE SAINTS

Come, dear saints, and let us visit at the court of heavenly grace,
  For Jehovah deigns a welcome to prepare.
He has bid us leave our earth-cares for the pleasures of his face,
  And recruit in heav'n's salubrious atmosphere.

He has spread a "feast of fat things" that will tempt our appetites.
  O the daintiness and richness of his fare!
He will cheer our drooping spirits with the vintage that delights
  Every honored guest his benefits to share.

Let us lay aside our burdens, and our sorrows leave behind,
While we hasten to that glory-lighted scene;
Let us purge our hearts of evil, and put on the willing mind,
Lest our eyes be holden by a veil between.

Clad in spotless robes of righteousness, by faith received and kept,
We may safely pass stern Justice's sentry-post;
While our Guide-book, studied carefully, will make us all adept
In the customs and requirements of our Host.

By his grace brought nigh, and joying in his countenance of light,
We may greet the loving Father face to face;
We may learn the hidden mysteries of wisdom, love and might,
Proving the "exceeding riches" of his grace.

With his signet in our foreheads we may wander leisurely
Through the palace gardens, by the river peace;
We may scale the heights of happiness, and overlook the sea
Of content, whose grateful murmurs never cease.

We may saunter through the orchards where the Spirit's fruits are ripe,
Plucking hope and love and kindness as we go;
And their fine, delicious flavors from our memories shall wipe
Every trace of bitterness and earthly woe.

We may change our weariness to vigor and perennial youth,
At the living fountains near the palace-door;
And with newborn energy and zeal explore the mines of truth,
Adding gem on gem of knowledge to our store.

And the feast of his providing! Who can tell, without a taste,
What shall charm our palates at that episode?
Come, dear saints, and visit long and often! Come with seemly haste!
For the King says "Welcome" to his high abode.

—R. B. H.

"NOW IS CHRIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD"

JUNE 11.—JOHN 20:11-20; 1 COR. 15:20.

Under divine supervision most elaborate proofs are furnished us of the death of Jesus—even tho the disciples and friends saw no necessity for this particularity, and indeed would have regarded all such proofs of his death as so many contradictions of their hopes and so many proofs of their disappointment. But the death of Christ was an all-important event, and hence it was necessary, from the divine standpoint, that the proofs respecting it should be indubitable. Let us note some of these proofs:—

(1) His side was pierced with a spear, and from the wound flowed blood and water—a positive proof that death, dissolution, had taken place.—Jno. 19:34, 35.

(2) The centurion who had charge of the execution undoubtedly was a man of large experience in such matters, and the record is that he was convinced of our Lord's death, and so reported to Pilate, the governor.—Mark 15:39, 44, 45.

(3) The corpse was buried in Joseph's *new* tomb, which contained no other corpses, and hence there could be no question respecting the body of Christ and its burial.

(4) The chief priests, anxious to prevent any spread of the doctrine of Jesus, remembered his words respecting his resurrection; and, while they placed no confidence in the matter, judging Jesus' disciples by themselves they surmised that they would be tricky and attempt to steal away the corpse and to claim the resurrection of their Master in harmony with his previous declarations. As a precaution against this they requested Pilate to seal the tomb and place a guard of Roman soldiers there; but Pilate refused to act officially in the matter, nevertheless giving them, as was probably customary, the privilege of hiring some of the soldiers as watchmen—much the same as anyone today can employ and pay a policeman for extra service as a watchman; thus the Pharisees appointed the watch and sealed the stone, and had full cognizance of Jesus' resurrection.—Matt. 27:62-66.

(5) The friends of Jesus were fully convinced of his death, and wrapped his body in linen clothes, with spices. (John 19:40) Apparently his declaration that he would rise from the dead on the third day was not appreciated by his followers until after he had risen. Their minds were intent upon the promise of the Kingdom; they were amazed at his arrest, conviction and crucifixion, and, it would seem, forgot for the time many of his precious words. Indeed, we are to remember that our Lord's teachings were almost wholly in parables and dark sayings, and they may have misinterpreted his reference to a resurrection. (Mark 4:13) After his resurrection they remembered his words, and particularly after Pentecost—after they had received the holy Spirit, which, according to promise, brought to their memories the things which he had spoken unto them while he was with them.—John 14:26.

If it were well that the facts respecting our Lord's death should be clearly set forth as a part of the Gospel, it is well also that all of the Lord's people should fully recognize the fact of his death, and the necessity of it, and its value as the offset or corresponding price for the redemption of Adam, and indirectly the redemption of all those who were in Adam when the sentence of death came upon him,—all redeemed by the one sacrifice, offered once for all. Strange to say, very many Christian people speak of our Lord's death and of his resurrection, and yet really do not believe in either. To believe that our Lord arose from the dead on the third day is to believe that *he was dead* from the time of his crucifixion on Friday afternoon until the time of his resuscitation or resurrection, early on Sunday morning, the first day of the week. And if he *"was dead"* (Rev. 2:8) during that period (parts of three days) and did not rise from the dead until the morning of the third day, it means that our Lord Jesus was *not in any sense alive* during that interim, a period of about thirty-eight hours. It seems strange that it should be necessary to emphasize a point so emphatically and repeatedly set forth in the Scriptures. The necessity is two-fold:—

(1) Because, through a false, unscriptural theory, many Christian people hold that there is no such thing as death;—that what appears to be death is merely a transformation to a larger degree of life;—that the real being cannot die, and that merely the body dies, and that so our Lord Jesus *did not die* for our sins, but merely shed off an outer covering of flesh.

(2) It is important to the true Christian's faith that the fact of our Lord's death be not only fully established by the statements of the Scriptures, but that the Christian's faith therein be fully and thoroughly grounded; because only those who realize that our Lord's death was for the time an extinction of his being can realize how his death was the payment of father Adam's penalty. Father Adam's penalty was death, extinction, and this penalty fell by inheritance upon all his posterity: "Christ *died* for our sins"—he suffered the death penalty for father Adam (and incidentally for all those who had come under the death sentence through Adam's transgression).

Nor should it be understood that the penalty upon father Adam was an extinction of life for merely thirty-eight hours: it was perpetual, the everlasting extinction of life and all the privileges of life he had received from his Creator. Our Lord's sacrifice—the death of the man Christ Jesus—was an everlasting death also, a death which fully offset the penalty upon father Adam, and as Adam's *substitute* the *man Jesus* could never be released. The release of the *man* Jesus from the death penalty would be as impossible as the release of Adam himself without a substitute; for, as man's substitute, *"the man* Christ Jesus" took upon himself the entire penalty of Adam's transgression, and must bear to the full the death-curse which rested upon Adam and indirectly upon his race. Hence, faith grasps firmly the thought that our Lord Jesus did not take back man's ransom-price—did not take back the sacrifice for sins, the human nature—in his resurrection.

In order that he might offer this, the only proper and acceptable ransom for man, our Lord left the glory which he had with the Father, left the higher nature, and was "made flesh," "that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (John 1:14; Heb. 2:9) If he could pay man's penalty by remaining dead thirty-eight hours, then man could have paid his own penalty by remaining dead thirty-eight hours, and there would have been no necessity for a sin-offering, a ransom-price, to be paid. Indeed, Adam would have overpaid his penalty thousands of times. But since the penalty was death in the absolute sense, unlimited by time; and since this penalty would never permit a restoration of life to Adam, therefore it was necessary that a *ransom* should be paid for Adam;—that another life should be *substituted* for Adam's life;—that another, a perfect man, should die and *remain dead everlastingly*, that Adam and the race condemned in him might be released from death by a resurrection.

It was just this work, in harmony with the divine plan, that was accomplished by the man Christ Jesus, and finished in his death; and according to divine promise that ransom-sacrifice will never be abrogated, will never be taken back: and consequently all who are trusting in the merit of the great sacrifice of atonement may have full confidence that there will be a resurrection of the dead (of humanity), both of the just and the unjust; because Justice has been paid the full price, and because God has promised through the Gospel of Christ an opportunity for return to everlasting life, which shall eventually be offered to every member of Adam's race.—1 Tim. 2:6.

In view of these facts, how and why do we speak of the resurrection of Jesus as essential to man's salvation? We answer that neither we nor the Scriptures speak of the resurrection of Christ Jesus as a *man*. As his coming to our low estate of manhood was merely for the purpose of effecting our ransom, and as the taking back of manhood by a resurrection would undo the entire work of redemption, it is preposterous to think of our Lord's resurrection as a restoration to human nature.

Quite to the contrary, all the evidences of the Scriptures, rightly and carefully arranged before our minds, show conclusively that our Lord was resurrected a spirit-being—not only higher than man, but higher also than angels, archangels, principalities and powers, a partaker of the divine nature. As such he was indeed a "new creature," and not in any sense of the word did this imply his taking back our ransom price. The Scriptures declare that he was "put to death in the *flesh*, but quickened in the *spirit*"—a spirit-being: and the Apostle Paul declares our Lord's resurrection to be the pattern or sample of the resurrection of the church which is his body. (Rom. 6:5) He declared that we with him will constitute the first (chief) resurrection; and then he explains our resurrection, and that explanation, therefore, must be equally an explanation of our Lord's resurrection, for he is the Head, the first-born from the dead amongst many brethren: and the experience of the "brethren" in resurrection will only be a duplication of the experiences of their Lord. With this in mind, let us note the Apostle's statement respecting the first resurrection and its operation upon the Church, assured that the same description, in general features at least, apply to our Lord's resurrection. He says, "Thus is *the* resurrection of *the* dead: It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."—1 Cor. 15:42-44; Phil. 3:10, 11.

From this standpoint, and from no other, can the facts related in the Scriptures respecting our Lord's resurrection be harmonized with each other and with the object for which he came into the world and suffered death.

Our Lord's resurrected being was a direct gift from the Father, and not something which our Redeemer held over from a previous existence: it was a *re*-creation on a higher plane of existence. When he left the glory of the spiritual condition and became the man Jesus, he had a *right to life*, under the divine law, because he had always fulfilled the conditions of life. In harmony with this the Scriptures assure us that his degradation from a higher nature to the human nature was not as a punishment, but of his own volition; not in obedience to a command of the Father, but in obedience to the will of the Father. As a man also he had a right to life, because the divine law guaranteed life to all who obeyed it; hence in no sense of the word was his human life forfeited. On the contrary, he *gave* it, he *sacrificed* it, he *offered* it, in harmony with the Father's plan, as man's *ransom-price*. But there he *lost* all right to life: that was the very thing which he surrendered or "offered" on man's behalf. And having surrendered on man's behalf his rights to life he had no such rights remaining, and consequently could plead no right to a future life by a resurrection on that score—he had given his rights for Adam and his race.

But while the rights of our Lord were gone—paid to Justice as Adam's ransom, nevertheless the heavenly Father's power and right to re-create on a higher plane were in no sense of the word abridged. Justice might properly object to the re-creation of Jesus as a *man*, but would have no ground whatever for objecting to the creation of a new creature—of a nature higher and superior to all others of God's creatures—of the divine nature. And this is what the Apostle tells us did occur; after describing our Lord's humility and obedience to the Father unto death, even the death of the cross, the Apostle declares, "God hath highly *exalted* him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:9-11. [See Z '16, p. 133, for later view].

While it doth not yet appear what we shall be, when we are changed by a share in the first resurrection to the same divine nature, and while consequently it does not yet appear to us clearly what our Lord is in his very high exaltation, we can nevertheless appreciate the fact that amongst all who are honored with the title of sons of God upon the different planes or natures, there is a measure of identity. Thus for instance, our Lord, in his prehuman condition as Michael, the Logos, could be transferred to a lower condition, the human, and yet could preserve a good recollection and appreciation of his previous experiences, and did so, as the Scriptures relate. (John 8:58, 17:5, 24) And similarly it was possible for the perfect man Jesus, the image of God in flesh, to be so duplicated as a still higher image of God in the divine nature, "the express image of the Father's person," that his identity is absolutely assured. The Scriptures clearly indicate that our Lord's experiences as a man, and the lessons of patience and obedience and sympathy which he then learned, are present with him now, as experiences, altho no longer flesh, but spirit of the highest order. Only from this standpoint can we rightly appreciate the various facts set forth in this lesson.

Woman's love and tenderness, specially endearing charms of the sex, are well illustrated in this lesson—in the coming of Jesus' female friends "very early in the morning," "while it was yet dark," at the "dawn." They came with no thought of the Lord's resurrection, but to embalm his body more elaborately than there had been time and opportunity for doing on the evening of his burial. They had been hindered from coming the previous day, because it was the Jewish Sabbath (the day now known as Saturday), the seventh day of the week. It does not appear that they all came together, but rather that Mary Magdalene was the first to arrive; but before her arrival there had been an earthquake, the keepers were affrighted, and fled to the chief priests. (Matt. 28:2, 11-15) Mary's perplexity respecting the events connected with the crucifixion was evidently intensified by the finding of the stone rolled away from the sepulcher, and full of the thought that the Lord's enemies were still pursuing him, and had even removed his body, she ran with haste to make the matter known to Peter and John, saying, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid him." Meantime the other women arrived, and saw the two angels, who explained to them that Jesus had risen as he had foretold, and they also returned to the city to report to the apostles.—Luke 24:2-10.

Peter and John were immediately interested by Mary's narrative, and hastened to the sepulcher; John, the younger and more active one, arriving there first, looked in and saw the place vacant, and the linen clothes lying; but Peter, the courageous, coming up, was the first to enter the sepulcher. Now they began to think of the words which our Lord had spoken respecting his resurrection on the third day, and John tells us of himself that looking at these evidences "he believed"—yet no doubt with much confusion of thought at first. The two disciples went to their home, but Mary remained at the sepulcher, weeping, and looking in she saw what Peter and John had not seen—two angels. They were doubtless there when Peter and John went into the sepulcher, but as we have heretofore seen from the Scriptural testimony, angels are invisible to human sight, except as a miracle may be performed. Such a miracle was performed in this instance, and the two angels assumed human form and white raiment, and asked Mary why she wept. While she told them that she was weeping because some one had taken away the Lord's corpse, she heard a footstep near her, and turning saw what she took to be the gardener, the keeper of Joseph's garden in which this tomb was. She did not recognize him as the Lord, but asked him if he had removed the body to tell her where, that she might take charge of it—her thought seeming to have been that Joseph was unwilling to have his tomb cumbered longer, and had therefore ordered that our Lord's body be removed, and that probably the gardener had attended to the matter.

It will be noticed in this case, and in the various instances of our Lord's appearances after his resurrection, that his nearest and dearest friends did not recognize him. He appeared in various forms and under varying circumstances. He spoke to them only briefly on each occasion, and during the forty days of his presence from the time of his resurrection to the time of his ascension was seen of his disciples only a few times, and all of his conversations together probably did not occupy over an hour. These appearances, nevertheless, were for the purpose of teaching them very important lessons. (1) They were to recognize the fact that he was no longer dead, but alive. (2) That he was no longer the *man* Jesus, and subject to *human* limitations as before his crucifixion, but with the same loving disposition and characteristics was now a "new creature," not subject to earthly conditions and limitations—able, as the angels, to appear and to disappear, to go and come like the wind, as he himself had explained that all "born of the spirit" in resurrection can do.—John 3:8.

In this view of the matter we are not surprised that Mary did not know her Lord until he revealed himself by speaking her name in a familiar manner. Then how quickly her faith surmounted every obstacle. With a woman's intuition she stopped not to inquire why there were no marks of the nails in his hands and in his feet but crying, "Master!" she clasped him by the feet with a fervency that meant, "Now that I have found you again I will not let go of you!" Her love, her devotion, her persistence, gained for Mary the great honor of being the first to whom the Lord revealed himself after his resurrection. She had been forgiven much, and she loved much, and our Lord manifested his appreciation of her devotion. Nevertheless, he must tell her that she was neglecting a great privilege and a great duty, for under divine providence it had fallen to her to be the first to announce to the disciples positively that the Lord was alive again. Instead of holding the Lord tightly by the feet, and thinking never to leave him, she should rather gladly become the servant both of the Lord and the apostles, and carry the good tidings.

And this in substance is what our Lord said to her. Our common translation "Touch me not" is faulty: the passage should rather be rendered, "Cling not to me, but go to my brethren, and say to them that I have not yet ascended to my Father, but that I am to ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and to your God. Announce to them the fact of my resurrection, and that I will be with them awhile before I go to the Father: thus you will do a work of preparing them for my subsequent manifestations." And having the true love which manifests itself in obedience, Mary immediately undertook the mission assigned her. According to Matthew's account (28:1, 9) "the other Mary" must have been near by, and have come forward by this time, and received a commission with Mary Magdalene to tell the disciples.

We will not stop to call special attention to the words of our Lord, in which he declares that our heavenly Father is his heavenly Father, and our God his God, for the expression is simple enough for all unprejudiced minds. We pass on to notice that the second appearance of our Lord was in the afternoon of the same day, toward evening, when he overtook two of the disciples going to Emmaus, a suburban village; one of these was Cleopas, and the other evidently was Simon Peter.—Luke 24:13-32, 34.

The third appearance was in the evening of the same day. While Simon and Cleopas (who immediately returned to Jerusalem to tell the disciples) were relating their experiences, Jesus himself appeared in their midst. The disciples were nervous from the experiences of the preceding days, and were fearful of what the rulers of the Jews would do against them as the followers of Jesus, and were together in conference, "the doors being shut," barred and bolted, we may reasonably suppose. What could be more astonishing to them than that a stranger should appear in their midst? and altho he said, "Peace be unto you," no wonder they were affrighted. They thought of this as the manifestation of an angel in their midst, for who but a spirit being could appear while the doors were shut? They had not yet learned the lesson that our Lord, in his resurrection, was a spirit being and no longer a human being, and that like the angels he now had power to appear and disappear—to assume a human body with clothing etc., and to dissipate the same at will. This lesson they must learn, and must needs be taught it by practical illustrations. Simon, who had been at Emmaus, and who had noted how the Lord vanished out of their sight as soon as they recognized him, would undoubtedly be prepared, better than the others, for this miraculous appearance while the doors were shut. He would know that the one who could disappear and vanish out of their sight at Emmaus would similarly have power to appear in any place.

Our Lord's interview was not a lengthy one; it was a first lesson, and the disciples would get the more good of it by reflection after he would leave them. He wished them, however, to be at ease in his presence, and to know that they were not *seeing* a spirit being, for, as he explained, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones." What they *saw* was not spirit, but matter. This does not mean that our Lord was not a spirit being at this time, as is clearly set forth by other Scriptures (1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:17; Phil 3:21): it merely means what it says, namely, that what they *saw* was not spirit, and hence that they had no cause for affright.

In our Lord's appearance to the Marys and on the way to Emmaus there is no suggestion that he appeared in a body scarred with the marks of the nails. Can we suppose that Mary would have clasped him by the feet and not have noticed the great wounds made by the nails? Can we suppose that the two going to Emmaus, and looking curiously at their companion, asking him if he were a stranger in those parts, would not have noticed if his hands and his feet had great wounds in them? The evidence, therefore, seems conclusive that in neither of these manifestations did our Lord appear in bodies bearing wounds and thus resembling his crucified form. But now, at this third showing, wishing to emphasize the identity of his risen self with the crucified one, he appeared to his followers in a form exactly like the one that was crucified, and showed them the spearmarks in his side and the nail-prints in his hands and feet. And while they still wondered and feared that what they saw was merely an apparition, he asked them to give him food, and ate some fish and honeycomb in their sight.—Luke 24:39-43.

Nothing in this implies of necessity that the flesh which they saw was the identical flesh which had hung on the cross. On the contrary that flesh, like all other flesh, was subject to the laws of nature and could not have been brought into the room while the doors were shut, nor subsequently caused to vanish out of it. The body of flesh which our Lord displayed to the disciples, was evidently created, and its clothing as well, in their presence, and dissolved when he vanished from their sight after the interview. Such powers are beyond human comprehension, but quite within the range of divine power.

What became of the body of flesh that was crucified, and that laid in Joseph's tomb, and that disappeared therefrom, we are not told, except that the Apostle and the Prophet declare that, "His flesh saw no corruption." (Acts 2:31; Psa. 16:10) We incline to the opinion that the flesh, which was man's ransom-price, will never see corruption, but that it will be preserved by divine power as an everlasting testimony of the grace of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ in man's redemption, and will thus be a witness and a testimony to the divine love throughout eternity. Where God may have that body in preservation we know not. He who could hide the body of Moses, who was only a type, surely could hide the body of his Son—the antitypical redemption price.—Jude 9.

These various appearances of our Lord under peculiar circumstances were continued at long intervals during the forty days. Apparently he appeared in all some four or five times after the appearances above noted, which were on the day of his resurrection, and the Apostle Paul assures us that at the time he wrote his Epistle to the Corinthians over two hundred and fifty witnesses of our Lord's resurrection were still living, and this epistle was written about twenty-four years after the crucifixion. When we remember how close a reasoner the Apostle Paul was, and how logical were all his conclusions, we may rest assured that he did not receive this testimony respecting our Lord's resurrection upon any slight evidence, but had full confirmation of it. Moreover, he attests as a witness to the resurrection himself, saying, "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born before due time."—1 Cor. 15:6-8.

The Apostle Paul did not see Jesus under a vail of flesh, as he appeared to the others before the spirit dispensation began. To Paul he manifested himself in the glory of his spirit being, "shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday." The effect, as is well known, was disastrous to the eyes of the Apostle, because, altho he saw the Lord *as* one born before the time, yet not having been thus born himself by a resurrection change to the newness of nature, the sight was a calamity to his flesh.

It surely is a great relief to us to understand correctly respecting our dear Redeemer's resurrection, for several reasons:—

(1) It permits us to see how he arose without taking back our ransom price.

(2) It shows us that, altho, in obedience to the Father's arrangement, he willingly and gladly left a higher condition in order to be made flesh and to give a ransom, nevertheless he has not been permitted to be a loser to all eternity by this arrangement—he is not hampered by the lower or fleshly organism, but has, in his resurrection, attained to the highest form of spirit nature, the divine nature.—Phil. 2:8-11; 3:8, 9.

(3) It is a comfort to us to know that he does not bear now, in glory, the scars of the thorns, the spear and the nails; nor any of the evidences of the things which he suffered on our behalf: but instead his is an "excellent glory"—"the express image of the Father's person."—Heb. 1:3.

(4) It comforts us also to know that the church, the body of Christ, will not to all eternity bear the marks of imperfection, the blemishes of sin, nor the marks of the wounds endured for righteousness' sake. No, the promise to the church is the same as the promise to her Lord, that in the resurrection the Father will give (not the body that died, with wounds and imperfections, but) "a body as it hath pleased him," a glorious body, a likeness of the Lord. "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he *is*"—not as he *was*.—1 Cor. 15:38; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2.

THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

June 18.—Col. 3:1-15.

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."

Following our consideration of our Lord's death and resurrection, it is appropriate that we apply to ourselves the twofold lesson therein taught:—

(1) The lesson of man's depravity through the fall and his consequent need of a redemption and restitution. As we have already seen, the death of Christ was man's ransom-price, and the resurrection of Christ was God's attestation of the acceptableness of the sin-offering, and preparing of the way for the blessing of mankind by raising up to superhuman life, divine glory and power, the Redeemer,—constituting him "Lord of all," and thus fitting him for the great work of blessing Adam and his family in due time—after the establishment of his Millennial kingdom.

(2) We should note God's purpose to select from mankind a "little flock" on whom to confer kingdom power in due time, making them his representatives and agents in the work of blessing the world of mankind with all the favors secured by the ransom sacrifice. The Scriptures show us that this plan or purpose of God was foreknown, forearranged, by him before the foundation of the world. They show us also that in the divine purpose our Lord Jesus was the Head, the First, the principal One, the Lord of this little flock; and that God's dealings with him and the method by which he was prepared for his present high position were an illustration of the method by which his church is to be prepared for joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom.—Eph. 1:3, 4; 4:15; Col. 1:18; 1 Peter 1:20.

It is with this latter feature or lesson that we now have to do. In the Scripture under consideration the Apostle is addressing, not mankind in general,—not even believers in general,—but a specific class, namely, "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ." (Col. 1:2) He is addressing, therefore, those who have taken the two steps of grace:—(1) The step of justification from Adamic sin and death to reconciliation with the Father through faith in the atonement accomplished by his dear Son. (2) Having thus been justified reckonedly, or by faith, lifted out of the condition of sin and condemnation, these, according to the Lord's invitation, have *consecrated* themselves in the fullest sense and degree to the Lord for obedience and service "even unto death."

This full consecration of every talent and power and opportunity is Scripturally called death—because the will has died, self-will has gone, and the Lord's will has been accepted in its stead. And since the will is the real *ego*, the real person, the thought is that the old *ego*, will or person has died, and that the new creature, having no will of his own, but being wholly under subjection to the divine will as expressed in Christ, who is the Head of this body, has come into control. Let us not lose the thought-picture here conveyed. We are not new individuals or persons, for it was individually and personally that we ceased to be when we gave ourselves over by full consecration to the Lord: our new condition is that of members or parts of the larger corporation or body of which our Lord Jesus is the Head. Whoever has a will of his own is properly to be considered an *individual;* but whoever has dropped his own will, and accepted instead of it the will of another, has ceased or figuratively has died as an individual. And this is the picture which the Apostle presents in this and in various other presentations of this subject. For instance, in 1 Corinthians xii. the same writer declares that the entire Christ is one body of many members; but that the will resides not in the members but in the Head. To whatever extent, then, the Lord's people have fully consecrated themselves to him as *members* of the body of Christ, they should be in absolute subjection to the will of God in Christ; and so far as their own wills are concerned they should have none, but in that respect should be *"dead."*

This is the Apostle's thought in this lesson; but he carries it further, saying that as our own wills, ambitions, aims and hopes were consecrated and reckoned dead, so we should reckon ourselves as members of the Christ, risen from the dead: new creatures, possessed and controlled by the new will, the mind of Christ. It is this class that the Apostle addresses, and from this standpoint that he declares, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God."

The thought is that all of this class have, as justified earthly beings, desiring and hoping to attain joint-heirship with Christ in his kingdom, been taught of God and inspired by the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word to come to this position of self-consecration. We are to note *how* our Lord Jesus laid down his earthly life, and was by the Father exalted to a heavenly condition and the right hand of power,—as a criterion for our course as followers in his footsteps. We are to remember continually that joint-heirship with the Lord in that spiritual condition and in his heavenly power and kingdom are the hopes set before the church of this age, and we are to *"seek* those things"—*"seek* chiefly the kingdom of God"—*seek* to make our calling and election sure to participation with our Lord in the kingdom honors and glories to which he already has attained as a reward for his faithful sacrifice.—Verse 1; Matt. 6:33; Rom. 2:7, 2 Pet. 1:10.

The Apostle wishes us to understand how we are to *"seek"* those things. We are not merely to seek them in prayer, altho prayer is an excellent aid in the seeking. We are to seek them by setting our affections on those things, and by lifting our affections from earthly things.

Comparatively few realize to what extent we have the forming of our own characters—to what extent our minds, our affections, are gardens, in which we may plant either the thorns and thistles of sin, or plant the merely moral and practical qualities corresponding to the useful vegetables, or plant those seeds which will produce the fragrant and beautiful flowers which more particularly would represent the heavenly and spiritual graces. That which a man soweth he shall also reap in kind, whether he sow to the flesh or to the spirit. Whoever, therefore, seeks for the heavenly things, joint-heirship in the kingdom, etc., must plant or set out in his mind, in his affections, those qualities and graces which the Lord marks out as essential to the development of characters such as will be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."—Col. 1:12.

Thus the Lord throws upon all those whom he calls to this "high calling," this "heavenly calling," and who accept the call and covenant thereunder, the responsibility of their success or failure in attaining it. Through his Word he tells them of their own natural weaknesses and imperfections, and shows them how he has provided a full off-set or counterbalance for these imperfections in the merit and sacrifice of the Redeemer: he shows them also what are the fruits and graces of the spirit which they must possess, in heart at least, if they would be joint-heirs with Christ: he shows them also in the Redeemer's life as well as in his teachings the copy which all must follow who would reach the same glorious station and be his joint-heirs. We might look at this matter merely from the standpoint of the responsibility which it throws upon us, and might well feel overawed thereby; rather, however, we should view it from the standpoint of divine grace, and consider what a blessed privilege has been granted us, not only of being transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we might come more and more to know and to strive for the good, acceptable and perfect will of God, but in addition to all this God has set before us the grandest reward imaginable for the doing of that which is merely our duty and reasonable service—the doing of that which would bring us the largest measure of joy and peace, aside from a future reward.—2 Pet. 1:3, 4.

There is a natural attraction to earthly things for all mankind: even though the earthly things, during the reign of evil, be blemished and in many respects distasteful to those who have learned to love righteousness and hate iniquity, there is nevertheless still a strong attraction to the marred and blemished earthly things. Like weeds, earthly affections and desires spring spontaneously from seeds which come we know not whither. The Christian, therefore, who would keep his heart in the love of God must not only keep planting out or setting his affections on heavenly things, but he must keep rooting out the weeds of earthly desire and attraction.

As the Apostle intimates, our new life is not manifest to all, nor upon all occasions; it is a life of new desires, new aims, new aspirations,—which the world can neither see nor fully appreciate, though it see some outward manifestations of the new life in our daily conduct. Even the "brethren" may not be able to appreciate the progress of the new life in us; and even ourselves may at times be somewhat perplexed respecting the rapidity and strength of its growth, and we may need to look back over weeks or months, or perhaps years, in order to determine unquestionably that it is growing. Our new life, represented by our endeavors to follow the new will of Christ, is *hidden* thus in Christ and in the Father.

It is in harmony with this thought that the Apostle Paul declares in one place that neither the world nor the brethren were capable of judging him—that only the Lord, who could read the heart and know all the conditions and testings and weaknesses to be striven against, could properly judge him. He even declares, "Yea, I judge not mine own self." (Rom. 14: 4; 1 Cor. 4:3; Jas. 4:12) It is an excellent plan neither to condemn others who claim to be walking conscientiously as children of the Lord, nor even to condemn ourselves under similar circumstances. We should simply press along day by day, doing the best we can to cultivate the heavenly graces and to serve our Master, leaving all the results with the Lord. He careth for us, and so long as our hopes and aims and objects of life are centered in the heavenly things, and our lives thus hid with Christ in God, we need fear no evil, present or future, for the Lord will be with us and bless us and keep us from falling and ultimately present us blameless.—Psa. 23:4; Jude 24; Col. 1:22.

This condition of things is to last throughout the entire Gospel age, and is to apply to all the members of the body of Christ. All are to be dead to the world and all are to have their ambitions and hopes for life hidden with Christ in God. As the Father has done for our Lord, so he will do for all those who are truly united to him; and the time for bringing these blessings to the church is, the Apostle states, at the second coming of the Lord. Then the Lord's people will no longer be misunderstood by each other nor by the world; then the faithful will all appear with the Master in glory, and then will begin the work of blessing all the families of the earth with a knowledge of the truth and with an opportunity for full restitution to all that was lost in Adam.

Having thus set forth the proper course of the church in the line of aspirations, hopes, etc., the Apostle turns to the other side of the question, and gives us particular and explicit directions *how* we should proceed to carry out our consecration vow of deadness to earthly things and life only toward the heavenly things. It will be noticed that he does not counsel retirement from the world and its busy cares to cloisters, monasteries or nunneries, but taking the Lord's consecrated people where they may be, he advises respecting the methods by which they can best accomplish the desired results of mortifying or *deadening* their appetites, desires, etc., which are rooted and grounded in their fallen flesh or earthly nature. He mentions these besetments, commencing with the more gross and ending with the most subtle.

Fornication was very prevalent in the Apostle's day, and he would have the saints recognize this gross, prominent evil, and then in connection with it notice others which they might be much more likely to overlook. First of these in order is "uncleanness." What a searching thought is in that word! It means anything that is not pure, not chaste, not holy, not clean. If a good many of the saints might feel that it was useless to mention to them so gross an evil as fornication, they would be forced to admit that in their imperfect condition they required guarding, counseling, on the score of "uncleanness." This reminds us of our Lord's words to the disciples on the night before his crucifixion. He said to Peter, when proposing to wash his feet, "Ye are clean, but not all." So the saints consecrated to the Lord are clean of heart, pure of heart; yet they are not all clean—the members which touch the earth, their sensibilities and passions which come in contact with the defiled human nature, need cleansing, need "washing with water through the Word." All filth, all uncleanness, every "spot and wrinkle," needs attention, and the "precious blood" is the antidote for every stain.—Eph. 5:25-27.

"Inordinate affection" is one of the things mentioned as needing attention and correction by the saints: this signifies earthly or animal passions. The saints are to mortify these, that is, to deaden them—not only to seek not to cultivate, not to enliven, not to arouse, such passions either in themselves or in others, but on the contrary they are to seek to deaden these as well as to cultivate the higher and nobler joys and sentiments. The deadening or mortifying of these, and the self-denial according to the flesh thus implied, is a part of the antitypical *fasting* in which all of the Lord's people should seek to engage, each according to his zeal, opportunities and possibilities.

"Evil concupiscence" (or, in more modern language, *desires for forbidden things*) is a step higher in the Apostle's list of evil tendencies that should be rooted out and mortified, *deadened.* It is not sufficient that we acknowledge sin in its various forms to be evil, and that we resolve that we will strive against it because it is under the Lord's ban: in addition to this we are to root out of our hearts every *longing,* every *desire* for every thing not thoroughly approved by the Lord. Oh, what a cleansing this would mean in the hearts and lives, and especially in the thoughts, of many who have named the name of Christ! Many who fail to note this point, who fail to follow the Apostle's admonition, find themselves continually beset by temptations, because, while outwardly avoiding gross immoralities, they secretly harbor sympathies for things condemned,—*desiring* that they might have them, if only they were not forbidden. Under such conditions comparatively little progress can be made in the higher life. The Apostle would set before us the proper course to be pursued, if we would win the great prize,—namely, the high standard of bringing the very thoughts, wishes, desires, of our hearts into full conformity to the perfect will of God: and only those who do so are properly making progress, running the race set before us in the Gospel.—2 Cor. 10:5.

The Apostle concludes his list of things against which the "new creature" must war to the *death* by naming "covetousness," and declaring it a species of idolatry. In other words, if the hearts of the Lord's people are running after any earthly thing (even if it be not an evil thing of itself), if they are centering their affections upon even good things of an earthly kind, and are neglecting to set their affections upon the heavenly things, they are failing to run the race successfully. This is amongst the most seductive trials of the Lord's people. Some will set their affections upon a wife or a husband, or upon parents or children, or upon a good name before the public, to such an extent that when testings come as to whether or not they love these more than they love the Lord, their conduct proves that they have given to these *earthly good things* a degree of love beyond that they accorded to the Lord.

Frequently the Lord's people do not at the time realize that this is the case. They love the Lord, and they love their families and friends, and a good name, which is to be preferred to great riches; and they do not realize that they love the Lord less than they love these other things. The Lord, however, will test everyone whom he will receive to the high calling along just these lines; he declares in advance that whoever loves father, mother, children or any other thing more than him is not worthy of him—not worthy to be counted as a member of the body of the Christ in glory,—the overcoming church. The overcomers must all be proven to be such as would sacrifice every other thing for the Lord; such as would sacrifice the love and fellowship and approval, if necessary, of every other being, in order to retain the love and favor of the Lord. We believe that this test is coming daily closer and closer to the Lord's consecrated people, and it behooves everyone of us to remember that this is one of the elements of our trial, and to set our affections on the heavenly things accordingly, and to mortify or deaden all such affections toward earthly beings and things as would bring these into competition with our Lord in our affections, service, etc.

The Apostle sums up this list of evils to be deadened by saying that it is in the seeking of these earthly things, because of such things growing in their hearts, that the Lord's wrath is to come "on the children of disobedience." Who are these children of disobedience? Are they the wicked, the worldly, the unregenerate? No, none of these; for they are not "children" at all. The reference evidently is to those who have become children of God by his legitimate arrangement of (1) justification and (2) sanctification through faith in Christ. He is referring to those who are of the class "called to be saints," but who fail to make sure their calling and election to joint-heirship with the Lord, as members of the kingdom "little flock." He refers to those who do not properly set their affections on heavenly things, but allow their affections to centre chiefly in earthly things. He refers to the "great company" who, because of loving father or mother, houses or lands, or something else, to such an extent that they fail to keep their covenant of sacrifice, will be accounted unworthy of a share in the kingdom, and instead will be subjected to the great time of trouble—"the day of wrath."—1 Cor. 3:15; Rev. 7:9-15.

This does not signify, however, that such persons have become exceedingly corrupt in their lives, but merely that they are continuing in the course of life in which they were before making their covenant to the Lord. This is clearly expressed in the seventh verse of our lesson.

Coming down to a *particularization* of the change which should take place in those who have consecrated themselves wholly to the Lord, the Apostle enumerates certain alterations of disposition which should be attempted, and, so far as possible, accomplished; namely, the putting away of all the following—anger, wrath, malice, evil-speaking, impurity of language, and falsehood in its every form. At first thought such correction of life might seem to be unnecessary to mention as being too coarse and entirely opposed to every true Christian principle; but as we scrutinize the matter we find that the Apostle has really taken into his list nearly all the weaknesses of the flesh which beset those who have become "new creatures in Christ." What is more common with Christian people than to become angry? How many there are who have named the name of Christ who have malicious or at least unkind thoughts respecting others, and who harbor these, and sometimes permit them to influence their conduct! How many there are who indulge in evil speaking, that is, slander (here translated "blasphemy")! This is often done in such a manner as not only to deceive the hearer, but also to deceive the speaker as respects his real intention in speaking of others discreditably, unkindly.

What a wonderful world this would be if all the evil or impure language were avoided! Every Christian should see to it that henceforth every word which proceeds from his mouth shall be such as will minister grace to the hearers—such words as will do only good and be edifying. Finally, how much need there is, not only of having good intentions in the heart, but also of expressing those good intentions truthfully one to another—without deception, without hypocrisy. But it requires that a heart be very pure and very full of love if it would be very truthful, otherwise it would lead into trouble continually. If the unloving, ungenerous, unkind hearts, full of evil surmising, malice, hatred and strife, were to express themselves frankly it would add immensely to the trouble of the world. The Apostle therefore urges, first, the purifying of the heart, and then general candor.

These corrections of life are urged as the reasonable and proper outcome of our transformation from the Adamic and fallen nature, reckoned dead, to the new nature of Christ, of whose "body" we have become reckonedly members, controlled and renewed in knowledge through our new Head, Christ Jesus.

And the Apostle then shows that in this new condition, as members of the body of Christ, we are to remember that previous differences of man are ignored, for whoever is accepted of the Lord as a member of his body is a fellow-member with every other member thus accepted,—whether, according to the flesh, they were Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, Barbarian or Scythian, bondman or freeman; because all who come into Christ are reckoned *dead* to their previous condition, and alive to the new conditions which are alike for all. Thus, a slave being set free is dead to his former slavery, and may figuratively be said to have started on a new life. Thus also a citizen may renounce his allegiance to the land of his birth and may swear allegiance to another country, and become a citizen of it, and thus be reckoned as dead to the nation of which he was a citizen by birth, and to have become alive as a citizen of the new nation to which he has been accepted. Thus it is with all those who are in Christ: they may have been Welshmen or Spaniards, Britons or Gauls, blacks or whites, Indians or Malays, but as soon as they are accepted of the Lord as new creatures through faith and consecration they are to reckon themselves *dead* to all their former relationships and obligations, and as having come into new conditions as citizens of the heavenly kingdom, and reckonedly heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

This does not mean, however, that the white man will become a black man, nor the black man a white man; it does not mean, necessarily, a change of language either, nor a revolution in all the tastes and peculiarities wherewith one was born; nor does it mean a full release, according to the flesh, from obligations to the land of our birth, nor imply that we should not be subject to the powers that be, except as their demands might conflict with the positive commands of our King; nor does it imply an ignoring of the differences of sex and the proprieties which belong to each sex, and which, according to the Scriptures, are to be continued and preserved during this age. It does imply, however, that in thinking of each other as *new creatures in Christ Jesus* all are to be considered as on a common plane or level—none are to be disesteemed as "brethren" because of color, speech or sex.

With this thought before our minds,—of the oneness and equality of those who have been accepted into the body of Christ, the Apostle urges upon our attention the necessity, not only of putting off the evil dispositions of our fallen flesh, but the necessity also of putting on, cultivating, the various graces of the Spirit exemplified in our Head, Christ Jesus. He specifies these: (1) Bowels of mercies, or, in more modern language, *compassionate sentiments;* a disposition toward largeness and generosity of heart toward everybody and everything—toward the saints, toward our neighbors and friends and relatives, toward our enemies, and toward the brute creation. Amplifying, he continues, showing that it would imply (2) kindness toward all; (3) humbleness of mind, the reverse of boastfulness, headiness, arrogance; (4) meekness, or gentleness of disposition; (5) long-suffering, or patient endurance with the faults and weaknesses of others. It implies that we should bear with each other's peculiarities of temperament and disposition, freely forgiving one another, if there be cause of offence found in each other—learning the meanwhile to correct ourselves, as we see our own blemishes more or less mirrored in others. And the standard for all this course of conduct is found in the Lord's course toward us, for he surely has been generous, kind, forbearing and forgiving.

The Apostle wishes us to notice that he is not attempting a reformation of the world along these lines, but merely a transformation of those who have entered into a special covenant with the Lord, namely, the church: "the elect of God, holy and beloved." Nevertheless, all who are thus covenanted to the Lord, and hope to make their calling and election sure to membership in the glorified church, will not only seek to have these fruits of the spirit in their own lives, but will seek also to cultivate the same as they may have opportunity in their friends and neighbors: above all will such seek to exercise such a good influence upon their own families—that as their children receive from them, as parents, the natural life and the necessary instructions and start therein, they may also if possible receive from them their start in the new life, and the necessary instructions and equipment for the same.

But the Apostle, as the mouthpiece of the holy Spirit, is a thorough instructor: not only does he tell us what *dis-graces* to put off and what *graces* to put on, but viewing the Lord's body arrayed in these glorious qualities of heart,—compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patient endurance, forbearance and forgiveness,—he adds, "And *above* all these put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." Love is thus pictured as the "girdle" which binds and holds in place the folds of the robe of Christ's righteousness, with its various graces. In other words, the Apostle would have us see that forbearance, meekness, patience, etc., must not be matters of courtesy merely, or matters of policy merely, but however much they might partake of these qualities at the beginning, the wearers will not be perfected in heart, not be fit for the Kingdom, until they have reached the place where these various graces of their wills, or intentions, are bound to them by the cords of love—love for the Lord, love for righteousness, love for the "brethren," and sympathetic love for the whole groaning creation. Love is indeed the bond of perfectness, the very spirit of the Lord.

How forceful in its place is the last verse of this lesson.

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body [one corporation, one church—the body of Christ], and be ye thankful." Not until God's people have reached some measure of what the Apostle has here outlined can they know experimentally the blessedness of having divine peace *rule* in their hearts and lives, controlling their relationship with every member of the body of Christ under the bond of love, and producing more and more in them the spirit of gratitude and thankfulness to God, for mercies and blessings enjoyed. And such gratitude will find its natural and proper outlet in endeavors to serve the Lord: endeavors which the Lord will be sure to accept from such hearts, reckoned holy and acceptable through Christ Jesus, the Head and Redeemer.

JUNE 25TH—REVIEW

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that
Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."
1 Tim. 1:15.

The lessons of the past six months have related particularly to our Lord Jesus and his ministry, and in view of this fact Bishop Warren has remarked:—

"I knew a man who went a thousand miles and back, and supported himself at great expense, to be with Agassiz a few weeks at his summer school at Penikese. An hour with the great naturalist would have amply repaid the trouble and expense. To even see the master of any department is helpful.

"Christ is the Master of the department of spiritual life. We have had six months' study with him and of him. Happily we do not have to go to Judea. He says, 'I will come to you and make my abode with you,' and, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world,' either as to time or space.

"It is not fish we experiment on, as did Agassiz, but souls,—ourselves. So there can be no more interesting study."

INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—It is with pleasure that I report an increased sign of interest in the truth by some more of the Lord's people. Since the loss of our dear brother Nicholson (who will doubtless be profitable for the truth wherever he may settle in the States) we have unmistakably entered a new era in our Christian history. At the point of his leaving and for a few weeks later the lowest ebb of the tide was reached; but at the darkest hour of future prospect, a revival of interest set in which has increased steadily. Our work is altogether in the interest of the "household of faith"—seeking to be used of the Chief Reaper in supplying the present truth. The interest is marked in the saints who, realizing the great need of separation from what tends to compromise with Christendom and having a desire to be of the sanctuary class, follow the Lord outside the camp.

Our Dawn Circle (every Tuesday evening) is exceptionally successful compared with the past year, and the work on Sunday is at last bearing fruit. All the helpers are in our midst, and all who speak the truth are known to be sound in the faith. Thus we are able to avoid the inevitable consequences of the warning of Scripture, "Sow not the field with mingled seed." As far as lies in our power the truth (unadulterated) is proclaimed.

Some years ago I wrote you upon the seeming discrepancy of the 400 and 430 years of the Israelites' sojourning and afflictions, and since have come across what is a very helpful solution of the matter, and a further indication of the reliableness of the Bible dates.

GENESIS 15:13-18.

This distinction between affliction and the bondage of the Israelites (the former including the latter, but not confined to it) throws light upon the difficulty which is often experienced respecting the period of 400 years here mentioned. The actual bondage in Egypt was of comparatively short duration (one-half of 430 years); but the affliction of the seed of Abraham commenced in his son Isaac. The interval between Isaac's birth and the Exodus was 405 years; and if we place the predicted affliction of the seed to commence in Isaac's fifth year, when he would begin to feel the effects of Ishmael's mockery, we then have the afflictions enduring 400 years, and including in the last period of it the bondage. What is said (Exod. 12:40) about the sojourning of the people 430 years before the Exodus presents no difficulty in the way of this solution, but rather confirms it; because it is evident from Gal. 3:17, that this period of 430 years is to be reckoned from the giving of the promise to Abraham, which was first done 25 years before the birth of Isaac. This corresponds exactly, and was the whole period of sojourn, including the other two periods, which are more actually characterized as, first, the period of affliction, and finally, the period of actual slavery.

I remain, Yours in the Kingdom hope.

JAMES HAY,—*England.*

DEAR MR. RUSSELL:—The undersigned, ex-captain of the Salvation Army, has recently, on account of the light God has sent him through your work, M. DAWN, left said organization.

I have read VOLS. I and II. twice, and have just received VOL. III. God has, through furnishing me with this volume, plainly shown his will in regard to me; I recognize his voice. Glory be to his name! Even before I received the truth I was fully consecrated to the Lord's service, and am determined, by God's gracious help, to spread further the great light he in his wonderful graciousness has counted me worthy to receive. Should be very grateful to you for some advice on how to act in the matter. Could no doubt get a situation in some worldly business, but, as I have said, being consecrated to the Lord's service, and believing that God has work for me to do, I much prefer to turn my talents into the service of our King.

I am twenty-five years of age, have no worldly possessions, can only speak or read Swedish. If you so desire, I shall be very glad to go into the colporteur work here in Sweden; but if you think I could do more good in any other country, I have no objection to go anywhere you may suggest

Yours, devoted and grateful,

AUGUST LUNDBORG,—*Sweden.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Please find draft for One Thousand Dollars, a thank-offering to the Lord for his many blessings given to me. Please use it in the harvest work, and if you think best, I would be pleased to have you use it to assist in defraying the expense of the "Volunteer" service, mentioned in the April 15th TOWER.

Please do not publish my name in the TOWER in connection with this. I am thankful that I can help a little in this way.

Your brother in Christ, ———, *Wisconsin.*

[The zeal of the Lord's dear people as "volunteers" in the various departments of the King's service is very encouraging. Although we have appropriated the name "volunteers" specially to the public tract distribution now in progress, it is a fact that all who serve this harvest message in any capacity are really *volunteers*. The important financial part of the work is all volunteered—never begged, never urged, but always, as in the above case, done freely "as unto the Lord." The "colporteur" service is similarly done by volunteers: and all these efforts are owned and blessed by the great Chief Reaper, we are sure.

The friends will be glad to know that the call for "volunteers" for Sunday work amongst church-goers—circulating gratuitously the pamphlet, *The Bible vs. Evolution*—met with prompt and cordial responses from every direction. We send portions of each order in its turn and not all at once: and yet many orders are waiting for the pamphlets from the binderies. We have already sent out over 100,000 copies and are pushing the matter along as fast as possible: meantime fresh "volunteers" are constantly reporting and the proposed half-million booklets may not be near enough; but if Providence so indicate, we are ready to issue more. The topic is apparently a very timely one, as many are in danger of "stumbling" on the subject of Evolution.—EDITOR.]

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—You will be pleased to have a brief account of our first two Sundays' experience in distributing the *Bible versus Evolution* pamphlet. Last Sunday we served six churches, and today we served five. Six of the brethren and four of the sisters in the truth are in the "volunteer" ranks at present. We have still over two hundred churches to be served. The average distribution to a congregation thus far has been about 125 of the pamphlets; as we are now working chiefly on the outskirts of the city among the smaller churches.

The common people receive them gladly and often with hearty thanks. One lady this evening was so favorably impressed by a hasty scanning of its pages that she walked back and tendered twenty-five cents to the sister who handed it to her, but the money was politely declined.

Another, a gentleman, stepped to the light to examine what it was that had been handed to him. In a moment he returned and said, "This is just what I have been seeking and did not know where to send for it; I am so glad to have it. Had I known you were outside to hand out these, I should have taken your supply inside and passed them out to our people." Others declared that we are certainly accomplishing a good work and wished us Godspeed. At one church, where we served this morning, the minister's sermon was on "Evolution," and he preached against that theory; our pamphlets at the door capped the climax.

I trust our effort will show for itself in the inquiries you will receive from here and requests for further reading matter along these lines.

We exercise great care in handing out the pamphlets so as not to pass them to any except such as we deem worthy of receiving them. We much appreciate our privilege of co-operation in spreading the Gospel to others. The Lord bless you and all the dear ones engaged in the harvest work!

Your brother "volunteer,"

J. A. Bohnet, *Washington, D. C.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

Spiritualism is steadily asserting itself. The Boston *Journal* of May 28th, reporting recent utterances of Rev. M. J. Savage, says:—

"TALK WITH WHITTIER

"In a quite recent sermon Dr. Savage declared that he had talked with the late poet Whittier and knew that he, too, believed in the essentials of Spiritualism. Longfellow, too, he classified with him, and cited his famous lines: 'There is no death; what seems so is transition.' Most of the poets, he thinks, have shared the Spiritualist conception of the life beyond this one.

"'The other day,' said Dr. Savage, 'the papers contained a long account of the belief of Dr. Lyman Abbott and of Dr. Hillis, who is his successor. Both believe all the essentials that Spiritualists believe, only both were very careful to guard themselves against believing in such vulgar and foolish things as rappings on a table. For the life of me I cannot see what there is so foolish and degrading in rapping. If you are in one room of a hotel and I am in another, I am not so impolite as to go into your room without rapping to find out whether you want to see me. If some one from the other world is near me and wants to see me, is it so dreadful that he should call my attention by rapping? I have been asked as to the nature of communications from the other side. I've had what purported to be hundreds of them, and I say that they are pretty much on a level with my daily mail. I get some foolish and some malicious communications and again some noble and intelligent ones in my mail every morning. So it is with those from the other side. If we can get rid of the old idea that the moment a man dies he is either a devil or an angel, we will see that this is just as it would be likely to be—the communications being on a level with things as they are now. If I should die here in this pulpit I should not expect to be in the next moment more foolish or more wise than I am now.'"

The matter of the faith of Whittier, Longfellow, Abbott and Hillis is stated as tho it were exceptional among Christians: on the contrary, it is the rule: the exception is to find those who deny these propositions among clergy or laity. All believe that the dead are *not dead*, but more alive than ever before. All think and speak of them as being near to the living and interested in their welfare; but only Roman Catholics directly invoke their aid in prayer, except Spiritualists who go still further and claim to converse with the living-*dead* or *dead*-living. (Which would be the less absurd statement?)

It should not surprise us, therefore, that Christian people, long accustomed to this fallacy (that the dead are alive without a resurrection), are stumbling into Spiritualism, utterly blind to the fact that its manifestations are the work of demons who personate the dead to draw attention away from the Scriptural teaching that the Christian's hope is—the resurrection of the dead at the second coming (presence) of the Redeemer when he will exercise his office of Lifegiver.

* * *

Rev. B. E. Austin, D. D., of the Methodist Church of Canada, was deposed for heresy on June 1st, after a trial by Conference at London, Ont. Respecting the matter Dr. Austin said to the reporter of the Toronto *Globe:*—

"If I had elected to leave the Conference in ignorance of just where I stood on the subject of Spiritualism, I would have been in the church today, but, as I was charged with teaching it, I thought it only fair to defend my own views on it, and against the advice of my friends I addressed the Conference. I did not wish to be in the church and hold views which were contrary to its teachings, and I decided that if the church was not broad enough or liberal enough to let me in, I wanted to be out of it. While I valued my standing in the church, I value my liberty much more. I wished a large personal liberty.

"My views are the result of years of study and investigation. I became interested in the study of psychology through teaching it in class work at Alma College, and five or six years ago I became convinced, not that the current theory regarding Spiritualism was correct, but that underneath all the deception and artifices practiced throughout the country under the name of Spiritualism there was a great deal of natural phenomena. As Principal of Alma College I became specially interested in investigating mental sciences both theoretically and experimentally. I read the works of scientists like Sir William Crookes, Alfred Russell Wallace, Zollner and others, who have been making long and patient researches into this subject, and I finally became convinced that telepathy and clairvoyance were positive facts, and that there were many phenomena that were not explained even by them. The question of the origin of these phenomena then arose. One theory held by a great many people in the church is that it is all deviltry; then there is Carpenter's theory of mental cerebration, and the other theory that the phenomena are caused by the spirits of the dead, or so-called dead. Investigation and study convinced me that the last was the only theory to fit the case. I was led up gradually to a firm conviction in this truth.'"

As the Doctor declares, the fact that some good people cry "deviltry," while teaching doctrinally what supports reasonably nearly all the claims of Spiritualism, is not enough—should not be enough for reasonable minds. Only those who get the Bible teaching on death and on Spiritualism are prepared to see conclusively that it is demonism.*

DR. BRIGGS AN UNWELCOME EPISCOPALIAN

Dr. Charles Briggs, famous as a leader among "Higher Critics" and for his determined endeavor to remain a minister of the Presbyterian church after confessing himself out of accord with it, has been received into the Episcopal church: but quite a few Episcopalians do not welcome him. Bishop Seymour declares himself forcefully on the subject as follows:—

"I agreed cordially with the Rev. Dr. Briggs in his rejection of Calvinism, but I as cordially revolted from his trying to remain a Presbyterian minister after he had publicly renounced the characteristic teaching of Presbyterianism. This shocked my moral sense. . . . . This view of the Rev. Dr. Briggs touching Holy Scripture may be true. I do not stop to inquire, since the truth or falsehood of the Rev. Dr. Briggs' theory does not touch the issue. He believes it to be true, and avows his belief in oft-repeated publications. This is quite enough. With such convictions, I cannot understand how any man who accounts himself an honorable and upright man can enter the ministry of the church.

"The test is much more than the declaration which the candidate signs and the vows and pledges which he makes before the altar of his God, and in the most solemn and critical hour of his life it confronts him and will continue to confront him while he lives, in every, or almost every, public service in which he participates. The rubbish and debris theory of the Bible places the Rev. Dr. Briggs in a most frightful position now that he has been ordained. The Bible supplies two lessons for morning and evening prayer daily throughout the year, and it saturates with its language and ideas the offices and services of our Book of Common Prayer. There is no branch of the church which makes more copious use of Holy Scripture than does that one in which the Rev. Dr. Briggs has just been ordained a presbyter, at his own earnest request, and in spite of protest and warning for his own sake as well as that of others.

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* See *What Say the Scriptures About Spiritualism?*—10c., or loaned *free*, this office.

"This Holy Book, as we regard it, is, in the estimation of the Rev. Dr. Briggs, a holy book hidden, unknown beneath an incrustation, an accumulation of myth, fables, legends, stories, and to some extent worse material—in a word, dust, debris and rubbish, and this dust, debris and rubbish he and all the clergy must serve up to the people as the Word of God in the public offices of the church. How can any man with one spark of religion in him voluntarily place himself before God and man in such a position? I confine myself to one point, and to one point alone, and I rest upon no question taken from its context, but upon a fundamental position deliberately taken and publicly avowed by the Rev. Dr. Briggs.

"It is true that the Rev. Dr. Briggs professes love and reverence for the Bible, but it is not our Bible, the Bible published by our Bible Society and read in our churches; it is a hidden Bible, an unknown Bible. The kiss of Judas was more conspicuous than the betrayal. A general profession of veneration and love does not condone repeated stab thrusts which are designed to destroy life.

"It has been said that any church is honored by the admission of the Rev. Dr. Briggs into its fold. Alas, the Rev. Dr. Briggs may be, and probably is, all that his admirers represent him to be, but neither he nor any other man, be he saint, confessor or martyr, can honor the church of God. The church can do without us, but we cannot do without the church.

"Again, there are men who seem to be afraid if they do not profess sympathy and agreement with this higher criticism that they will be regarded as ignoramuses or idiots. Let me tell all such persons that there is a worse fate than that—it is to be accounted a fool by God.

"In conclusion I wish to press the point that the ordination of the Rev. Dr. Briggs is most of all a moral issue, and brings into view Almighty God, with whom all who shared in that service must deal, if not now, ultimately at the last great day. God may be 'far above out of our sight,' and we may say in our hearts: 'Hush, God will not see.' But this is a sad, fatal mistake. God will not be trifled with. He is patient, but no man can be guiltless who takes his name in vain. 'So, then, every one of us must give account of himself to God.' Must, not may, give account of himself, not of others, to God, who cannot be deceived, not to man, who can be imposed upon and misled."

SOWING TO THE FLESH—IN THE CHURCHES

We regret to note the multiplying evidences that the nominal churches are more and more losing sight of the Scriptural idea of the church of Christ—that it is a company of called-out ones, separated from the world and united to each other and to the Lord as "members in particular of the body of Christ," whose present duty it is to edify one another and to build one another up in the most holy faith. The false view, that the church is now to effect a social uplift of the world, is largely responsible for this. The remedy for the malady is the *truth*, that the election and education of the church is the duty of the present age except as the light shining out from these saintly ones shall "reprove the world"; and that the Lord's time for the social uplift will be the Millennium, which he will bring about in his due time by the exaltation to glory and power of the church, whose election will then be complete. In illustration of the misleading influence of a false theory note the following, published in the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* of May 30th:—

"PRIZE FIGHTS IN A CHURCH

"New York, May 29.—The idea of special features to attract young people to church, which has gone as far as dancing classes in several places, has gone a step further in the Protestant Episcopal pro-cathedral at No. 130 Stanton street, of which the Rev. Dr. Charles Briggs is to have charge.

"Boxing matches and a wrestling bout were introduced with the approval of the authorities of the pro-cathedral and under the eye of the Rev. Mr. Paddock, the vicar, who seemed to enjoy them. The contests were held in the basement for the Young Men's club, one of the many organizations of the pro-cathedral. There was a smoker, music and recitations. Then a ring was improvised.

"At the opening Kid Rowling of Buffalo and Kid Floss of Avenue A boxed three tame rounds, and a draw was the decision. The boys carried out the custom of the ringside, and vociferous cheers, hisses and catcalls filled the large room.

"Then came the real event of the evening. 'Fellows,' said Announcer Gambert, 'I now introduce to you with great pleasure Dick Wunderlick, ex-champion welterweight, and Phil Kelly, the coming welterweight. They will box three rounds, and in the last introduce their original 'knockout,' which has been imitated by many, but successfully copied by none.' Three strictly professional rounds followed, and in the last round, Kelly delivered the realistic 'knockout' blow.

"The wrestling match was between Mike Zimmer and George Burke, the instructor of the gymnasium attached to the church.

"The Rev. Mr. Paddock said that doubtless many people would not approve of such amusements in such a place, but he said the aim was to hold the young men's interest and keep them off the street."

"I SUPPOSE THEY CALL THAT HERESY"

Rev. F. W. Gunsaulus, D. D., of Chicago, preaching recently, is reported to have said:—

"The fact that the spirit of holiness and truth enters into man with the power of a divine comfort is proved as much in the songs of the Wesleys as in the Psalms of David.

"A man must believe that God has vacated his throne, and that the ascended Christ has ceased to guide human events, and that the holy spirit is dead, if he does not feel within his own inspired nature that the inspiration with which the soul of Lincoln trembled and was yet steadied when he wrote the Emancipation Proclamation is greater and diviner than the inspiration with which Joshua commanded the massacre of a prostrate foe."

Dr. Gunsaulus said, after the address: "I suppose they call that heresy."

This may have been said in a bombastic spirit, with the desire to create a little cheap sensation; or it may have been uttered in all sincerity. If the latter, it only serves to show how blind are the "Doctors of Divinity," selected at good salaries by "orthodoxy" to confuse the people and mislead them into the ditch of skepticism.

The gentleman's words, whether so intended or not, will give to the average reader the thought: "Dr. Gunsaulus believes that Wesley's hymns were as much inspired as the Psalms of David, and in the same manner and degree." Dr. G. may privately deny any such sentiment, but the thousands who read his statement in print will be influenced to discredit the inspiration of the Scriptures in proportion as they are babes in knowledge of God's Word and pin their faith to those who are "highly esteemed among men."

All true Christians partake of the spirit of the Lord—the spirit of truth, of gentleness, of patience, of kindness, of love: for "if any man have not the spirit [disposition] of Christ, he is none of his." The Wesleys, we doubt not, had much of this same spirit, and we may discern considerable of it in their writings, prose as well as verse, with some admixture of what we consider error, which cannot have been, as it is not now, in agreement with the spirit of truth. But in the Psalms of David, written long before Pentecost by one who never received "the spirit of adoption," we find a totally different *inspiration* from that which fills and guides the church as its members become emptied of "the spirit of the world."

The Apostle Peter explains the difference exactly, saying, "Holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the holy spirit"—mechanically—often, if not always, without knowing why they wrote what they did, or what it signified. The Apostle declares this in so many words, saying, that they sought the significance of their own utterances, but were not granted an explanation, but were informed that "not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister." (1 Pet. 1:12) How else could we account for the prophetic utterances of the Psalms, descriptive of our Lord's death and resurrection and of his coming Kingdom and of the great time of trouble by which it will be introduced? Can we go thus to the writings of the Wesleys or others since the apostles? Surely not! Hence the blindness of those unable to discriminate, or the criminal negligence of those who pose as oracles of God and yet would mislead the blind into the ditch.

Respecting the comparison between Joshua and Lincoln: Here again evil is done; the blind are misled by the suggestion that the Bible presents Joshua as an *inspired* man. Nothing of the kind is true. Joshua was no more a prophet than Lincoln, so far as the Scriptures inform us. Both were good men so far as we know them: both, so far as know, were used of the Lord in accomplishing his purposes. Lincoln was led of divine providence and the exigencies of the war to proclaim the liberty of the slaves;—as a war measure, to enlist the sympathies of the millions of slaves for the Northern cause and to proportionately discourage the Southern cause. God's hand was behind Lincoln's course, unquestionably, and he did his part courageously and no doubt was brought into that place for that purpose and because he was such a man as the Lord could use. But it is very doubtful if the honored President realized to what extent his Emancipation Proclamation was forced by divine providences.

With Joshua the case was different: he was not guided by *circumstances* and *necessities* of the war he was conducting, but was definitely directed respecting what should and what should not be done to the enemy. The matter was not left to his choice in any sense. Those against whom he fought had already been sentenced to destruction; because "the iniquity of the Amorites" had come to the full.—Compare Gen. 15:16; Lev. 18:24; Deut. 9:4-6; 18:12.

The difficulty with Christian people, in re the destruction of the Amorites, lies in their misapprehension of the facts and of the future operation of the divine plan of the ages. They think of the slain Amorites as going to a hell of eternal torment; instead of which they went to *sheol;* of which the Scriptures declare, "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave [*sheol*], whither thou goest." (Eccl. 9:10) They think of Joshua as cutting short the probation of the Amorites to all eternity, whereas their probation for everlasting life had not begun; nor did such a probation for life or death everlasting come to anyone until after our Lord had redeemed all from the "curse" of Adam's transgression, by the sacrifice of himself.

Evidently the "key of knowledge" by which the divine plan may be understood is as thoroughly lost to the doctors of divinity of our day, as it was to the doctors of the law at the first advent. (Luke 11:52) The people should know this and should seek the "key of knowledge." Seek, and ye shall find! Knock, and it shall be opened unto you!

"WILL A MAN ROB GOD? YET YE HAVE ROBBED ME"

"Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."—Mal. 3:8-10.

The tithing system, so far as Israel was concerned, had its beginning when they entered the promised land, after their forty years' journey in the wilderness. A tithe signifies a tenth; and under the divine arrangement made with Israel this was the portion of all their *increase* required to be devoted to holy purposes. One-tenth of the increase of their flocks, their herds, their seeds, grains, etc., was first to be set apart to the Lord's service, as sacred, to be used in the maintenance of the priestly tribe, the Levites, and for the relief of widows and orphans, and other unfortunates. The one-tenth of the family increases was also required by the Lord; but this had already been provided for in the selection of the tribe of Levi and its increase devoted to the Lord's service exclusively, as instead of the firstborn of each family.

The system of taxation in vogue throughout Christendom today somewhat resembles the tithing system, except that it is collected and not left to voluntary contribution: and it is assessed on the valuation of property, etc., and not wholly on the *income.* It covers the expenses of public schools, relief of the poor, improvements of streets, sewers and general government expense. In the United States maintenance of religion not being included in taxation is left, properly, to the zeal and discretion of the individual: it is safe, however, to assume that the majority of people do not contribute largely to religion and charity; while others strictly appropriate *one-tenth* of their entire income to these benevolences.

The effect of this tithing system, had it been carried out in the right spirit, would have been, (1) to teach the people of Israel generosity, and to inculcate in them a realization of their obligations to God, and that all that they enjoyed were his bestowments. (2) It would have made abundant provision for the maintenance of the priests and Levites, the widows, orphans, and unfortunates, and thus would have been a perpetual insurance fund of mutual benefit. It not only would have provided for the temporal necessities of the unfortunate, but also for the educational arrangements, which were in the care of the Levites.

But the Israelites, like all the other branches of the human family, were depraved through the fall, and had come under the control of the spirit of selfishness, the spirit of evil,—to which may be traced every impure, ignoble, unholy word, thought and act. Hence the Israelites begrudged the giving of so large a proportion as one-tenth of all their earnings, and since the contribution was left to the conscience of the people, and no officers were entrusted with the enforced collection of this tithe, by punishment of those who failed to contribute it, very soon many ceased to contribute altogether, while others gave stintedly and grudgingly. But however the people felt that they were thus at liberty to curtail the amount of their contributions to holy purposes, and however much they presumed that they would ultimately be gainers, to the extent that they would withhold their tithes, we find that they erred; for God himself not only was the ruler of that peculiar people, their King (1 Chron. 29:23), but he was also the chief executive officer to administer the punishments for the violation of his own laws. Consequently, in proportion as they attempted to defraud the Lord of tithes, in that proportion or a greater proportion they were losing, for the Lord sent upon them grasshopper plagues, caterpillar plagues, and various insects, blights and diseases, which more than offset the tithes which they were withholding.

In all this, and in every instance when thinking of Israel and God's dealings with Israel, we should remember that they were a special and peculiar nation, differently dealt with from all the other nations of the earth. (Amos. 3:2) God did not exact from other nations a tithe, a tenth, but neither did he promise to other nations his special care and bounty and blessing. Other nations were left largely subject to the changeable conditions in nature, but Israel, as a result of the covenant sealed between them and the Lord at Sinai, came under special obligations to the Lord, including this tithing arrangement, and the Lord came under special obligations to them, in that he promised that, if they would live up to their engagements, observe his laws and statutes, to do them, he would bless them in their fields and in their cities, in their flocks, their herds, their crops and all.

Israel, therefore, was to know that God would not fail of his part of the covenant, and that if they lacked any good thing, any temporal blessing, it must be because sin lay at the door; because they had, in some sense or degree, violated their part of the Law Covenant. Consequently the coming of caterpillars, army worms, palmer worms, locusts and grasshoppers *upon them* meant special chastisements from the Lord, and were special evidences of divine disapproval toward them, while similar things coming upon the world of mankind in general meant no such thing.

In our Lord's day, at the first advent, he called attention to the fact that the holiness class of that day had gotten into a formalistic condition—that they were very exact about their tithes, being careful to tithe the very smallest of seeds: mint, anise and cummin. But he showed that their hearts were still selfish, and that these contributions were not according to the spirit of the law, but rather for an outward show, done vain-gloriously: that so far from having the spirit of tithing, a desire to contribute to the Lord's cause, and to the maintenance of the poor, those so-called holiness people (the "Pharisees") were quite ready to devour the widow's house, taking advantage of her necessities, etc., and that their long prayers were, in keeping with this wrong condition of heart, merely outward display.

Our text calls attention to this neglect of tithes on the part of the Israelites, pointing them to the fact that if they had been faithful to the Lord their granaries would be full instead of empty; their flocks and herds would have been well-favored instead of lean; and their general prosperity would have been much greater. This is along the line of the Scriptural injunction, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth: and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." (Prov. 11:24) In our text the Lord calls upon Israel to realize the situation, and restore that which they had withholden, and that then he would pour them out a great blessing, and would "rebuke the devourer," the pests which injured their crops.

SOME APPLICATIONS OF THIS IN NOMINAL SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Many in spiritual Israel draw from this Scripture the lesson that spiritual Israelites should faithfully give a tenth of all their earnings and profits to the Lord's cause. This lesson is preached from pulpits of nearly all denominations and emphasized as obligatory upon their adherents. Such is the case with the Mormons, and as a result millions of dollars flow into their treasury, and are used in the propagation of that system of religion or irreligion, as each may be pleased to term it. We see the same method enforced by the "Seventh Day Adventists," with similarly marked results,—hundreds of thousands of dollars pour into their church treasury, and are used in the dissemination of literature, in the sending forth of evangelists to all parts of the world, and in the general propagation of their doctrines. We note also a similar tendency in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Already it has engrafted this feature of "Moses' law" upon their young people of the "Epworth League," those who agree sign a pledge, called "God's Tenth—the pledge of Jacob," which reads: "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give a tenth unto thee."

The printed matter before us, descriptive of this tithing system, bears the imprint of the Methodist Book Concern—New York and Cincinnati offices. It proceeds to outline suggestions respecting the manner in which so large a sum should be divided up. It takes as a basis of calculation an income of $1.00 a day, or $300.00 per year, the one-tenth of which, $30.00, it appropriates to pastor's salary and various other religious benevolences, but says:—

"Those who are specially interested in some particular benevolence are *permitted* to use a different ratio for these benevolences, provided one-tenth of the income is given. *Tithing* should be figured from the net income, *not the net surplus* after living expenses have been deducted. Many examples are before us, where the Lord has proven his promise: 'Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse [etc., our text]'—not only rich spiritual blessings, but *temporal as well.*" [Italics are ours.]

We have not learned what measure of success has attended this effort, but infer that it is considerable; because the denominational papers are now calling attention to the fact that Bishop McCabe is starting a similar tithing scheme for the older Methodists. Some objections are urged against it—that it is going back to the Mosaic law: but the majority apparently do not recognize clearly the dividing line between the Law Covenant and the New Covenant and are inclined to think the movement a proper one, in the direction of *duty.*

OUR APPLICATION OF THIS TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

While we believe that such a system may be a powerful influence for good or for evil, as respects the amount of money collected and disbursed; and while we believe also that such systematic giving is a helpful discipline to many of those who contribute, increasing their interest in the cause to which they give, and decreasing their selfishness and worldliness,—nevertheless we are not prepared to advocate this system amongst the Lord's consecrated people; because we find no authority for the tithing system under the New Covenant; and we may preach nor advocate neither more nor less than the laws our God has spoken unto us.

To Christians, begotten of the spirit of adoption to be *sons* of God, the Lord speaks not as he speaks to *servants,* saying "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" do thus and so. On the contrary he speaks to us as a father unto his sons. He communicates to us a knowledge of his will and plan, without putting exact limitations upon our acts. He merely places us under the perfect law of liberty—Love; the law which gives us perfect liberty to do all we please in harmony with love to God and man. He who loves much may give proportionately: he who loves little may give little accordingly. Our Lord desires that each should thus show forth his own developments in love. But, shall we consider that this liberty, which we enjoy as "new creatures in Christ Jesus," releases us from all obligations? Shall we consider that because the Lord has not specified that we must give *one-tenth* of our incomes, as he required of the Jew, under his Law Covenant, therefore we are at liberty to give the one-twentieth, or the one-fiftieth, or one-hundredth part, or nothing, to the Lord's cause?

Yes, we have just that liberty,—that is to say, God will not now withhold from us rain on this account, nor will he send pests as punishments as he did with the Jews under their covenant. Yet surely all who have been begotten of the spirit of adoption, all true sons of God, would rather say: If it were proper that the Israelite according to the flesh should give one-tenth of all his income to benevolent purposes, it is much more proper that we, the spiritual seed of Abraham, who have been still more highly favored than the natural seed, should render some thank-offering unto the Lord our God. And what shall we render unto the Lord? If the Jew, who had much advantage every way over the Gentile, should in all justice devote one-tenth of his income to holy things, how much more should we devote who, by God's grace, have still greater advantages every way—not only greater advantages than the Gentiles, the world, but greater advantages also than the Jew, the natural Israelite? What shall we *not* render unto the Lord our God, for all his benefits toward us?

The more we consider this matter, the more we might properly be perplexed to know where our giving should end, we who are the recipients of the manifold grace of God—not only of the present life, but also of the promises of the life to come—justification and its joy and peace, sanctification and its rejoicing in hope of a share in divine glory and honor and immortality, and all the good things which God hath in reservation for them that love him. The more our hearts learn to appreciate the blessings of divine favor which have been showered upon us, the more do we feel not only that a tenth would be too little, but that a half would be too little, and that *our all* would be too little for us to render unto our God.

Here the Apostle comes to our relief, and offers a suggestion, saying, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God [already received] that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service.*" (Rom. 12:1) Ah yes! that comes nearer to our reasonable service than anything else we can think of, and yet we realize that even such an offering is far too small, and does not at all counterbalance divine grace and mercy bestowed upon us. Nevertheless, seeing that it is all that we can give unto the Lord, we are glad to have the Apostle's assurance that, presented in the name and merit of our dear Redeemer, God would esteem it holy, and would accept the offering. And so, with rejoicing hearts, we lay our little all upon the Lord's altar in consecration.

However, let us not forget that the "new creatures" were accepted in Christ and adopted to sonship, because they *presented themselves* to God as living sacrifices to be wholly his and to do only *his will in all things.* And since he who thus gives himself gives his life and his *all,* it follows that all who made this covenant of full consecration thereby agreed to give to the Lord *more than ten times as much* as the Jew agreed to in his covenant. So then the obligation of the true Spiritual Israelite is the greater, not the lesser, obligation of the two, as compared with the Jew. Our obligation not only absorbs *all* the income and profits on our capital and labor, but additionally the capital, the life, the principal.

But now the question arises, How shall we present ourselves? We have given our *all* in consecration to the Lord; in what way would he have us render it unto him? He does not wish us to destroy our lives, and thus become dead sacrifices: and if we present ourselves *living* sacrifices, how little there will be to render to the Lord! As living beings we have certain necessities of our own and obligations toward others (we must support our own lives and the lives and happiness of those who are immediately under our care, in our own families and households): and if we attend to these, how little time will be left for *special service* of the Lord. Surely it requires the largest portion of our time and energy to provide the "things needful" of the present life; and thus, to our disappointment, we find that the *all* that we had laid upon the altar will mean comparatively little by the time that it is rendered to the Lord in special services or contributions, or efforts on behalf of his cause. What shall we do?

Realizing our perplexity, and how unsatisfactory this condition of things would be to those who are of a proper condition of heart, the Lord very graciously informs us of how he accepts the matter. He tells us that he accepts us as living sacrifices, and that this which we have fully and completely devoted or consecrated to him, and which he has accepted, he returns to our care and custody, making us stewards of those things which we have devoted—our time, our influence, our means, our talents—all. We are to do the best we can with these in our Lord's service, and if we do the best we can with them, to glorify him, he accepts the matter as tho every act and every word and every deed were rendered directly in his service, tho the majority of these acts and words and deeds may necessarily be used by us in attending to our own necessities, and the necessities of those depending upon us. How gracious is this arrangement by which we may not only render our all to the Lord, but give proper attention also to all the obligations of an earthly kind, and that with greater blessing, realizing that, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do (as stewards of the Lord, with an eye single to his service, his glory, his pleasement), is accepted of him as *done unto him,*—as tho it were direct service.

Let us remember also, during this Gospel age, the Lord is seeking a peculiar people for a peculiar present and future service. He seeketh *such* to worship him as worship him in *spirit* and in *truth*—from the heart, and not of compulsion. Hence the Lord leaves the Spiritual Israelite *free:* he does not shower temporal blessings upon those who live up to their covenant, more than upon others, nor does he pour out curses, blights and troubles upon those who violate their covenant more than upon others. He leaves all the "house of sons" thus *free,* in order that each by his own conduct may manifest the *sincerity* or the *insincerity* of the covenant which he made.

Thus all of the sons of God practically pass judgment upon themselves.

This is illustrated in the parables of the Pounds and of the Talents; in these the Master shows talents and pounds *recognized as his,* entrusted to his servants during his absence. The servant who had not sufficient love for the Master to use what he possessed *in his service* was reproved, and rejected from further stewardship as unfaithful, unworthy. So all the sons of God under the New Covenant,* having presented their *all* to the Lord, are now only stewards of what they control—principal and increase. They are given a *free* hand to do with it as they choose: "Ye are not under law [as servants], but under grace [liberty—as stewards]." But at the reckoning day all unfaithful stewards who failed to use their Lord's goods with energy in his service—time, talent, influence, as well as money—will be rejected, put out of further stewardship.

CAUSES OF STUMBLING

While, therefore, the spiritual Israelite of this Gospel age has a greater liberty than had the natural Israelite of the Jewish age, in so far as the express commands of the Lord are concerned, we find that, in proportion as he possesses the spirit of the Lord, he will realize a much greater obligation than his Jewish brother, and where this obligation is realized and appreciated, it will lead to faithfulness, devotion. As with the Jew the Lord did not make the matter of tithing obligatory, in the sense of enforcing it, so with the spiritual Israelite he does not attempt to enforce his covenant obligation of full consecration, but takes note of our courses in life, as indicative of the measure of our love and appreciation of his mercies and blessings. Yet as God watched over the Israelites, to give earthly blessings, bountiful harvests, etc., to those who were faithful in tithing themselves, so with spiritual Israel, the Lord watches over us to give us, not temporal, but spiritual bounties and fatness in proportion as we are faithful in presenting our bodies living sacrifices to him. Do we see some stumble and fall from the truth, after they have been once enlightened, and after they have tasted of the heavenly gift and of the powers of the age to come, after they have had much advantage every way? Do we see some feeble and delicate in spiritual health, and ready to be stumbled by the Adversary? If so, we see some who have been unfaithful in rendering unto the Lord their God that which they have covenanted. Or if they seem to have been energetic in his service, and yet are stumbling, we may rest assured that it is because their energies and efforts were to be seen of men, and were not of pure devotion to the Lord.

It is well, of course, that our criticisms should be chiefly turned inward, and that each should question himself, rather than others, on so important a subject as this. We may not always know who are the Lord's, but we may always know that "the Lord knoweth them that are his"—the heart-faithful. And we may be sure that these shall not stumble, tho they be permitted to pass through trials and difficulties which would deceive and stumble, if it were possible, the very elect. To these the Lord will, with every temptation, present also a way of escape; he will succor them because they are his. As the Apostle Peter says, "If ye do these things [fulfil the royal law of love and devotion to God and the neighbor] *ye shall never fall;* for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 1:10, 11.

"These things," which the Lord's people are to do, because they are begotten of his spirit, and because they are consecrated to his service, are all of them the things of love—the patience of love, the meekness of love, the long-suffering of love, the brotherly-kindness of love, the gentleness of love. These things can abound only in those who have been begotten of the spirit of love, and who, on this account, are already reckonedly dead (and daily dying) to their former selves, and to the selfishness which once ruled them, through inherited depravity by the fall.

Let each reader look, of course, to his own condition of heart, and judge himself whether or not he is rich in the spirit of the Lord, whether or not his soul is fat, whether or not he is growing in *grace* and in love, as well as in knowledge. If any, on inspection, find such fatness of soul, let him rejoice, yet nevertheless, as the Apostle says, "rejoice with fear," lest the present condition of divine favor and blessing should give place and some earth-born cloud arise to hide the heavenly Father from the eyes of faith. And should any, upon self-examination, find leanness of soul, spiritual poverty, lack of progress, or perhaps a retrogression in spiritual matters, let such remember the Apostle's words,—"Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into [divine] rest, any of us should seem to come short of it."—Heb. 4:1.

EXHORTATIONS OF FAITHFULNESS

Nevertheless, let not such be discouraged, but hearken further to the word of the Lord to fleshly Israel, in which he says to them, in the words of our text, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open unto you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Let all who desire to find blessing in rich and overflowing measure take the Lord at his word, and present to him the offerings which we have already consecrated, and which are not our own, (1) because they were bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, and (2) because recognizing this fact, we solemnly consecrated ourselves to the Lord—presented our bodies living sacrifices in his service. Let us resolve for the future to bring to the full measure of our ability a reasonable service, the rendering of time and influence and talent and means to the Lord and to his cause, to his service;—that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts may be pleasing to him: and let us seek that all our acts of life may be living epistles, read and known of all men, showing forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

And not only so, but let us, in proportion as we have been lax or careless in the past, and unfaithful to our vows, put forth renewed energy, to compensate, so far as possible, for past neglect, "redeeming the time," remembering also that "the days are evil"—that the times in which we live are unfavorable, that the tendency of our day is towards selfishness and worldliness more and more.

Those whose consecration will be thus revived will no longer find themselves more interested in worldly riches, and the meat that perisheth, than in spiritual riches and the bread of eternal life, and contrariwise will seek and find opportunities, not only for serving the Lord in their ordinary vocation, but also will seek and find special opportunities of service. This will include the rendering to the Lord of thanks and worship. For in proportion as each becomes earnestly desirous of rendering service to the Lord, and of keeping his heart in the love of God, he will find it desirable, yea, necessary, to seek supplies at the throne of grace and the family altar daily, as well as to lift up his heart frequently in private to the Lord, in thankfulness, or in prayer for help *in time of need.* And likewise, at the close of every day, those who have been desirous of pleasing and serving the Lord will desire to render their report at the close of the day, and to inspect themselves and the efforts which they have made, that thus they may stimulate themselves in the heavenly race, and renew their vows of consecration. Moreover, those who are thus wholly consecrated to the Lord, and seek first or chiefly his righteousness and a share in his Kingdom, will very generally find opportunities for meeting together with others of like precious faith, to encourage one another, and to build one another up in the most holy faith, and so much the more as we see the day drawing on.

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* See June 15, 1919, for critical examination of Covenants.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question.—(1) To what extent should the Lord's people take literally the statement, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?"—Matt. 6:25-34.

(2) How much time should the Lord's people take from the duties of life for Bible study and in general the service of the truth?

Answer.—(1) The words of our Lord which you quote must be interpreted in harmony with other declarations of the inspired Word. They must not be interpreted so as to conflict with other statements. Other Scriptures instruct the Lord's people to labor with their hands, that they may have to give to those that have need (Eph. 4:28), and this implies forethought and provision in the way of laying up of money earned. Again, the Scriptures declare, "The children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children" (2 Cor. 12:14)—implying some reasonable forethought and provision on the part of the parents for those whom they have brought into being. Again, the Apostle implies that the Christian who is fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, will not be slothful in any business (Rom. 12:11), and declares that "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."—1 Tim. 5:8.

Interpreting our Lord's words in harmony with these other Scriptures, their sense would be that the Christian is not to take *anxious* care respecting the future, in matters beyond his control. He is, however, to take thought for every matter that is subject to his control. He is to seek to order his life so that it shall be useful to himself and to others. He is to remember the Scriptural injunction, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise," and is to follow the ant's custom of laying up provision in advance of necessity. This lesson is taught by all of our Lord's providences; for instance, the plowing and the sowing are to be done bountifully and in faith, not doubtfully and fearfully. So also the cultivation is to be done with patience, waiting for the harvest: and when the harvest comes the lesson of nature is that the reaper shall not merely reap what he wishes to eat, and let the next day look out for itself, but that he shall gather into barns, making provision for the winter and for the next seedtime. Our Lord's remark that the fowls of the air do not gather grain into barns, and yet are fed, nor do lilies spin, yet are clothed, was not intended to teach that his followers should adopt the method of the fowls respecting their food, nor expect to be clothed as the lilies. It was intended to teach confidence in God as our caretaker, and thus permit his faithful children to plow and sow in faith, to labor in faith, and to reap with faith, to lay up in store with faith, and to use with faith; recognizing every good gift as of the Lord (through the sun and rain, by plowing and reaping), the same who provides for the birds, tho in a different manner. The Christian is ever to remember that man shall not live by bread alone: that he is not wholly dependent upon his own energies; that his affairs are in the Lord's hands for supervision, and that the promise is, "Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Putting this confidence in God's supervision of his affairs, while making a true Christian restful in mind, will not make him slovenly, careless or idle in doing with his might what his hands find to do, as unto the Lord.

(2) Duties may at times seem to conflict, but they do not really do so. A Christian's first duty is his hearty acknowledgment of his Creator and Lord, in all his ways. His second duty, if he be a husband and father, is toward his wife and children; or if she be a wife and mother, it is toward her husband and children. In the divine arrangement the husband is made the *provider* of the family, and is not obeying the divine law if he neglect this duty—no matter for what reason, unless it be disability through sickness. Likewise, the wife's first duty is that of *caretaker;* looking after the comfort and encouragement of her husband and children along the path of duty. The marriage contract, by divine arrangement, comes in as a first mortgage upon every husband's time and upon every wife's time—the demands of this mortgage must be *reasonably* met before anything can be properly done to or for outsiders.

It is a great privilege for Christians to study the Lord's Word, yet a great deal of study is done to no purpose. Study which is not put into *practice* in daily life is worse than a waste of time. It is not he that merely knoweth the Master's will, but he who patiently and perseveringly seeks to *do* the Master's will, that shall be approved and win the crown. Every reasonable opportunity should be used by the Lord's people to obtain a knowledge of the divine plan—even to the extent of sacrificing; but the child of the Lord will be particular to see that it is his *own* conveniences and comforts that he is sacrificing, and not chiefly the conveniences and comforts of others. The Bible study which is done merely at the expense of others is a sign of selfishness rather than a sign of a rich indwelling of the Lord's spirit of love.

To make our studies of the divine plan as profitable as possible, we should spend as much time daily in dispensing the truth to others as we spend in seeking to feed ourselves, and Christian experience proves the truth of the words of Scripture, "He that watereth shall be watered also himself:" so that gradually the servant of the Lord will become more and more interested in handing forth the truth to others and finding that his own growth in knowledge and in grace came either in preparing to dispense the truth to others or while dispensing it to them. A state of lethargy, indolence, etc., respecting the duties of life, and respecting opportunities for presenting the truth to others, is a sure indication of spiritual poverty. It is well that all of the Lord's people keep ever before their minds the inspired words, "Not slothful in business, fervent [warm, zealous] in spirit, serving the Lord."

As to the *amount* of time each can devote, no rule can be laid down except that of *fervency* of spirit. One fervent in spirit will be serving others temporally and spiritually nearly all the time—with his might, as his hand finds to do.

Question.—Who is the "spoiler" denounced in Isa. 33:1—"Woe unto thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled"? Do you consider that this verse is in any sense applicable to the present time of harvest?

Answer.—The connections seem to associate this with the coming great time of trouble. No doubt when the time of trouble is fully on or nearly over it will be very easy to distinguish who is referred to by this verse. It does not seem easy to distinguish with certainty at the present time.

Question.—Please give a thorough definition of the words *sheol* and *hades.*

Answer.—We hope to furnish such a definition in the fifth volume of the DAWN series, now in preparation.

Question.—Do you consider the history of Joseph, recorded in Genesis, as typical?

Answer.—Yes; to our understanding Joseph was a type—various features in his history seem to be separate and distinct pictures of the experiences of Christ, Head and body. (*a*) Joseph was hated of his brethren, beloved by his father: so with Christ. (*b*) Joseph was cast into the pit by his brethren, as Jesus went into the pit of death for his brethren, the Jews. (*c*) Joseph's *life was sold* into servitude to the Egyptians, but became ultimately the means of the preservation of his entire family, as well as of the Egyptians; so Christ gave himself a ransom not only for his brethren but also for all mankind; and during the Millennial age will furnish "bread of life" to all who famish for it. (*d*) Joseph was sacrificed, sent to prison, because of his purity; so our Lord Jesus, "holy, harmless, undefiled," was treated as a transgressor, and went into the prisonhouse of death. (*e*) Joseph was delivered in due time from the prison, and made the associate of the king upon the throne of Egypt; so our Lord Jesus was raised up from the prisonhouse of death by the glory of the Father, to be set at his right hand in the glory of power, on the throne of earth; agent and representative of the great King for the blessing of all the families of the earth, typified by the Egyptians.

Question.—Do you understand from the prophecy of Ezekiel 40:40-46, that sacrifices of animals will be resumed after the establishment of Christ's kingdom and when Israel is again in Palestine?

Answer.—The "better sacrifices" of the Gospel age having taken place beforehand, we think it unlikely that typical sacrifices will be restored. We consider it more probable that antitypical sacrifices are referred to—the broken and contrite hearts of the people, and their consecration to the Lord's service being thus represented. However, we are to remember that God considered these typical sacrifices of bulls and of goats a good method of presenting important truths to the attention of fleshly Israel, and we can see that if such sacrifices were restored now, they would have much more force and meaning to similar classes than they had before their antitypes had come. We may not, therefore, be sure that the Lord will not adopt some such plan as this of instructing the ignorant masses of mankind, as preparatory to higher lessons—as illustrations of spiritual things.

"UNTO THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH"

MY DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:—Will you allow me, in the spirit of love and humility, to call your attention to two or three scientific errors which have crept into your papers?

Z. W. T., Mar. 1, '97, p. 74, column 1, says, "the healing may be said to have been in a natural way by the removal of the injured cornea." If the cornea itself were removed, the anterior chamber of the eye would be open, and with the consequent exposure of the iris, pupil and lens, the eye would inevitably be destroyed. The removal of the *injury* to the cornea, in a natural way, would probably be effected by the dried exudation from the inflamed structures (scab or scale) falling off.

[The EDITOR acknowledges, freely, that he should have added the word *portion* and thus have said—"by the removal of *a portion* of the injured cornea." Thanks for the correction.]

Z. W. T., June 1, '98, p. 172, column 2, says:—"As it was the full of the moon, a solar eclipse could have lasted but a few minutes at most." That is an unfortunate expression, for at the full of the moon a solar eclipse is an impossibility. A solar eclipse is only possible at the time of new moon, and owing to the varying rates at which the two bodies travel it is not possible under the most favorable circumstances for a total eclipse to last longer than seven minutes, and an average eclipse is two or three minutes only. The most favorable circumstances are, (1) The sun at greatest distance from the earth, *i. e.*, the earth at aphelion; (2) the moon at least distance from the earth (at perigee); and (3) the observer must be on the central line of totality.

[We are at a loss to understand how this statement crept in and thought to have corrected it in our next issue: we concluded not to do so, thinking that few of our readers would notice the error, and that those who had noticed it would recognize it as a "slip of the pen." We should have said—"As it was at the full of the moon, a solar eclipse even for a few moments was an impossibility."—EDITOR.]

In Z. W. T., Oct. 15, '95, p. 241, column 1, and in tract No. 40, p. 3, line 4, it is stated:—"The heart *whose valves* in turn propelled them to every part of the body." The function of the valves is not to propel, but to stop, the current of blood. It is the strong muscular heart wall itself which, contracting, forces the blood out of its cavities into the vessels, and the blood pressure thus produced shuts down the valves, closing certain orifices, to prevent the backward flow of the blood. In sending out this excellent tract I am taking the liberty of erasing the two words "whose valves" and substituting "which" in their place.

[Thanks for this correction also: our thought was that the heart is a pump with necessary valves. We will correct our next edition of Tract No. 40 to read—"The heart as a pump in turn propelled them to every part of the body."—EDITOR.]

I am sure your large heart will easily bear with me, as I call your attention to these points, and my only reason for doing so is that some readers, I fear, may reject your more precious Bible expositions because they detect an error in your science.

[Fortunately, dear Brother, the EDITOR has never laid claim to *infallibility* on scientific or other matters. He is on the contrary pleased to have honest criticism from any quarter—appreciating it specially when it comes from "brethren" and in a brotherly, loving spirit. We strive to exercise great care that our every utterance may be as the Scriptures direct—"*as the oracles of God.*" (1 Pet. 4:11) The EDITOR can scarcely hope that these three are the only errors and "slips" of his pen, in the publications of the past twenty years, and requests that if you or other readers note other errors worthy of correction you will kindly communicate them.]

You may like to see the circular letter, 5,000 of which I have had printed, and which I am sending out to all missionaries in China, Japan, Corea and Siam. I enclose a copy.

[Our readers are interested in all efforts to serve the Truth to others—we therefore print Brother Randle's Circular Letter in full.—EDITOR.]

"There has arisen a witness for God and his Christ, an expositor of Bible truth, such as may be safely said has not hitherto appeared.

"The question is, 'Is this man's testimony of God?' I believe it is. He claims little, but he teaches much. He teaches that the conflicting creeds of Christendom are out of harmony with God; and that even some of the most cherished doctrines regarded as orthodox are wrong. If what this man writes is true, he is the veritable John the Baptist of this age, or at least the voice of one crying in witness to the second presence (not coming) of Jesus, the Son of God.

"If his interpretations are true, he is '*that servant*' now engaged in 'giving meat in due season to the household of faith.'—Matt. 24:45, 46.

"It is of course a very easy thing to see error in the teaching of other churches than that to which we belong. The Episcopalian sees the Nonconformist as astray from the main track of truth, the Baptist recognizes the mistakes of Methodism, the Brethren condemn both these churches, while the Presbyterians regard the last named as distinctly misled, and so it is more or less all round. The greatest difficulty of all is to detect one's own errors of Christian doctrine and practice. We are (generally speaking) all of us so sure that we have the Scripture interpretation correct, and are so confident of our own position, that for one to call anything in question is an offense. That branch of the Christian church to which we belong is much more frequently determined by the accident of our natural birth, than by the circumstance of our regeneration.

"Can it be within the bounds of possibility, that the views commonly held as orthodox are mistaken ones, just as was the case with Israel at Christ's first appearance? Read 'MILLENNIAL DAWN' and see. We think the Jews were terribly mistaken to reject Christ as they did. Are we quite sure *we* have got hold of the truth just as God means it? Read 'MILLENNIAL DAWN' and see. Either the author of DAWN is wrong or we are. Of course it is easy,—perhaps all too natural,—to rashly conclude the author of DAWN must be wrong. Still it would be safer to examine his testimony and the Scriptures, to see if these things are so.

"How every age that has ever lived before us has failed to see the hand of God at work at the time; and as it was in the days of Noah, so it shall be in the days of the coming (presence) of the Son of Man.

"God gives his evidence in strange ways, emphatically *not* in the way commonly expected.

"I therefore beg all who are desirous of possessing the pure gold of God's truth, to examine what this servant of God has written. The most important are four volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN, which show the character, circumstances, and time, of the coming Kingdom of God. It may be that some will feel inclined to lightly toss this aside without much thought (as I did myself six years ago). I beg you do not so. If you hunger for God's truth, the living bread, at least read carefully the first volume of 'MILLENNIAL DAWN.'"

[Signed.]

I am also advertising DAWN in local prints, and if I may but be used in bringing some others into the light and joy of the truth I shall be satisfied.

I have sold several of the DAWNS to missionaries, and this week I received a very encouraging letter from one who had bought the first volume a few weeks ago, and he now writes:—

"Please forward me the other three volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN. I have been deeply interested in reading the first volume. I am determined by the grace of God to go to the bottom of these questions, cost what they will. If the DAWN teaching is according to God's Word, it will need humility of mind for us to confess how thoroughly we have been mistaken and to retrace our steps."

On the contrary many speak against it, and some with bitterness, but it is (for the most part) those who only hear of it, or only read superficially. But whether few or many receive the truth, our strong confidence is in *God's own purpose* regarding his Word, which he has clearly stated in Isaiah 55:11.

My wife and eldest daughter rejoice with me in the light of God's truth now shining. We pray for you, and your colaborers, and for all who love the present truth, that God will graciously preserve us all until the manifestation. I am,

Yours in the love and service of Christ,

HORACE A. RANDLE,—*China.*

P. S.—Poor WONG CHIN FOO (DAWN, VOL. 4, p. 253) died suddenly of heart failure at Wei Hai Wei on Sept. 13th last. A few weeks before he had visited Teng Chaufu where he first heard of and learned Christianity. He then remarked to a Baptist missionary that "he supposed the most wicked thing he ever did, was to write that letter, 'Why Am I a Heathen?' but he never supposed that it would cause so great a sensation." H. A. R.

"SEND OUT THY LIGHT AND TRUTH, O LORD!"

From earliest childhood the EDITOR has had a deep interest in the heathen, and naturally a deep interest in missionaries. At the early age of seven years he expressed to his mother his intention to become a missionary, and a little later with other Sunday School children contributed his mite to the building of "The Morning Star" missionary boat—abstaining from certain table luxuries that he might have the value thereof to contribute as *his own* donation, that had *cost* him something and was not merely his parents' gift.

This sympathetic love for the heathen has not abated in all these years; but under the leadings of the Divine Word and providences it took a different turn than he had first intended. As the divine plan of salvation unfolded to him, he saw clearly that the Lord's sympathetic love for the heathen so far from being less than his own was greater. He gradually came to see that God's plan of salvation as he has purposed it in himself, from before the creation of the world, has made abundant provision for "every man that cometh into the world"—that all should "come to an accurate knowledge of the truth"—to a knowledge of him who is "the *way*, the *truth* and the *life*" and by whom alone access to the Father and restitution to his favor and blessings are possible. He came to see, also, that God is operating his great plan methodically, and that, as there was a "fullness of time" in which our Saviour should be born, so also there is a *"due time"* in which the knowledge and blessing flowing from his redemptive sacrifice shall be made effective to all who will accept this favor under the terms of the New Covenant sealed with the precious blood.—John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:4-6; Gal. 3:16, 29.

In harmony with this he soon learned from the Word that the church, the "little flock," "the very elect," who are to win the "prize of the high calling," offered during this Gospel age, are to be but a *"first fruits* unto God and the Lamb." (Rev. 14:4; Jas. 1:18) And the completion of this specially elect church with the close of the present age will therefore be but the *beginning*, and not the *ending*, of the great plan of salvation which God has purposed.—Isa. 55:9-11.

In a word, he came to see that in God's great plan the present Gospel age is merely for the selection and education of those whom God purposes to use as his *ministers*, his *missionaries* to the world in general, in the next age, the Millennium. These are to be the "royal priesthood," to whom (under Christ the King of kings and Priest of priests) shall be committed the full control of earth during the "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Luke 12:32; 19:12-15; 22:29; Jas. 2:5; 2 Pet. 1:11; Dan. 2:44; 7:18, 22; Matt. 13:43; Rev. 20:4; Acts 3:19-23.

From this standpoint it soon became evident to him that the duty of the hour is not the uplifting of heathendom,—for which work God has specially appointed a coming age and is specially preparing teachers, who will be granted plenary powers for that work. Accordingly, instead of seeking foreign fields of service, he sought a more and more intimate knowledge of the divine plan from the divine Word—to the intent that he might be a coworker with God in his work. And the due time for revealing to the church the divine plan respecting *its participation with Christ* in the blessing of all the families of the earth—"the mystery hid from past ages and dispensations," having come, he has been privileged by God's grace to serve this "meat in due season" to many of the Lord's people far and near.—Eph. 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; Col. 1:26, 27; Rev. 10; 7; Matt. 24:25.

Further light upon the Word showed that this knowledge is now granted because due, because we have reached the period designated by our Lord as the "harvest" or closing period of this age.* We most firmly believe that this is the "harvest message" which as the Lord's sickle is to gather the ripe "wheat" of the living church and that all associated with the promulgation of this message are reapers in this harvest, colaborers with the great Chief Reaper—our Lord and Head. He believes that this message and these messengers are figuratively referred to in Matt. 13:39, 41, as doing a separating work in the church—gathering the jewels, making ready the bride, the Lamb's wife, for the "marriage,"—gathering the elect from the four winds—from one end of the ecclesiastical heavens to the other.*—Matt. 24:31.

If it be argued that the work is insignificant in comparison to the great institutions of Christendom surnamed in the Scriptures "Babylon," we reply: It is God's usual method to choose the weak things, and the things that are despised; that it may be the more manifest that not the arm and spirit of man have accomplished the results, but the arm and spirit of Jehovah—our Lord Jesus and the *"spirit of the truth."* It may be argued, also, that less than sixteen years of the "harvest" period remain and that the Scriptural indications are that all of the elect will have been found and "changed" probably four years before the harvest ends—before the climax of the great time of trouble. We answer, Yes; but each year puts the present truth into more concrete form and increases opportunities (financially and otherwise) for reaching all who have "an ear to hear" (Matt. 13:43); and each year under divine providence brings the ears of the consecrated—the watchers—into better condition to hear the Lord's message.

Here, for instance, are the missionaries in far off China and Japan having this "harvest" message served to them by a dear brother in their midst. We have no idea that all missionaries have the true missionary spirit; but undoubtedly some of them have: and all such having ears to hear will surely *hear*, and be gathered by the truth out of sectarian bondage and the slavery of error and fear into the blessed liberty of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love; and into the closer oneness with our great Head which accompanies a knowledge of the truth to the faithful. May the Lord richly bless dear Brother Randle's efforts to serve the truth to others—more than compensating him for his consequent trials and self-sacrifices.

Nor have we been idle as respects foreign missionaries, for during the past year we sent out large numbers of TOWERS and tracts to English speaking missionaries in all parts of the world.

And as it relates to "foreign missions," but of another kind, we here mention that the past year has witnessed considerable progress of the truth in Great Britain, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden and Denmark, and an entrance has been effected into France and Norway. We hope for additional coworkers (colporteurs) in all these foreign fields as well as here in the *home* field, which thus far seems to yield the largest returns of "wheat"—under divine providence, previously gathered here from every nation under heaven. All of the Lord's people filled with his spirit *must* be engaged in this work in some manner. (Jer. 20:9, 10) And "he that reapeth [using his abilities and opportunities] receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." (John 4:36.) Therefore, let each one who has tasted of this grace of God be forward to avail himself to his utmost in using his privilege of being a colaborer with his Lord.

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* See MILLENNIAL DAWN for Scriptural proofs.

DIVINE MERCY IN HOSEA'S PROPHECY

JULY 2.—Hos. 14:1-9.

"Come, let us return unto the Lord."—Hos. 6:1.

For the next six months the International Lessons are in the Old Testament, and begin with the closing words of Hosea's prophecy.

To appreciate the lesson it is necessary that we have at least a general understanding of the time and circumstances under which the prophecy was given. Hosea was a resident and prophet in the kingdom of Israel—the ten-tribe kingdom—during a part of the period in which Isaiah was prophesying in the kingdom of Judah—the two-tribe kingdom. We recall in our lessons of last year (Sept. 4) the death-bed of Elisha, and his instructions to Joash, the king of the ten-tribe kingdom, to smite upon the ground, and his explanation that the smiting of the ground three times with the arrows by Joash represented three victories which he would gain over Syria, effecting the full deliverance of Israel from Syrian control. Those promised victories were gained, and for a time Israel made great strides nationally, extending its borders to very nearly the area of territory controlled by David and Solomon (Judah excepted). This condition of things was favored by dissensions in Egypt and in Assyria, the greater nations near. The Lord manifested his favor to Israel in token of the measurable reformation begun by Joash by giving bountiful harvests also, so that the land became very wealthy and prosperous from the large crops, as well as from the spoils taken in war.

But these prosperities, which were in full accord with the covenant God had made with Israel at Sinai (Deut. 28:1-14), instead of leading the people back to God and to full obedience to their covenant, seem to have had before long a very different effect. Soon they forgot that the prosperities were the results of divine favor, and, in the language of Scripture, the nation "went whoring after other gods." Undoubtedly one thing which especially made the false religions attractive was the fact that their worship and ceremonies gave loose reign to licentiousness, and even gave a certain sanctity to it. Thus their great prosperity led Israel into idolatry and into general licentiousness and corruption, worse, probably, than at any other period of their history, and this led to their utter rejection by the Lord, delivering them to the Assyrians, who took the entire nation captive.

Hosea's prophesying was at the time of Israel's depravity, just preceding their captivity. Through the Prophet the Lord appeals to Israel, pointing out his loving tender care for them from the very beginning of their history as a nation, pointing out their backsliding attitude, their falseness to him —picturing them as a false wife and God himself as a most merciful husband.

It would appear that the Lord permitted Hosea to have certain very trying experiences in domestic troubles, with a view to impressing upon his mind the Lord's view of Israel, his spouse. The Prophet, in the very opening of his book, declares that the word of the Lord first came unto him in connection with his domestic trials. The Prophet had married, seemingly by divine providence, an attractive girl, named Gomer, whom he dearly loved, and who at the time of their marriage was quite probably true and worthy of his affection. Or it is possible to understand from the account that the Prophet, loving her, hoped to fully reclaim her, but, infected with the general immorality of the time, she proved unfaithful, so that only her first child was recognized by the Prophet. The names given to the succeeding two show that the Prophet did not acknowledge them. Dr. George Adam Smith remarks: "Hosea does not claim the second child, and in the name of this little lass, Lo-ruhamah, '*She that never knew a father's love*,' orphan, not by death, but by her mother's sin, we find proof of the Prophet's awakening to the tragedy of his home. Nor does he own the third child, named Lo-ammi, '*Not my people*.' That could also mean, '*No kin of mine*.' Once at least, but probably oftener, Hosea had forgiven the woman, and until the sixth year she stayed in his house. Then either he put her from him, or she went her own way. She sold herself for money, and finally drifted, like all of her class, into slavery."

The Prophet's sympathy went out to his wife to the extent that he redeemed her from slavery, as recorded. (3:1-3) These severe experiences through which the Prophet passed seemed to be preparing him to voice the Lord's sentiments of tender compassion to Israel, his espoused one, who so frequently and persistently went after other gods. If the prophecy of Hosea be read from this standpoint its tender compassionate appeals will be appreciated as from no other.

Our lesson is the conclusion of the matter. First, the Prophet is represented as addressing the people: "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity; take with you words and turn to Jehovah"—words of contrition, promises of reformation.

Then Israel is represented as speaking in a repentant attitude, saying: "Say unto him [the Lord], Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously: so shall we render the calves of our lips. Assher shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless find mercy."

This is the attitude of heart in which all "Israelites indeed" throughout this Gospel age are returning to the Lord;—not those alone who are Israelites according to the flesh, but those also who are called to fill up the elect number from every nation under heaven; to become members of the holy nation, the peculiar people, by becoming the Bride, the Lamb's wife. The Lord has indeed graciously received them, and has put away their iniquity—through the blood of the cross.

The Lord's answer is recorded in vss. 4-6, saying, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely [unmeritedly], for my anger is turned away from him. [Spiritual Israel is not received of Jehovah as a woman, but as a man, of which Christ Jesus our Lord is Head and his church the members of his body, accepted in the Beloved.] I will be as the dew [refreshment] unto Israel; he shall grow [thrive] as the lily [whose growth in Palestine is remarkable], and cast forth his roots as Lebanon [the trees of Mt. Lebanon had very sturdy roots]. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as an olive [everlasting], and his fragrance as Lebanon." Thus does the Lord picture the development and establishment of his true Israel, the Christ.

Then follows a picture of the blessings of the Millennial reign of spiritual Israel as God's kingdom; the revival and restitution of Israel and of all the nations is symbolically pictured, saying:

"They that dwell under his shadow shall return [have restitution]; they shall revive as the corn and flourish as a vine, and the fragrance thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim [one of the names given to the ten-tribe kingdom, and also symbolically used sometimes in referring to nominal churchianity] shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him [the great Prophet—Acts 3:22] and observed [obeyed] him; I am like a green fir tree [an evergreen tree,—symbolically representative of the possession of everlasting life]. From [in] me is thy fruit found;"—the fruits of the spirit.

In conclusion, attention is called to the fact that not by earthly wisdom and intelligence can these predictions be comprehended. They shall be understood only by those who are taught of the Lord with the true wisdom which cometh down from above: as the Prophet declares, "The [truly] wise shall understand, but none of the wicked shall understand."—Dan. 12:10.

We give the translation of this last verse from *Leeser*, as follows: "Who is wise that he may understand these things? intelligent, that he may know them? For righteous are the ways of the Lord, and the just shall walk in them [understand them], but the transgressors will stumble through them [misapprehend them]."

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"THE BISHOP OF LONDON ON 'GETTING ON'"

"The Bishop of London possesses a mind of unusual interest, and everything that he says is worth paying attention to, whether we agree with it or not. In addressing the pupils of the Philological School the other day, he took as the subject of his remarks, 'Success in Life.' Considering his own career, one might expect that he would justify, and possibly glorify, success, for few men of our generation have risen more rapidly and achieved such brilliant success as he. But the Bishop did not take that line of thought at all, and we are glad that he did not. Enough and too much has been written for boys as to the way in which they may regard the world as their oyster to open at their will. Strength, instead of purity, of will has too often been represented as the most desirable of attainments. Now we do not doubt for one moment that this element of great will-power is an important element in the building up of character. Without it nothing can be achieved that is worth achieving. But mere strength of will may, and often is, accompanied by the worst traits in human character. We need not accept all the deductions of Schopenhauer to agree with him that what he calls the 'will to live' is a root of all the crime, sensuality, and base unsatisfied longings which make up the carnal side of human nature.

"It is true that Nature itself implants this forceful 'will to live' in every one of us, and that without it the human race would soon cease to exist when confronted with the terrific forces of the material universe. It is true that great and beneficent discoveries are due to the persistence of this intense will in us. It is even further true that many noble qualities, and no little of the social and the humanizing elements in life, are intimately connected with a powerful will. Many of the great human scourges of the race have, unconsciously and unintentionally, done immense good for mankind through the possession of this vast overflowing energy. 'There shall be no Alps,' said Napoleon in his selfish desire to conquer Italy, and the result was the wonderful roads which connected Northern and Southern Europe. If ever there was an example on a colossal human scale of the 'will to live,' it was embodied in Peter the Great, an awful and drunken barbarian; but see what he did for Russia. In this world, whose ultimate problems we do not pretend to solve, the 'will to live,' with all its potential consequences, is a great fact without which the human race would gradually die out.

"Now the successful man, in the ordinary sense of the word, is he who develops in himself in an abnormal degree this 'will to live.' We in the Western world scarcely recognize that this 'will to live' carried to great lengths is not only not universal among mankind, but is rather exceptional in its operations. It is the brute inheritance, at least on one side, against which some of the great religions of the world have contended, and contended with success. The East as a whole finds in the quiescence of the will, in its passive submission to a vast and supreme Power, the solution of the problem of life. Even among Western peoples the average man lives with content amid the 'petty murmur of his bourg' rather than contends for the great material prizes of life, or what are supposed to be such. It is well that this is so, for if every one were fired by the ambition of a successful general, or politician, or merchant, the competition among men would be so terrible that, from another point of view, annihilation would be the lot of humanity. Men would not be able to stand the strain, nor would Nature afford the mass of them the opportunity for attaining, or even seriously striving for, the object of their ambition. Earth would become a hell, and this green globe would witness tragedies compared with which the most awful in history would dwindle into insignificance. Most men are, happily for themselves and for their fellows, contented, like the Apostle, with food and raiment, and taking the world as a whole, they live the lives of decent and faithful fathers, sons, husbands, and friends. Ambition is the mark of a comparative few, and what are called the prizes of life are contended for by an insignificant minority.

"We say that this is well, and the Bishop of London is evidently in agreement with our position, for he does not think that success in life usually develops the best qualities among men. It is indeed true, as Wordsworth said, that it is dangerous to look on tyrants with a dazzled eye, and one might add that it is not quite safe for most men to take as their models those who are generally estimated to be successful men. There can be, as the Bishop said, no absolute rule as to what one should do to gain success. One may spend one's life in the most praiseworthy diligence, and yet die poor, unknown, and be accounted by the world as a failure, tho happily the world's coarse judgments do not constitute the final court of appeal. One may master all science, one may be a great thinker, and yet pass away from these noises of earth unrecognized, and even laughed at, by one's fellowmen.

"It has been reserved for few great men to attain renown in their own lifetime. They have been hated and ridiculed, while the shallow charlatan has won the success of his age. This is, indeed, such a truism that one does not need to dwell on the fact. If we are to measure character, genius and worth by the standard of success, we should have to say that the great men of the world have been among the least successful men. What does seem to us to ensure success is some overplus of human energy with which a man is born, and which cannot be created in him afterwards, and which is directed towards the attainment of objects that can be best appreciated by the average man. There is a general demand in the world at any given time for a kind of mechanical talent rising at times to genius, but of a variety which can be estimated by common people, and which can apply itself to objects of general desire. He who possesses this kind of overplus of human energy is the successful man, because he holds a monopoly of what all desire and of what all can appreciate. To him all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players, and he soon finds out that he can play the best game of them all in some particular line.

"In a world such as ours, how far is it wise to encourage that kind of talent? Religion, as we have said, over most of the Eastern world has persuaded countless millions of people that this kind of success is not worth while. Buddhism and Brahminism have indoctrinated a large proportion of the human race with a positive contempt for the kind of existence which alone seems worth having for a member of the New York Stock Exchange. Indeed, if we contemplate the two varieties of mankind from a spiritual, instead of a physical, point of view, we might be led to doubt whether the human race had a common origin. There seems absolutely nothing in common between the two types.

"On the one hand, we see the action dictated by the strong will, by the 'will to live' endowed with keen intelligence and a rather low standard of aspiration. On the other side, we see a being who is striving—for what? For the cessation of all will, for the attainment, not of material commodities, not even of mental good, but of entire peace and calm, and to him all the efforts of human life in our busy civilization seem entirely purposeless and even absurd. Are we to take the extreme Oriental view, or must we accept the standard of the strong will as believed in and acted upon by the busy men of our busy world? If the latter is a true theory of life, then we must accept the successful man as our hero, even tho we cannot teach our youths how to imitate his example.

"We think there is a mean between these extremes, as there is between most extremes. We cannot annihilate 'the will to live,' because existence itself on our planet depends upon its mysterious operation. Neither can we desire the *larger development* of the 'will to live,' the will carried to an abnormal point, as in a very great general or financier, among average men. All that we want among average men, as Hegel said, is that they should be good men in all the fundamental relations of life. If they happen to achieve that reward which, as Coleridge says, so rarely comes to merit, well and good.

"But it is well that most men should not go out of their way to seek rewards. So long as they are standing on the ground of right, they are safe; but the moment they quit that point of moral vantage for the perilous peaks of human ambition, they are usually lost. They must not, then, put forth the abnormal 'will to live,' but neither must they crush that will without which human life would be empty of all positive content. No, what is really needed among men is a pure will, a will cleansed of all that degrades life while prolonging it and extending its relations. This was the best Greek idea, it is also the Christian idea, which comes to men, not as taking away the real content of life, but as giving life more abundantly; but life which can control those fiery courses of the soul instead of leaving them to their own ungoverned sway. On the whole, therefore, we say with the Bishop that success in life is a dubious object of desire, since it is connected inextricably with so much that wars against the soul. But we must not, as the Germans say, throw away the baby along with the bath. We must accept the will, but we must give to it that direction and noble purpose which render it truly free." —*London Spectator.*

DANIEL IN BABYLON

JULY 9.—DANIEL 1:8-21.

"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself."

Daniel is set before us in the Scriptures as one whom the Lord loved. His standing with the Almighty is strikingly presented through the Prophet Ezekiel, where the Lord, speaking of the sureness of his judgments about to come upon the land of Judah, said, "Tho these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness." (Ezek. 14:14) These words were spoken by Ezekiel shortly before the desolation of Jerusalem, while Daniel was in Babylon, where he had risen to a position of great prominence; and his fame no doubt had reached his home.

Daniel was carried captive with Jehoiachim, king of Judah, and many of the nobility of the land of Israel, eighteen* years before the final captivity in the days of Zedekiah, when the land was left desolate without an inhabitant, and the seventy years of desolation began. Daniel was fourteen years old when carried captive to Babylon, and consequently lived to the extreme age of over one hundred years.—Dan. 1:21.

The Book of Daniel is one of those against which the "higher critics" expend special energy, some being inclined to call it a fiction, while others declare it to be a history of the period of Antiochus Epiphanes (over three hundred years after Daniel's death) and that it was written by some unknown writer who attached Daniel's name as a disguise. Modern science and the higher critics are very much opposed to anything in the nature of positive prophecy—anything claiming to be of direct divine inspiration, and in any sense of the word attempting to foretell the future. The Book of Daniel is preëminently marked with these characteristics, and hence it, more than any other book of the Old Testament, has the reprobation of these gentlemen. But the Lord forewarned us, through the Apostle and the Prophet, of these wise men, whose wisdom would become a trap and a snare unto them, so that "the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid [obscured]."—Isa. 29:14; 1 Cor. 1:26-29.

Our Lord also pointed out that *these things* are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes—made clear to those who make no boast of wisdom according to the course of the world. (Matt. 11:25) How true to facts we find this to be! While many of the great and learned are stumbling themselves into higher criticism and other forms of infidelity, the Lord's "little ones," meek, humble, teachable from the Father's Word, are being instructed, and are growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

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* Should be *eleven*, not eighteen, years. See Vol. II, p. 52.—EDS.

To those who have clearly in mind the presentations and interpretations of Daniel's prophecies as presented in Millennial Dawn, Vols. i., ii. and iii., there is no need for elaborate arguments to prove that this wonderful Book of Daniel is not a fiction, but more wonderful by far than any fiction that could have been written. And to them it will be useless to declare it a history of events which transpired 167 b. c. and falsely set forth as a prophecy by Daniel, for they see fulfilments, past, present and to come, far larger and grander and more wonderful than anything which occurred at the date named—they see in these fulfilments unmistakable evidence of superhuman intelligence, and that, as Daniel declared, the most high God therein revealed the secrets of his plan still future.

Our lesson proper finds Daniel with others of the Jewish captives in Babylon, where according to custom, the king had made choice of a number of the most promising of the captive youths to pass a three-years' course of education in the sciences, Babylon being at this time the center of learning. The object in this was no doubt two-fold: the Babylonian monarch thus attempted to associate with his empire the learning and skill of the world, and to promote a friendly feeling as between Babylon and the various countries over which it held sway, that foreign nations might feel the greater interest in Babylon as the center of the world-empire, and be the more contented with the laws and regulations which proceeded therefrom, knowing that some of their own nation stood before the king as his counsellors or secretaries—magicians, astrologers and wise men, as they were then called.

The choice of the four young Israelites was no doubt a subject of divine providence, and from their names we may infer they were all children of religious parents, the compounds of their names so signifying, as follows: Daniel, *"God is my Judge;"* Hananiah, *"God is gracious;"* Mishael, *"This is as God;"* Azariah, *"God is a helper."* Thus did the Lord, overthrowing a nation for its wickedness, make special provision, even in its captivity, for those of that nation who were faithful to him. In choosing these four Jews for the Babylonian college course the prince of the eunuchs, according to custom, gave them new names, to break their identity with their native homes and to establish an identity with the kingdom of Babylon; hence he named them Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.

From the first Daniel seems to have been the specially favored of these favored four—he was favored of the Lord in that, while all four were specially blessed, his portion included visions and revelations; he was specially favored by the prince of the eunuchs who had these youths in charge, as we read, "Now God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs." (Vs. 9) We are not to understand that this favor both with God and man was something wholly outside of Daniel himself; on the contrary, it is proper for us to infer that by birth (heredity) and by natural training of godly parents Daniel had a noble, amiable, winsome character, which not only prepared him the better to be the Lord's mouthpiece, but which also made him moderate, discreet and amiable toward all with whom he had to do.

What a lesson is here, not only for young people, but also for parents! How necessary it is that those who seek divine service shall endeavor to attain to characteristics pleasing to God! And if any find themselves wholly without friends, how proper it is that they should suspect that some measure of the fault lies in themselves; and how proper it would be that all such should seek to cultivate amiability and suavity at the expense of everything except principle! Only Ishmael was to have the experience of every man's hand against him, and his hand against every man, and those who have Ishmael's experience have need to fear that they have Ishmael's disposition, and should forthwith diligently seek grace at the throne of mercy whereby to overcome ungainly qualities and idiosyncrasies.

It is only when we are hated because of our loyalty to the truth (directly or indirectly) that we are to take satisfaction therein, or to think that we are suffering for righteousness' sake. As the Apostle points out, some suffer as evildoers and as busy-bodies in other men's matters, or because of ungentleness, uncouthness, or lack of the wisdom of moderation, which the Lord's Word counsels. (1 Pet. 4:15; Phil. 4:5; Jas. 1:5) We are not to forget, however, that rudeness, which is an element of selfishness, may be more quickly dispelled from the heart than from the life, and all should take encouragment from the thought that God, and his people who view matters from his standpoint, judge the sons of God not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit or intention of their minds, their hearts, and have patience with the weakness of the flesh, where there are evidences that the new mind is endeavoring to bring the flesh under its control.

Of these four Jewish companions, Daniel seems from the first to have been leader, and his leading seems to have been in the right direction. In a new land, under new conditions, a shallow character would be likely to be thoroughly spoiled. First, the fact of being chosen, even in the probationary sense, to be of the king's council was certainly a great honor; and the tendency to a shallow mind would have been toward vanity, bombast, pride, haughtiness, etc., qualities which would have hindered real progress in the school, and thus would have made him less likely to be the king's ultimate choice as counsellor; but still more important, it would have separated between him and God, for God resisteth the proud and showeth his favor to the humble.—1 Pet. 5:5.

Daniel might have said to himself, as some would have said,—I am now far from the land of Israel; I am identified with the Babylonish court, and I therefore may profitably forget and neglect the laws of God, and consider them as having been applicable to me only in my own country, and that here, far from the land of promise, I may do in all particulars as the better Babylonians do. But, on the contrary, Daniel very wisely resolved in his heart that, since his nation had been cut off from the land of promise because of disobedience to God, he would be ever careful to do those things which would be pleasing to the Almighty; and, as we shall see, he soon found a place for his new resolutions.

The portion of food provided for these college students by the king's command was good—far better, probably, than they had been used to previously;—nor was Daniel's mental objection to it instigated by self-denial, but wholly by religious duty. The Israelites, under their Law Covenant, were forbidden to eat certain articles of food in common use amongst other nations, for instance, swine's flesh, rabbit flesh, eels, oysters, etc., and indeed all flesh that was not killed by being allowed to bleed to death: for the Law specially forbade the use of blood under any circumstances or conditions. The food of the king's household was not prepared along these lines, and the young Hebrew perceived that he could not hope for any change in these respects, and he was too wise to even find fault with them. He saw rightly enough that the divine Law that was upon him as a Jew did not apply to Gentiles, and he made no efforts to interfere with the general arrangements.

Daniel's request, therefore, was a very simple one, *viz.*, that he be permitted to have a very plain and inexpensive diet, called "pulse," which no doubt was prepared as a part of the general household meal. If the request could be granted, no one would be specially inconvenienced, and yet Daniel would thus preserve himself from "defilement" under the terms of the Jewish Law. It would appear that Daniel's companions, influenced by his decision, joined with him in this request. The prince of the eunuchs, while desirous of favoring Daniel, feared his own position if, as he surmised, this simple diet would prove insufficient for the boys, and lead to a breakdown of their health during the period of study. But finally it was arranged with the melzar (or butler) that the matter of diet should be tested for ten days.

Here Daniel's faith in God showed itself. He was confident that, even tho such a diet might not be the most desirable in every respect, yet, inasmuch as it was the only course open to them whereby they could preserve themselves from violation of the divine Law, therefore God would specially supervene to the extent necessary, and in this, it seems, he was not disappointed. There is a lesson for all of the Lord's people here. It is our duty not only to study the Lord's will, but also to consider well the circumstances and the conditions which surround us, and to seek to adopt such a moderate course in life as would first of all have divine approval, and secondly, cause as little trouble, inconvenience and displeasure to others as possible, and then to confidently rely upon the Lord's supervising wisdom and providence.

When we read, "As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams," we are not to understand that this skill and learning was wholly miraculous, like the understanding in visions and dreams, which was to Daniel only. Rather, we are to judge that under what we might term natural laws four boys who had enough character to undertake such a course of self-denial for righteousness' sake would have also courage and strength of character in respect to all their affairs and studies. We are to surmise that their determination in this matter of their food, that they would rather deny themselves than violate God's Law, would mean to them a mental and moral discipline which would be helpful to these young men in all the affairs of life.

And there is a lesson in this for every Christian. Many are inclined to think of the little things of life as being unimportant, but everyone who attains to any proficiency in any department of life surely learns that his attainments were in considerable degree the result of determined will-power, and that it is well-nigh impossible to be strong in will-power in respect to important things if lax and pliable in respect to things in general, even tho less important. Habit is a wonderful power, either for good or evil, and the boy or girl, the man or woman, who has not learned self-control in respect to little things, indeed all things, cannot expect to be able to exercise self-control upon the greatest and most important affairs merely.

In other words, applying this matter to Christians, we might say that he who wants to be an "overcomer" at all, must make the attempt all along the line on every point, great or small, where conscience and principle call for it. It is he who is faithful in things that are least who may be expected to be found faithful also in things that are greater: and this evidently is the Lord's view of this matter. From the Lord's standpoint, all of the affairs of this present life are little in comparison with the future things. Hence he is calling for "overcomers" whose general faithfulness to principle, even in small things, will give evidence of the *disposition*, the *character*, to which may be entrusted the great responsibilities of the kingdom glory, honor and immortality.—Luke 16:10; Matt. 25:23.

At the end of the three years' college course, when Daniel was seventeen, came the examination before the king, and as should have been expected, Daniel and his companions, faithful to the Lord, seeking first his will, were found to be far in advance of their companions, and were accepted to the king's council. We might draw a lesson here, without in any sense of the Word intimating that it was typified, for we do not so think. We might say that there is a certain correspondence as between the position of Daniel and his associates and the position occupied by all those who have been called of the Father to joint-heirship in the kingdom, with Jesus Christ our Lord. Not all who are called, nor all who undertake the course of training, have the promise of acceptance: on the contrary, many are called, few will be chosen. But the character of those who will be chosen in many respects corresponds to that of Daniel and his companions. Not all are leading spirits, as was Daniel, nor are all given to visions and revelations and interpretations, as was he; but all will have the same spirit of devotion to principles of righteousness, which devotion will be tested under divine providence, step by step, through the narrow way, as they seek to walk in the footsteps of him who set us an example—our Daniel, our Leader, our Lord Jesus. Let all, then, who have named the name of Christ, depart from iniquity, let all such be faithful: "Dare to be a Daniel."

Another thought is that clean spiritual provender is important to the Lord's flock, and that those who have come to a knowledge of the truth should abstain from all food that is defiled. If this shall seem to restrict the bill of spiritual fare, and the opportunities for mingling with the Babylonians at their table, it will have its compensating advantages nevertheless, for the Lord will bless to the spiritual good of his faithful ones even the plainest of spiritual blessings and opportunities. Let a test be made, after the manner of Daniel and his companions, and see whether or not those who feed upon the clean provender of the Lord's Word, and who reject the more sumptuous arrangement and defiled food of Babylon will not be fairer of countenance spiritually, even after a short test. But let us not suppose that anything would be gained by simply abstaining from the Babylonian portion and starving themselves spiritually. Whoever abstains from the popular and defiled supply must seek and use the simple and undefiled food which the Lord in his providence supplies, otherwise their last state of spiritual starvation will be worse than the first.

IN THE FIERY FURNACE

JULY 16.—DAN. 3:14-28.

"Our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us."

Probably twenty years elapsed after Daniel and his companions reached Babylon in captivity before the scenes of this lesson were enacted. Meantime Daniel had been raised to a very high position in the empire, as king's counsellor, while his three companions had been made magistrates in the provinces of Babylon. We know that their prosperity did not tend to make them careless of their duties and responsibilities toward God, for otherwise they would not have been able to stand the severe test recounted in this lesson, and which proved a great blessing to them because of their fidelity to the Lord.

King Nebuchadnezzar just before this had won some great victories over surrounding nations—Egypt, Syria, etc.—as he had previously done with Judah, and as the Lord had predicted in the dream which Daniel had interpreted for the King, which showed the Babylonian Empire as the golden head of earthly dominion. His great success no doubt had tended to feelings of pride and a desire for display. Yet these were probably not the only motives which led to the program of the great festival in honor of his victories, and the erection of the great image which all were commanded to worship. Nebuchadnezzar's thought evidently was to unify his empire, and as a step in this direction he desired to unify the religious views and worship of the various peoples under his sway. In this his example was frequently followed subsequently, for all rulers have seemed to grasp the thought that man's mental organization is such that obedience can be best and most lastingly secured through the acquiescence of the religious organs of his mind. In other words, since man is a religious animal, no government of him can be secure and permanent which does not have, directly or indirectly, the support of his veneration. Hence it was that Nebuchadnezzar and others endeavored to associate the Creator and the king together in men's minds, that venerating the One they should respect and serve the other as his representative.

It was no doubt with a view to thus unifying the religious sentiments of his empire that this great feast was arranged, of which the very center of attraction was the great image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. This image, with its pedestal, was ninety feet high and nine feet wide. It was of gold, probably either made hollow or on a base of clay cement. It was located in the Plain of Dura, about the center of the walled enclosure twenty-four miles square, known as the city of Babylon. As it is a level country, and as the structures were comparatively low, the image could probably be seen from every part of the great city.

The appointed time for the festival having come, leading representatives, judges, treasurers, governors, sheriffs, etc., from all the divisions of the empire, clad in the gorgeous garments of the East, were present. A great band had been prepared, composed of all the musical instruments popular at that period, and the command of the king had gone forth that when the musicians should play upon their instruments all the vast concourse of people, representatives of his whole empire, facing the image which he had set up, should fall down and worship it, and thus indicate their loyalty, not only to King Nebuchadnezzar, but also to his gods who had given him the wonderful victories which they were celebrating.

As magistrates of the empire, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were necessarily in the great throng, tho it is quite probable that they, representing different departments, may have been at a distance from each other, each surrounded by his secretaries, assistants, servants, etc. Undoubtedly the object of the festival was clearly discerned by these intelligent men, and the question arose before their minds respecting their duty to God and the conflict of this with the probable requirements of the king. It was a crucial test for them, for they knew that the king's powers were autocratic, and that to cross his will meant death in some form. Nevertheless, they decided that they must be true to God, whatever the cost. It might be that their refusal to prostrate themselves before the image would pass entirely unnoticed by others, or it might be that, even if noticed, the incident might never reach the ears of the king, but such circumstances could make no change in the matter of their duty; whatever others might do, they must not bow the knee to any but the true God. Daniel is omitted from mention here, possibly because, occupying a different position as one of the king's personal staff and household, his conduct would not come so directly in contrast with the general conduct.

Finally, the hour of trial came, when the great king of Babylon was recognized not only as civil but also as religious ruler, and the image which he had set up was worshiped by the various representatives of his empire—except Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. Their neglect to bow was quickly brought to the attention of the king, for no doubt these, like all good men, had their enemies: some enemies through jealousy and rivalry for the king's favor: other enemies because, perhaps, they had been interrupted or hindered in dishonest practices and contracts with the government. The matter seems to have astounded the king, and hence his inquiry, Is it true, can it be true? Surely, no sane men would be so foolhardy as to oppose my decree, and that in my very presence, and upon such a fete-day as this? Not waiting an answer as respects matters of the past, the king voluntarily proposed for them a fresh test of loyalty and submission, nothing doubting but that, now that the matter had come to his attention, they would be moved by fear, not only in respect to their degradation from office, but by the danger of death in the fiery furnace, to render prompt obedience.

Perhaps the king's mind shot a glance backward fifteen years, to the time when the God of the Hebrews, through Daniel, had told and interpreted his dream, a matter which none of the other gods of his wise men could do; and as tho he had this in mind, and wishing to impress the matter upon these three Hebrews who had dared to challenge his power, he made the boast, "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" In his arrogance of mind and under the flush of his mighty victories over the greatest nations and mightiest kings, Nebuchadnezzar felt prepared to have a contest even with the unseen and to him unknown invisible powers. He would not be backed down in his own capital city; he would demonstrate his power to inflict a penalty, regardless of what any of the gods might do in retaliation. He would show that he, at all events, had the power in the present time, and in this respect at least was more powerful than any of the gods of whom he had knowledge.

The answer of the three Hebrews was a wise one; seeing from the king's mood that the discussion of the subject would be useless, they did not attempt to retaliate by threatening him with divine vengeance; neither did they attempt to convert the king to Judaism, knowing well that the provisions of the Jewish covenant were not for Gentiles. They simply responded that they were not anxious to avail themselves of the opportunity to argue the matter with the king. They assured him of their full confidence that their God was able to deliver them from the fiery furnace, and out of the hand or power of even the greatest king of the earth; but they answered, While our God is thus all-powerful we are not by any means certain that he will deliver us; nevertheless, "O king, be it known unto thee that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Angered that his great festal day should be thus marred by even the slightest opposition to his will, the king did not wait to give another opportunity wherein the Hebrews might relent. He saw that it was useless, that they were men of character and determination, and he resolved that he would make an example of them before all the people. The form of his visage or his countenance changed toward these men; whereas once he had admired them, as amongst his ablest counsellors and magistrates, and an honor to his empire, now he hated them, as opponents whose course, if not interrupted, might introduce disorder into his empire, and lead to more or less sedition, if copied by others. In his rage he commanded that the furnace be heated seven times, or to its utmost capacity. The furnace, already heated for the occasion, may have been the one used in melting the gold for the image, and must have been of immense size.

Probably as a mark of his great authority, and to show that even the very greatest of his subjects were subordinate to his supreme authority, the king commanded that these three recalcitrant officials be cast into the fiery furnace by prominent officers of his army—no doubt to teach a lesson respecting the power of the army, and the willingness of its chief representatives to serve the king, as against everybody else.

The Hebrews, bound in their official garb, were evidently cast into the furnace from the top, because it is stated that they fell down bound, while the heat was so intense that it even killed those who cast them into the furnace, possibly by the inhalation of the flames, which might kill them instantly.

The king seemed to be having matters his own way, as usual; even the mighty God of the Hebrews had not delivered these men from his power. And yet the king was solicitous and eyed the furnace, and to his surprise beheld those who had been cast into the furnace bound, walking about free in the flames—seemingly uninjured. More than this, he saw a fourth person there, of most remarkable appearance, which caused the king to think and speak of him as one of the gods. No wonder he was astonished; he was evidently contending with a God of whose powers he had been ignorant.

Nebuchadnezzar showed himself to be a man of broad mind—in his acceptance to the Babylonian college of the brightest youths out of all the peoples taken captive; in his readiness to acknowledge the God of Daniel, when he had received the evidences of his power; so now, realizing that he had made a great mistake in attempting the destruction of three of his most eminent magistrates, and that he was thus defying the great God, Nebuchadnezzar was prompt to make acknowledgment, and approached the furnace, calling out, "Ye servants of the most high God, come forth and come hither." In the presence of the king's courtiers they came forth, and all beheld them that the fire had done them no injury, not even having singed their clothes or their hair. This was indeed a stupendous miracle, and doubtless was valuable in its influence, not only upon the Gentiles, but also upon the Hebrews residing throughout Babylon, who would thus hear of the power of Jehovah in delivering those faithful to him. Whether this had a bearing on the subject or not, we know well that, while idolatry had been one of the chief sins of the Israelites before this captivity, there was comparatively little of idolatry in its crude forms in that nation afterward.

Nebuchadnezzar's acknowledgment of the God of the Hebrews, who sent his messenger and delivered his servants that trusted in him, is very simple and very beautiful. He rejoiced in the noble character of these men, and at once made a decree "that every people, nation and language which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be a dung-hill; because there is no other god that can deliver after this sort." And furthermore, he promoted these faithful men to still higher positions, for they had still more of his confidence respecting their integrity. Men who would thus hazard their lives for conscience' sake could be trusted in the most important positions.

It is not necessary that we determine this incident to have been a type and look for correspondencies to its every feature. Without so determining, the Lord's people may readily find in it many valuable lessons and suggestions. Not all of God's people are in such prominent positions as were these Hebrews: and not many have testings of exactly the same kind as were theirs, with a literal fiery furnace before their eyes. Nevertheless, there are trials before the Lord's people today that are fully as severe. Who will not agree that questions respecting a public acknowledgment of an idol and thus a public disavowal of the true God would be a point more quickly and more easily decided by nearly everyone than some of the subtle temptations of our day? For instance, various idols are set up all over Christendom, each of which, it is claimed, represents the true God, and each of which demands worship in honor and substance.

Babylon the literal was in ruins long before the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos was shown in prophetic vision the mystic or symbolic Babylon "which reigneth over the kings of the earth" today. The provinces of Babylon today are the various civilized nations—really "kingdoms of this world;" but deluded into calling themselves and thinking themselves kingdoms of Christ—"Christendom." And parallels to the king and the image are also presented in Revelation—they are religious systems symbolically described as "the beast and his image."—Rev. 13:15-18.

Without at present examining the symbols in detail we note the fact that worship of this symbolic beast and his image are to be the great test or trial upon professing Christians in every province of symbolic Babylon in the end of this age: indeed, the testing is even now in progress. And we have the same inspired record as authority for the statement that only those who refuse to render worship to those powerfully influential religious systems (symbolized by the beast and his image) will be counted by the Lord as "overcomers" and be made his joint-heirs as members of his elect church.—See Rev. 20:4.

As already pointed out, the "beast" represents not Roman Catholics (the people) but the Roman Catholic *system*, as an institution: and the image represents not Protestants (the people) but the consolidation of Protestant *systems*, as an institution. We have pointed out* that the first step in the formation of this symbolic image of Papacy was taken in A. D. 1846 in the organization of the Evangelical Alliance, and that the second step must come shortly in an active *living* co-operation of Protestants as one system; and that this infusion of *life* will result from the Episcopal church or church of England joining or affiliating with other Protestants under some general arrangement similar to the Evangelical Alliance.

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* Millennial Dawn, Vol. iii, p. 119.

While the severest testings will follow the giving of life to the consolidated image, in the near future, the testing has already commenced with many, for "Churchianity" is more and more demanding reverence and support, and those who absolutely refuse to worship its images are already exposed to fiery trials;—social ostracism, and financial boycotts. Prominent amongst these is the Roman Catholic idol; that church sets itself as the representative of God, and demands worship, obedience and contribution to its funds. It is one of the most popular as well as one of the most arbitrary of idols. The Greek Catholic church is another idol: the Anglican is another; and the Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc., etc., all similarly demand worship, obedience and revenue. They have "pooled their issues," to a certain extent, so as not to war upon each other's devotees, but they unite in warfare *against all who do not bow the knee to some such idol* (who reverence and worship *only* the Almighty God, and recognize his only begotten Son as the *only* Head and Lord of the true church, whose names are *only* written in heaven—not on earthly rolls of membership.)—See Heb. 12:23.

All who refuse to worship before any of these images are threatened with a fiery furnace of persecution, and the threat is generally carried out as thoroughly as circumstances will permit. In the "dark ages," when Papacy had a monopoly of the "church" business, it meant torture and the stake, as well as social ostracism. Today, under a higher enlightenment, and especially because of competition for worshipers, matters are not carried to the same extreme, thank God! Yet in many instances there are evidences that the same spirit prevails, merely restrained by changed circumstances and lack of power. Still, as many are witnesses, there are methods of torture which serve to intimidate many who would scorn to bow the knee to a literal visible idol. Thousands today are worshiping at the various shrines of Christendom who in their hearts long to be free from the sectarian bondage of fear—who fain would serve the Lord God only, had they the courage. And there are some the world over who, with a courage not less than that of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, declare publicly that the Lord God alone shall have the worship and the service which they can render. None, perhaps, know better than the writer the various fiery experiences to which these faithful few are exposed—boycotted socially, boycotted in business, slandered in every conceivable manner, and often by those of whom they had least expected it, who, according to the Lord's declaration, say "*all manner* of evil against them falsely."—Matt. 5:11, 12.

But with these, as with the three Hebrews of our lesson, the chief trial is in connection with their faith; after they have taken a firm stand for the Lord and his truth they may indeed be bound and have their liberties of speech and of effort restrained, and they may indeed be cast into the fiery furnace, but nothing more than these things can be done to them. As soon as they have demonstrated their fidelity to God to this extent, their trials and troubles are turned into blessings and joys. As the form of the Son of God was seen with the Hebrews in the fiery furnace, so unseen, the Lord is present with those who trust him and who, because of faithfulness to him and to his Word, come into tribulation. How beautifully this is expressed in the familiar hymn,

> "When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
> My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply;
> The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
> Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

And sometimes even the worldly can realize that the Lord's people in the furnace of affliction are receiving a blessing, and sometimes thus our heavenly Father's name is glorified in the world, as in Nebuchadnezzar's experience. Sometimes the Lord's people who are bound, restrained of liberty to proclaim the truth, find, as did those Hebrews, that the fire burns the cords and sets them free, and really gives them larger opportunities to testify to the glory of our God than they could have had by any other course.

The Lord's providences vary, and it is not for his people to decide when shall come remarkable deliverances, and when they shall apparently be left entirely to the will of their enemies without any manifestation of divine favor on their behalf. Note, for instance, the fact that, while the Lord interposed to deliver these three Hebrews from the fiery furnace, he did not interpose to prevent the beheading of John the Baptist, altho of the latter it is specifically declared, "There hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist." We remember that, while Peter was delivered from prison by the angel of the Lord, James was not delivered, but was beheaded. We remember also that Paul's life was miraculously preserved on several occasions, and that the Apostle John, according to tradition, was once cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, but escaped uninjured, while on other occasions dire disaster came upon the Lord's faithful ones, and that quickly, as in the case of Stephen, who was stoned.

It is not, therefore, for us to predetermine what shall be the divine providence in respect to ourselves; we are to note the point of right and duty and to follow it regardless of consequences, trusting implicitly in the Lord. This lesson is most beautifully set forth in the language of the three Hebrews, who declared to King Nebuchadnezzar that their God was entirely capable of delivering them from his power, but that, whether he chose to do so or not, they would not violate their conscience. It is just such characters that the Lord is seeking for, and it is in order to their development and testing that multiform evil is now permitted to have sway.

While such testings have been in progress to a considerable extent throughout this entire Gospel age, the Scriptures clearly indicate to us that in some special sense all of the Lord's people will be tested in the "harvest" or closing time of this age. Our Lord speaks of it, likening our Christian faith to a house, and represents the trials in the end of this age as a great storm which will beat upon every house, with the result that all that are founded upon the rock will stand, and all founded upon the sand will collapse. The Apostle Peter speaks of this trial-time, saying, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as tho some strange thing happened unto you." (1 Pet. 4:12) We are to expect a testing in the end of this age, just as there was a testing of the Jewish nominal church in the end of its age. As in that testing in the end of this age, just as there was a testing of the "wheat" from the "chaff," so here the separating will be complete between the "wheat" and the "tares," as our Lord declares. (Matt. 13:24-30) Throughout the age the "wheat" and the "tares," by divine arrangement, have been permitted to grow side by side; but in the "harvest" the separation must occur, that the "wheat" may be "garnered," received to the kingdom.

The Apostle Paul, also, speaks of this time of fiery trial, and, likening the faith and works of a zealous Christian to a house built of gold, silver and precious stones, he declares that the fire of this day, in the end of this age, shall try every man's work of what sort it is, and shall consume all but the genuine faith and character structures. (1 Cor. 3:11-15) But we are to remember that such loyal characters grow not suddenly, in a few hours or days—mushroom-like,—but are progressive developments, fine-grained and strong like the olive-tree.

Looking back, we cannot doubt that the step of self-denial recorded in our previous lesson,—taken for conscience' sake by the Hebrews,—had much to do with the development in them of the staunch characters illustrated in this lesson. Likewise we who have become "new creatures," reckonedly, in Christ, know that we are to be tested (if our testing has not already commenced), and should realize that only as we practice self-denials in the little things of life, and mortify (deaden) the natural cravings of our flesh in respect to food, clothing, conduct, etc., will we become strong spiritually and be able to "overcome."

Many deal slackly with themselves in respect to little violations of their consecration vow, saying,—"What's the use" of such carefulness and so different a life from that of the world in general? Ah! there is great use in it, for victories in little things prepare for greater victories and make them possible: and on the contrary, surrender to the will of the flesh in the little things means sure defeat in the warfare as a whole. Let us remember the maxim laid down by our Great Teacher—that he that is faithful in the things that are least will be faithful also in the things which are great. And this is the operation of a law, whose operations may be discerned in all the affairs of life.

Our Lord expresses the same thought, saying,—To him that hath (used) shall be given (more), and from him that hath not (used) shall be taken away that which he hath. If we start on a Christian life ever so weak in the flesh and weak in spirit, we will find that faithfulness in the little things will bring increasing strength in the Lord and in the power of his might. But it is in vain that we pray, "Lord, Lord," and hope for great victories and the "crown of rejoicing," if we fail to do our best to conquer in the little affairs of daily life. In other words, our testing is in progress from the moment of our consecration, and the little trials are but preparations for greater ones which, when faithfully attained, we will be able to reckon with the Apostle as light afflictions which are but for a moment, and which are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. 4:17.

The answer of the Hebrews to Nebuchadnezzar,—"Our

God whom we *serve*," is worthy of note. They not only acknowledged God and worshiped him, but they additionally *served* him, according as they had opportunity. And so it will be found to-day: those who have the necessary strength of character to refuse to worship human institutions and thereby to "suffer the loss of all things," counting them but as loss and dross, that they may win Christ and be found finally complete in him, as members of his glorified body, and joint-heirs in his kingdom, not only practice self-denials, but gladly serve and confess the Lord in their daily life. Rightly appreciated, a profession of love for the Lord would always be a profession of service to his cause. Whoever is not rendering some service to our King in the present time of multiplied opportunities has at very most the "lukewarm" love that is offensive to the Master.—Rev. 2:4; 3:16.

Let us resolve, dear brethren, as did the three Hebrews of this lesson, that we will worship and serve only the Lord our God—that we will neither worship nor serve sectarianism, in any of its many forms, nor mammon, with its many enticements and rewards, nor fame, nor friends, nor self. God "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth." is the declaration of our Lord and Head.—John 4:23, 24.

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES

July 23.—Dan. 5:17-31.

"God is the Judge."—Psa. 75:7.

Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, altho very prosperous, and wealthy by the gathering of the spoils of centuries from the great surrounding nations, was of short duration. Secular history mentions the father of Nebuchadnezzar as the founder of new Babylonia, and quite a number of Bible students have thus been misled to reckon the "Times of the Gentiles" as beginning before Nebuchadnezzar's time in the days of Nabopolasser. But while it is doubtless true that that monarch was prominently identified with the organization of Babylonia, the "Times of the Gentiles" could not have begun in his day, because God still had his own typical kingdom in the earth, as represented by the Jews—down until Zedekiah's captivity to Nebuchadnezzar, 606 B. C. We should remember that the "Times of the Gentiles" merely means the times or years in which the world's affairs are delivered over to Gentile supremacy, between the time of the removal of God's typical kingdom and the time of the establishment of the Millennial kingdom, October, 1914.* This Bible view of the matter is further confirmed by the fact that the ruins of Babylon show the name of Nebuchadnezzar on the bricks of the principal palaces, and thus give evidence that it was under his administration that the empire reached its zenith, or became, in the language of the dream, the golden head of the image, which represented Gentile dominion.—Dan. 2:38.

Secular history seems to give the name of Nabonidus, as king of Babylon, at the time of its fall, but the Scriptures make no mention of this name, giving us instead Belshazzar, denominating him the son of Nebuchadnezzar. Two explanations are possible: Belshazzar may have been the son of Nabonidus and the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, or Nabonidus may have been his original name, and Belshazzar a name adopted when he assumed the office of king; or reversely, Belshazzar may have been his original name, and the one by which Daniel and the people at home would speak of him, while Nabonidus may have been the name he assumed officially as king. At all events the name that appears on the tablets is Nabonidus, while the name which Daniel gives repeatedly is Belshazzar, a name of the same signification as that given to Daniel, who was called Belteshazzar, both words signifying "Favored of God." We can safely hold to the Scriptural account, assured that time will justify our confidence in this, as it has done in other matters.

At the time of our lesson, Babylon, the capital city of Babylonia, was the most wonderful city in the world. The following observations respecting it are from the pens of others. "Nebuchadnezzar converted his capital, Babylon, into one of the most magnificent and beautiful cities of antiquity." "Herodotus, who visited it about B. C. 450 [nearly a century after the date covered by our lesson], while its walls and buildings were still perfect, describes it as forming a square of nearly fourteen miles on each side." "The walls surrounding the city, according to Herodotus, were three hundred feet high and eighty feet broad. A hundred gates, with their great posts, leaves and sills of brass, and their bars of iron, permitted entrance to the city." "Such a city was never seen before, and was the work of Nebuchadnezzar. The bricks marked with his name, and the inscriptions which he wrote, being hidden in the ruins, have now come forth from their grave as witnesses to the truth of God's Word." "In those days Babylon was the metropolis of the world, the center of commerce, art and wisdom." "The great plain on which it lay, a Paradise of fertility and cultivation, was interested by countless canals, both small and great, serving alike for irrigation and navigation." "Babylon was a university city. The wealth of the world poured into the coffers of the Babylonian merchants."

Such wealth and prosperity were likely to beget luxurious ease on the part of the Babylonians, as they also excited the cupidity and ambition of enemies. Accordingly, the Medes and Persians had consolidated; and their army under Cyrus for several months had been besieging Babylon, whose citizens, however, felt quite secure behind their immense walls, and amply provisioned for a longer siege than it was supposed any army could enforce. So great was the confidence of the king of Babylon in the strength of his capital that he made a great feast to a thousand of his lords.

This feast would seem to have been in the nature of a boast in the greatness of Babylon; and as tho to emphasize his power and to remind his nobles and lords of how none of the gods of the surrounding nations had been able to deliver their peoples out of the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar had called for the vessels of gold and silver brought from the Jewish Temple, and these were profaned by drinking therefrom to the honor of Bel, the god of Babylon.

In the midst of the revelry of the feast, the king, his counsellors and lords were astonished to see a part of a hand writing certain fiery letters upon the wall of the palace. The revelry ceased, a hush of fear came over all; the flush of confidence upon the king's face gave place to one of terror; he trembled and called for the advice of the wise men to interpret the wonderful message, but they were unable to explain the matter satisfactorily. Even if they had deciphered the letters and words, they had no interpretation to offer, because from their standpoint any other meaning than the true meaning would have been more reasonable; nothing would have seemed further from the truth to Babylon's wise men than the message which these miraculously written words conveyed. The king was greatly disappointed, but his mother came to his assistance, informing him of Daniel, who had given to his father, Nebuchadnezzar, an interpretation of a dream, when all the wise men of Babylon had failed, and accordingly Daniel was sent for.

The aged Prophet, at this time about ninety years of age, as an officer of the kingdom doubtless resided in one of the palace buildings near by, and in response to the king's command he stood before them. The king, realizing the importance of the message, manifested his anxiety by offering, first to the astrologers, and now to Daniel, a great reward for the interpretation—to be robed in royal purple, with a royal golden chain as insignia of rank, and to be third in dignity and power in the empire. The first thing in the lesson which strikes us is the nobility of God's servant, in renouncing all claim to these gifts as a reward for the service of interpreting God's message. "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known the interpretation."

We may stop here long enough to take a valuable lesson, to the effect that all who would be the mouth-pieces of the Lord, and speak forth his Word, should, like Daniel, do so without stipulation of compensation. Only from this standpoint can any hope to be entirely free and untrammeled in speaking words of truth and soberness which may be very distasteful to those who inquire the mind of the Lord. Had Daniel thanked the king for the promised gifts, and thus accepted them as a reward for his service, he would have felt obligated to the king to such an extent that it might have warped his judgment, or have weakened his expression of the Lord's message. And the king in turn would have felt that, having paid for the information, it should be a smooth, favorable message. And just so it is with some of the Lord's true servants in mystic Babylon. They have the opportunity presented to speak the Lord's Word; yet many of them are handicapped by reasons of having received honors and robes, and are more or less inclined to hide and cover the message now due to Babylon in this its Laodicean epoch. They are bound by the chain of gold around their necks.—Rev. 3:14-22.

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* See Millennial Dawn, Vol. i, Chap. 13; Vol. ii, Chap. 4.

The aged Prophet displayed gentleness as well as fearlessness in the delivery of his message. It was stated as kindly as the truth would permit, but the truth was not withheld by reason of fear. He recounted to the king his father's exaltation to power, and ascribed it not to the god of Babylon, but to the God of Israel. He reminded him of how pride had been his father's downfall, resulting in his degradation to bestial conditions for seven times (seven years—corresponding to the seven times, *i. e.*, 2520 years, of Gentile domination). He reminded Belshazzar of how in the end his father had acknowledged the God of heaven as the real ruler amongst men, and then he charged home to the king that instead of profiting by this experience, of which he well knew, he had lifted up his heart to pride, had ignored the only true God, and had even brought what he knew were the sacred vessels of Jehovah's service, to profane them in the worship and glorification of idols—"gods of silver, gold, brass, iron, wood and stone, which see not nor hear nor know." He pointed out to the king that he had thus dishonored and defied "the God in whose hand [power] thy breath is [the God of all life—Acts 17:28, 29], and whose are all thy ways [who has full power to control your course]." This true God he had not glorified, but dishonored.

By thus kindly but plainly showing the king the truth, the Prophet prepared the way for the exposition of the fateful words—"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." **Mene* was repeated twice, probably for the sake of emphasis—Numbered! Numbered!—the limit of the time of your dominion has expired. *Tekel*—short weight, lacking. *Peres* signifies divided, and its plural form, *Upharsin*, gives the thought of broken or crushed into pieces—destroyed. Nothing in the word *peres* signifies Medes and Persians, but the Prophet knew from the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's vision that the Babylonian dominion would be followed by the Medo-Persian kingdom, and he also knew that they were already besieging the city.

So far from being offended with the plain words of the Prophet, Belshazzar seems to have felt their truth, and gave command that the honors already promised should be bestowed upon Daniel. But meantime other matters were transpiring in his capital, of which the king and his lords were unaware, so that the fulfilment of the doom written upon the palace wall was close at hand.

While the Babylonians were feasting and reveling in fancied security, Cyrus, the general of the united forces of the Medes and Persians, having studied up a plan of attack, had already caused a great ditch to be dug above the city, to divert the waters of the River Euphrates into a new channel. This river flowed through the center of Babylon diagonally, and was protected by enormous gates of brass, which were supposed to be equally as impregnable as the three-hundred-foot wall. Indeed, it would appear that the Babylonians had never a fear of attack from the river, and had left it comparatively unguarded; consequently, when Cyrus had diverted the stream into the new channel he found little difficulty in marching his troops under the brass gates into the city, so that at the very time the revelry was progressing in Belshazzar's palace the soldiers of Cyrus were taking possession of the entire city, and very shortly after Daniel's interpretation of the writing the troops reached the palace, Belshazzar was slain, and the new empire of Medo-Persia was inaugurated—"without fighting," as the tablets declare. Thus did great Babylon fall suddenly—"in one hour."

The thoughtful Bible student must of necessity have always in view the many correspondencies which the Scriptures institute between literal Babylon and mystic Babylon, and when studying the account of the fall of literal Babylon his attention is naturally drawn also to the foretold fall of mystic Babylon in the end of this age. Indeed, he must be comparatively blind who cannot see that the wonderful prophecies which speak of the fall of Babylon (Isa. 14:22; Jer. 50 and 51) were not wholly fulfilled by Cyrus the Persian. The fall of literal Babylon, while it was sudden, and while it made a great commotion amongst the nations, lacks much of filling to the full the prophetic picture. Much of the prophecy still waits for fulfilment in mystic or symbolic Babylon today; and this fact is abundantly supported by the prophecies of the Book of Revelation, written centuries after the fall of literal Babylon, which unmistakably refer to symbolic Babylon, and use language almost identical with that of Jeremiah.—See Rev. 16:19-18:24.

It will be noticed, further, that, as literal Babylon sat upon the literal River Euphrates, so mystic Babylon is said to sit upon the waters, peoples. It should be noticed, also, that as the literal city was captured by the diversion of the literal waters, so symbolic Babylon is to fall by reason of the diversion of the symbolic Euphrates, which in Rev. 16:12, it is foretold, shall be "dried up—that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared."

The kings of the East, or kings from the sunrising, are, we understand, the kings of Christ's kingdom, who are also priests—the body of Christ, the royal priesthood. "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." From this standpoint of view, Cyrus and his army, overthrowing literal Babylon, was a figure or illustration of Messiah, King of kings and Lord of lords, who with his faithful will shortly overthrow mystic Babylon, and take possession of the world in the name of Jehovah, to establish the Kingdom for which he taught us to pray, "Our Father . . . . thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

This likeness of Cyrus to Messiah is not merely in the particulars noted. It should be remembered that the name, Cyrus, signifies "the sun," and that thus in his name he reminds us of the prophecy of Christ,—"The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams." Moreover, there were sundry very remarkable prophecies respecting Cyrus, made long before he had come into prominence. Through the Prophet Isaiah (44:28) the Lord speaks of Cyrus as his shepherd, who would lead back Israel, and again (45:1-14) he calls him his anointed, saying, "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut in sunder the bars of iron; and I will give thee the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, Jehovah, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake. and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by name; I have surnamed thee, tho thou has not known me." In this prophecy Cyrus is evidently indicated, and yet just as evidently a greater than he is indirectly referred to, *viz.*, the Prince of the kings of the earth, who in Revelation is shown as drying up the symbolic Euphrates and destroying symbolic Babylon, and delivering spiritual Israel. And the time for the fulfilment of the symbol is clearly indicated, by the drying up of the Euphrates under the sixth vial of the "day of wrath:" and the fall of Babylon under the seventh vial, resulting in the liberty of all of God's people from the thraldom, through false doctrine, which has been upon them for lo, these many years, is portrayed as resulting.

Babylon literal fell because, when tried in the balances by the Lord, she was found wanting: mystic Babylon falls for a similar reason. Literal Babylon never was Israel, but the Israelites were for a time swallowed up in Babylon: likewise, mystic Babylon never was spiritual Israel, tho for a long time spiritual Israel has been in captivity to mystic Babylon. As the same Cyrus who overthrew literal Babylon made the proclamation which permitted literal Israel to return from captivity, so it is the King of kings who, upon taking his great power as earth's new king will set free all of the Lord's people—and in advance he sends the message to those who have ears to hear, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of demons and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. . . . Come out of her, *my* people, that *ye* be not partakers of *her* sins, and that *ye* receive not of *her* plagues." —Rev. 18:2-4.

The great feast which preceded the fall of Babylon would seem to correspond well with the great denominational union expected soon, and the season of rejoicing which will accompany it. The gold and silver vessels of the Lord's house which were profaned may fitly represent not only the precious truths of divine revelation, but also the Lord's consecrated people—the golden vessels representing the "little flock," and the more numerous silver vessels representing the "great company." What may be the character of the defilement and injury of these is of course problematical, but in any case we remember that those consecrated vessels were all highly honored, and restored to the Temple by Cyrus, and likewise we know that not only the truths of divine revelation will all be cared for by our Lord, but also that all that are his shall be glorified in the spiritual temple which he will rear shortly.

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* See issue Jan. 1, 1919, p. 15, letter, "A Remarkable Confirmation."

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

"The powers of the heavens shall be shaken," said our Lord; and all whose eyes are open can see the great shaking now in progress in the symbolic ecclesiastical "heavens" of the present time. How its stars are falling!*

Rev. Burt Estes Howard, formerly of the First Presbyterian Church of Cleveland, Ohio, but latterly of the First Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles, Cal., and now resigned with the intention of becoming a professor at Stanford University (the richest university in the world), declares his present position of disbelief as follows:

"Do I believe in the inspiration of the Bible, in the resurrection of Jesus and in the virginity of Mary? No, I cannot say that I do.

"My ideas have changed regarding nearly all of the generally accepted religious tenets. My beliefs have not changed suddenly, but in the slow course of the last half dozen years. Simple faith in the Scriptures has given way to an irresistible belief in what is called higher criticism in religious thought.

"I believe that Christ was born of woman, like the rest of us.

"But I regard these matters as non-essential. The necessity of believing them is not apparent to me. I know there are many honest preachers who think they believe these dogmas.

"The Old Testament is largely an historical work. There can be no question as to the Bible's power for elevating and uplifting humanity. But one does not have necessarily to believe in the miracles to feel and profit by this power.

"My whole aim in preaching has been to stimulate my people to the truest practical life. The good life is not necessarily the religious life."

SECULAR JOURNALS TO THE RESCUE

As there were Gentiles who exhibited great faith in our Lord at his first advent, while the scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Jews disbelieved and scoffed, so now it is gratifying to note the zeal of a few secular journals in the defense of the Bible, while so many of the professed ministers of the Gospel are repudiating it. Discussing the trend of the high ones in the church nominal, toward infidelity—called "higher criticism," evolution, etc.,—The Atlanta *Constitution* says:

"The manifestations of unbelief in the pulpit have become so frequent and so notorious that a well-conducted newspaper cannot fail to take note, if only as a part of the phenomena of the time. Those of our readers who have access only to a few of the newspapers of the day would be astonished if we had room in these columns to present even one-half of the manifestations of unbelief that have become visible as the result of the encouragement and support which Dr. Briggs and his views have received.

"Already various pulpit imitators of Dr. Briggs are boldly avowing the conclusions to which the higher criticism leads. For instance, here is a professor in the Chicago Theological Seminary declaring that it is not necessary for Christians to believe in the miraculous birth of Christ; that such belief is not necessarily a part of the Christian creed. This professor takes the ground that the statements of the apostles on this matter are not revelations at all. Commenting on the Saviour's words in the seventeenth chapter of John, this Chicago professor of theology calmly remarks: 'This is scarcely the utterance of one who was conscious of being the Messiah sent from God, but the preëxistence which is involved is ideal.'

"We need not say that *The Constitution* prints this shameful, scandalous and blasphemous statement, not to horrify decent men and women, but to show how accurate were its predictions with respect to the purport and tendency of the higher criticism. Its whole aim is to tear down and undo, to uproot and destroy, the faith that has served the purposes of Christendom for nearly nineteen hundred years. Since we have quoted the sacrilegious teachings of a professor in the Chicago Theological Seminary, we cannot do better than to quote the remarks of Dr. Adams, editor of *The Advance*. 'The Congregationalists may put up with loose views on the atonement, but you may rest assured [he was talking to a reporter] that they will never endure a man who denies the miraculous birth and the preëxistence in heaven of Jesus Christ.'

"Apparently these are the words of an indignant man, and yet how far is the journey from 'loose views on the *atonement*' to a denial of the miraculous birth and the preëxistence of the Saviour?

"The pretentiousness of the higher criticism could not be more powerfully set forth than its claim to be 'scientific.' No word in our English vocabulary has come to have a cheaper or a more insignificant meaning. It has been tossed to and fro between theorists and cranks until its primary significance has been lost and it stands for any wild or absurd conclusion that the disordered mind of man is capable of conceiving.

"Let it be understood that there is no objection anywhere to earnest and orderly investigations into the history and evolution of the books of the Bible. So long as such investigations are set on foot by men well enough equipped for the purpose and are not undertaken for the purpose of proving a theory already conceived, they are well enough. Let it be understood, also, that there is no claim among Christians anywhere that the translations of the Bible are free from error, or that the letter-press is inerrant; these are the work of man, and man's work is necessarily defective at some point or other.

"The claim that is made, and the claim that *The Constitution* upholds, is that the books of the Bible, of the Old as well as the New Testament, are divinely inspired; that to prove one or a dozen to be myths or fables is to tear down the whole scheme of salvation; and that the promise and the fulfilment are so intimately connected in the scheme of salvation that to prove one false is to prove the other a fraud. This is shown by comparing the conclusions of Dr. Briggs with the declarations of Dr. George H. Gilbert, the theological professor at Chicago. Dr. Briggs says that the Bible is made up of myths, fables, fairy tales, poems and fictitious narratives. The Chicago man is sure that the world is to be saved, if saved at all, by an Eastern philosopher who was not a Messiah, but a gifted idealist. This is the logical conclusion of Briggism, and this is why Robert Ingersoll regards Briggs as a modern hero.

"Dr. Briggs and those who are hurrying his doctrines to their logical conclusions have nothing to offer in the place of the Bible they are destroying; no hope to hold out to those whose faith they are trying to undermine. In place of our Lord and Saviour of whom the prophets tell, and to whom the apostles bear witness, they do not even offer us Mahomet, nor Brahma, nor Confucius. What then? Why, so far as the higher criticism is concerned, we have no choice but between Robert Ingersoll and the devil!"

WHAT LEARNED COLLEGE PROFESSORS ARE PREPARING AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE BIBLE

While Satan's arts are beguiling some from faith in the Bible, he realizes the need of a substitute, and is rapidly pushing forward his "seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." (1 Tim. 4:1) Theosophy, Christian Science (falsely so-called) and Spiritism are being advanced and exploited in various ways, through influential channels. Recently the New York and Boston journals of largest circulation have printed columns of matter, profusely illustrated, detailing the tests applied to Spiritism by Prof. Hodgson, representative of the English Society for Psychical research, Prof. James Hyslop of Columbia College, and Prof. James of Harvard College. We extract as follows:

"Noted Scientist of Columbia Says He Could Not Have Been Deceived—His Proof of Immortality

" 'I have had in all seventeen sittings with Mrs. Piper,' said Dr. Hyslop. 'She had no possible means of knowing who I am. In not a single incident did she tell me facts connected only with my own memory. They were common as well with the memory of persons now dead.

" 'Now that this was not fraud is proved by this statement of Prof. James, of Harvard, in the *Psychological Review:* "Dr. Hodgson considers that the hypothesis of fraud cannot be seriously entertained." I agree with him thoroughly and absolutely.'

"Will Tell All in a Year

" 'I shall be ready to lay my case completely before the world in just about a year. By that time I hope to organize a body of scientific men to examine my facts, and to get enough money to endow a fund to break down the frauds bound to spring up.'

"Prof. Hyslop is generally regarded by his associates in the faculty at Columbia as a sound-minded, painstaking and an especially keen scientific man.

"Butler's Faith in Hyslop

"Prof. Nicholas Murray Butler, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and an expert psychologist, yesterday expressed the greatest confidence in Prof. Hyslop.

" 'The fact,' said he, 'that he has gone at the matter in the most extreme spirit of skepticism, and is supported in his research by such men as Dr. James, of Harvard, and Dr. Hodgson, of Boston, leads me to believe that he would not make any statement which is not well grounded on scientific facts.

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* Millennial Dawn, Vol. iv, Chap. 12.

"'The field he has investigated is one that cannot be ignored. These occurrences need explanation, and that is what Dr. Hyslop is doing for them.'

"Dr. Franz, an assistant in the Department of Psychology, also asserted the trustworthiness of Prof. Hyslop's opinions."

Alas! poor Babylon, her lords and her teachers, in whom she has trusted, are leading on to the ditch of Infidelity, and fulfilling our Lord's prediction—"When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find *the* faith on the earth?" He will evidently find only a "little flock" walking in the light of his Word.

How opportune seems the booklet—*What say the Scriptures about Spiritualism?** All friends of the truth should have some of these on hand to loan—as helping hands to assist our "brethren" to escape this snare of the adversary.

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* Supplied at fifty cents per doz.; 10 cents each.

PRESS TOWARD THE MARK!

"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before."—Phil. 3:13.

Tho disappointments, keenly felt,
  Have traced care on thy brow;
Tho hopes have perished that have caused
  Thy heart in grief to bow;
Tho friends have failed thee whom thou loved,
  And foes with wicked dart
Have drawn the cruel bow of scorn
  To pierce thy breaking heart:

Be vigilant, be strong, be true,
  And quit thee like a man;
Be diligent God's will to know—
  Submissive to his plan;
Heed not the counseling of men,
  E'en tho in love 'tis given.
(Shortsighted it is apt to be,
  And lead thee far from heaven.)

But ready be to follow Christ,
  Wherever he may lead;
To voice of stranger hearken not,
  But to *his* voice give heed.
Through evil or through good report
  Undaunted follow on;
Your feet will never find a path,
  But there your Lord has gone.

And what if men may look askance
  And sneer and laugh and scorn?
You'll never feel a pang of pain,
  But that your Lord has borne;
The trials of this present life
  Are not to be compared
To glory we shall share with him,
  Whose sufferings we have shared.

HATTIE HENDERSON.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question.—Please give, for the benefit of others as well as myself, brief explanations of the following Scriptures: Matt. 10:10; 1 Cor. 9:7-14; 1 Thes. 2:6; Gal. 6:6; 2 Thes. 3:8-10.

Answer.—We reply to your questions as follows:

Matt. 10:10.—This instruction was to the twelve apostles sent forth to announce the kingdom. It was not a general instruction for all time, but particular to the occasion. It is not applicable to the present time. The object in sending them forth in this dependent manner was largely at least to teach the apostles the lesson of the Lord's full ability to care for them under all circumstances and conditions, and they learned the lesson. Subsequently the apostles acted very differently; the Apostle Paul, for instance, making tents, etc., and their change of course was under the Lord's direction.—See Luke 22:35, 36.

1 Cor. 9:7-18.—We understand the Apostle here to teach that it is the privilege of the church to support those who are giving their entire time to the ministry of the Gospel, as was the Apostle Paul, and as some are doing now. But this does not seem to us to imply that all the elders in all the churches were supported without doing any manual labor themselves. So far as we have any knowledge of the matter, the elders generally, as the Apostle expresses it, took the oversight of the local congregations, not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind—of a desire to serve the flock.—1 Pet. 5:2.

The Apostle's case, and that of others who did a like service, was different, and yet he did not demand support, and if it was not voluntarily rendered, he made tents, or otherwise labored with his hands, understanding that to be the will of God concerning his course—that he should not make request for support or any carnal things. This he explains in the very verses under consideration.—See verses 15-18.

It would seem to be a feature of the divine law that whoever has received a spiritual blessing must make some sacrifice of an earthly kind, and thus show his appreciation of the spiritual favor received of the Lord, if he would grow in grace, knowledge and love. While therefore we deprecate everything akin to money-begging, and carefully avoid it in our columns, we do believe muost sincerely that those who will receive the greatest blessing at the Lord's hands are those who are using their means in the spread of the truth—to the extent of their ability, if that be only two mites, as in the case of the poor widow. The salvation purchased at the high cost of our dear Redeemer's life is offered free, and the Lord refuses to permit any to pay for it, but he does not refuse to permit us to testify our love and appreciation of his grace by little self-denials. On the contrary, he appreciates these, and causes his face to shine and his spiritual blessings to fall upon those who take delight in devoting themselves and their substance to his service and the service of his cause, the service of his people. On the contrary, those who have never learned the blessedness of giving are informed that "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver:" and those who have not the love which leads them to respond with gratitude have not the condition of heart which the Lord loves, will not grow in grace and, because of the cultivation of the spirit of selfishness, instead of the spirit of benevolence, such are apt to grow cold, indifferent, and to fail to make their calling and election sure. "The liberal soul shall be made fat."—Prov. 11:25.

1 Thes. 2:6.—This is in harmony with the foregoing. In justice the Apostle might have said to those to whom he had brought the glad tidings: You owe to me, as the servant of God, more than you will ever be able to pay in the present life, and it is as little as you can do to care for my temporal necessities to the extent of your ability. But the Gospel message is not given along the lines of justice, but along the lines of love and compassion, and hence the Apostle was careful not to mention these things when with the church (tho after he had gone from them he thought it his duty to write as we have seen, to the church at Corinth, setting forth the facts). When with the Lord's people he neither coveted their silver and gold, nor asked for it or their praise, but was gentle and loving, "even as a nurse cherisheth her children: being so affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us, for ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail; for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable to any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God."—Verses 7-9.

Gal. 6:6.—This injunction, "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things," might properly be understood to mean that the taught were to support the teachers; and yet just as reasonably we might understand it to mean that those receiving instruction should not fear to communicate to the better instructed teaching-brother any thought that they might have respecting the Lord's word of grace. Nothing in the connection would seem to imply of necessity that it meant to communicate in carnal things: the good things with equal propriety might be considered good spiritual things. However, even if it were clear that this referred to temporal good things, we are to bear in mind that the Apostle did not impress this upon the church on his own behalf, for he was not with them at this time. Very evidently he never spoke in such a strain when with the church, and when his words might be understood to mean a personal appeal for money, for charity, for support.

2 Thes. 3:8-10, "Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you; not because we have not power [authority, as the appointed apostles of the Lord, to demand support], but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you this we commanded you, that if any should not work, neither should he eat."

It would appear from this that it was never the Apostle's thought, nor the meaning of any of the types or instructions of the Word of God, that a clergy class should be created or should create itself, and abstain from work and insist upon being supported in comparative idleness. Any such interpretation would evidently be contrary to the example of the Apostle, as above stated.

It may be sometimes difficult to draw the line on questions of this kind, which have two sides. The only safe way is to seek the mind of the Lord, and on the one hand to cultivate generosity and restrain selfishness, and on the other hand to give needed assistance to ministers of the truth, without doing anything to encourage them in idleness, which is a foe both to truth and to grace.

DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS

July 30.—Dan. 6:10-23.

"The Lord is thy keeper."—Psa. 121:5.

Nothing gives us a higher opinion of the kings of ancient times, their willingness to recognize character and merit wherever it might be found, than does the record furnished in the Book of Daniel. If we were surprised at Nebuchadnezzar's impartial treatment of his captives, in the selection of Daniel and his companions, and their education and advancement in the kingdom; if we were surprised that the king so greatly honored Daniel for the interpretation of a dream; if we were surprised that, when convinced that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were servants of the true God, Nebuchadnezzar gave them still higher positions in the empire; and if we were surprised that Belshazzar took no offense at Daniel's interpretation of the writing on the wall, but highly honored and rewarded him for his faithful, plain, outspoken words—we are still more surprised to find that King Darius of the Medes and Persians, so far from destroying all the rulers of Babylon, including Daniel, apparently spared all except the king alive, and gave Daniel a very high position in the empire. We may reasonably assume that, altho God's providence was in the matter of Daniel's preferment, nevertheless, there was some creditable generosity in those heathen kings, as well as some natural ability and good quality manifested by the Prophet Daniel.

As one of the three presidents of the empire, and having charge over a hundred and twenty of its provinces, Daniel stood in the way of many who sought office, and, as a man of unimpeachable character, no doubt he stood in the way of many schemes for the plundering of the treasury; for such public plundering and dishonesty, said to be very general throughout Eastern countries today, was probably so then to a large extent. For these selfish reasons, Daniel was sure to have a host of secret enemies, who sought his downfall. From the narrative we might suppose that these enemies, many of whom would be prominent in official life, had watched in vain to find any real cause of complaint, and that they finally concluded that if fault would be found at all, it must be on account of his religion.

How this reminds us of the Apostle's testimony, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," and again, our Lord's words, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you!" (2 Tim. 3:12; John 15:19) Even where there are no selfish motives to impel the persecution, there is ever present the distinction between "light" and "darkness:" and the fact noticed by all is mentioned by our Lord—that all who are themselves of the darkness hate the light and all who walk in the light. (John 3:19-21) Some one has truly said, "Whosoever does well and is faithful and true, while others are dishonest and false, must expect to be opposed and hated. Every effort will be made to injure his character, to drag him into the mire, and to make it appear that he is no better than those who assail him. Envy is sharper than a serpent's tooth, and deadlier than the poison of asps."

Shakespeare has truly said:

> "Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow,
> Thou shalt not escape calumny."
>
> "That thou art blamed shall not be thy defect;
> For slander's mark was ever yet the fair;
> So thou be good, slander doth yet approve
> Thy worth the greater."

Sometimes we speak of the snares that are laid for the feet of God's servants as fixed by Satan, their great adversary, and this may be so, at least by supervision, and yet apparently there are some so fully imbued with the spirit of their "father, the devil," that his nefarious schemes and plots seem to come quite naturally to them. And thus it was with Daniel's enemies who sought his ruin. Very skilfully they counseled with the king respecting the necessity that the people should recognize him as a god, and urged this as essential to the enforcement of obedience to the king's commands amongst his new subjects. The theory of the empire was that the king's person was specially possessed by Ormuzd, the deity of the empire, that his word was therefore representatively the word of that god, and that therefore all of his decrees were infallible and inviolable, even by himself. Taking advantage of this law of the Medes and Persians, that no decree could be altered or abrogated, these plotters succeeded in having the king set apart thirty days in which it should be a crime to offer a petition or worship to any other person or god save to Darius himself.

We are not to suppose that the king had so false an idea of his own personal consequence, nor that these his officers entertained the view that he was an infallible god: rather, it was a matter which they suggested as a piece of statecraft, a fraud upon the people, justified, in their perverted judgments, by the greater peace and security from the prevalence of such a superstitious reverence for the king and his laws. The false reasoning was of the Jesuitical sort, which says, An evil or a falsehood is justified if beneficial results are hoped for; the same false principle which operates in the minds of many intelligent preachers who, while thoroughly disbelieving in the doctrine of eternal torment themselves, countenance and encourage, or at least do not discourage, a belief in the falsehood on the part of their hearers; hoping that the prevalent superstition on the subject may prove a restraint upon the masses.

Having obtained the king's signature to the new law, the conspirators exulted in the thought that Daniel at last was in their grasp, and already practically destroyed. They seem to have known the man's character so well as not to doubt that he would be faithful to his religious convictions, and thus furnish them all the opportunity desired for his apprehension. And it was so. After the matter was proclaimed as law, as having had the king's signet, Daniel worshiped as before, kneeling three times a day before the Lord in prayer, thanksgiving and supplication—with his windows open toward Jerusalem, his expectations bright with hope in the Lord's promises, and especially with the thought that now the seventy years of Jerusalem's desolation were about fulfilled, and that very soon Cyrus, according to the prophecy, would become king, and send back the covenanted people to the land of promise.

We are not informed why Daniel had adopted a habit of private worship in so public a manner as to be generally known to the people—a manner so different from that which the Lord commended to the household of faith of this Gospel age, saying, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet [secret apartment], and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to the Father which is in secret." (Matt. 6:6) Quite probably the custom of Babylon was such as to make Daniel's more open course the reasonable and proper one. Possibly all worship was more or less public or visible, and for Daniel to have worshiped in secret might have been misunderstood to mean that he did not worship at all; while to worship as he did, not before an idol, but with his face toward Jerusalem, the typical city of God, the great King, and its Temple, the typical habitation of God, the great King, would be his standing confession of God before the various nationalities of Babylon, including his own people, the Jews, who would need just such an illustration of faithfulness to the true God and separation from idolatry.

Daniel was not satisfied to merely close his eyes in prayer after he had retired to rest, as do many people living under the greater light of this Gospel age, and under greater privileges and opportunities and grander promises. He had a great God who was worthy of reverence and worship, and he was great enough as a man to appreciate that it was a privilege to have intercourse and fellowship with his Creator. He was not only not ashamed to bow the knee to the Almighty, but was unwilling to assume a less humble position before God than he and others assumed toward earthly kings. Our judgment is that it is impossible for any Christian to maintain a proper consistent walk in life, and to build up such a character and faith structure as are represented by the Apostle as composed of "gold, silver and precious stones," without prayer; more than this, without regularity in prayer—we would almost be inclined to say, without *kneeling* in prayer: and we believe that the experiences and testimonies of the truest and best of the Lord's people who have ever lived will corroborate this.

One of the points of the adversary's attack, surest to have a baneful influence, is along this line. When the Lord's people become overcharged with the cares of this life, instead of realizing their danger and seeking the help of the Lord to order the affairs of life differently, the suggestion comes that they are too weary to pray, or that another time will be more favorable: or perhaps they are so fully engrossed that reverence and acknowledgment to the Lord, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, is entirely forgotten: or perhaps sin lieth at the door, and they seek not to think of the Lord, and therefore avoid the throne of grace: or perhaps coldness has come in from some other cause, and the Lord seems afar off, and prayer becomes a mere formality and is by and by abandoned. The child of God who is in a proper condition of heart-harmony will desire to commune with his Creator—not only to hear his Word, but also to offer thanksgiving and worship; as surely as he will desire natural food and drink for the sustenance of his natural body. Whoever has not this experience should seek it; and, according to our Lord's promise, he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

According to a preconcerted arrangement, the conspirators assembled themselves at the proper time to be witnesses of Daniel's devotion to the true God, and then proceeded to the king to announce that the first one to disobey his decree, and therefore to come under its punishment, was the aged, honored and trusted President of a hundred and twenty provinces of the empire, Daniel. The king was sorely displeased with himself: evidently he had not thought of Daniel, and of the possibility of such results following his decree. He had been advised to make it, it had seemed to flatter him, he had yielded to the urgent representations of the supposedly well-intentioned and wise men; and now he discerned that he had been deliberately led into a trap for the very purpose of destroying his most valued counselor, of whom, evidently, he had not thought to ask advice before signing the decree.

The King sought every possible way to make void the decree or to excuse Daniel from its penalty; but the conspirators were close at hand with arguments to prove that such a course would be contrary to the usages of the nation, would mean the undermining of the authority of the king and the loss of confidence in his decrees by the people; and he found no escape from his dilemma: his counselors even seemed to threaten the stability of his throne themselves, assuring him that "no decree *may* be changed." Finally the king commanded that Daniel be brought and cast into the den of lions; expressing to Daniel, however, the hope, "May thy God, whom thou servest continually, deliver thee." The exemplary conduct of Daniel, previously and at this time, had its effect upon the king, as expressed by the word, *"continually."* He had confidence that God was with Daniel, and that the God whom Daniel so sincerely worshiped and so intelligently trusted, must be more powerful than all other gods. Such should be the lesson of every Christian life, one which would testify not only to his own character and faithfulness to God, but one also which would testify to the good character and faithfulness of the God whom he worships.

The conspirators were bent on having matters thoroughly accomplished, and hence the stone (which covered the den and was probably fastened to its place with an iron bar) was doubly sealed with wax, to prove that it was not tampered with—one seal was the king's, the other that of the lords of the empire, who were amongst the conspirators, so that there might be no subsequent alteration of the conditions or delivery of Daniel during the night. If the lions were not very hungry at the moment Daniel was first cast in, it was reckoned that they would certainly become so before morning. How the hearts of these evil men longed for the death of a good man, who had done them no injury—except as his life may have been a living epistle, contradictory to theirs, or as he may have thwarted some of their efforts to do evil!

It is very much to the king's honor that we read that he was so troubled in mind that he could not sleep, but spent the night fasting, and very early in the morning made haste to the den to see whether or not Daniel's God had delivered him. So amongst the friends and neighbors of a true Christian are some who know and appreciate God only as they know and appreciate the Christian character.

The king's words, as he approached the den, were a wonderful tribute to Daniel's faithfulness as a servant of God. "Is thy God whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee from the lions?" The king here associated, and that properly, Daniel's faithful service to God with his hope respecting God's faithfulness to Daniel. And this reminds us of the words of the Apostle (1 John 3:22), "And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."—Compare John 8:29.

The heart of Darius was glad as he heard Daniel's voice saluting him, assuring him of his safety; and he at once caused him to be delivered from the den. Daniel expressed one reason for the Lord's deliverance, in the words, "Before him innocency was found in me—as also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." We note the fact that haughtiness and bravado are wholly lacking in the prophet's announcement of the great favor of God manifested on his behalf. There is a lesson here which many of the Lord's people need to learn; namely, that having done their part, they are not to boast of it, nor to parade their sanctity, nor to speak exultingly of the results, as though they were of their own achievement, but are simply, like Daniel, to give the glory to God.

The expression, "God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths," need not be understood literally to signify that an angel was personally present and literally prevented the lions from opening their mouths; for though such a course would be entirely possible, we are to understand the term, angel, in a general way to signify any power or agency which God might employ, and the expression, "shutting of the lions' mouths," would simply signify that they had been restrained from doing violence to Daniel. Nor would we question that an angel of the Lord could have been with Daniel, and kept him company in the den, if such were the will of God; but the presence or absence of an angel was not essential to the divine protection granted.

Not many of the Lord's people are cast into dens of literal lions, and yet at times quite a good many of them have had experiences which strongly resemble this—as for instance, the Apostle Paul, in recounting his experiences, mentions perils of waters, perils of robbers, perils by his own countrymen, perils by the heathen, perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, perils in the sea, and caps the climax in the specification of "perils amongst *false brethren.*" (2 Cor. 11:26) It is possible for human mouths to do us more harm than the mouths of brute beasts; the Apostle James points this out when he says: "Behold, how small a fire enkindles a great forest! And the tongue is a fire in the world of unrighteousness. The tongue is established among our members as the one which defiles the whole body and sets on fire the course of life, and it is enkindled of Gehenna; for every species, both of wild beasts and of birds and of reptiles and of sea-creatures, is tamable and has been tamed by the human race; but the tongue of men no man is able to subdue. It is an irrestrainable evil, full of death-producing poison."—James 3:6-8.

As God's providence was over Daniel, permitting him to come under the power of natural wild beasts, and making this a test of his fidelity to God and to principles of righteousness, so the Lord's providence sometimes permits his faithful ones to be exposed to the venom and malice and hate and misrepresentation and slander of human tongues, far more vicious and far more terrible every way than the wild beasts of the jungle, which can harm but for a moment. Nevertheless, as the Lord was able to deliver Daniel, he is not less able to send his angel (his providences) to shut the mouths of those who would do injury to his people. They may gnash upon them with their teeth, as the lions may have been permitted to do to Daniel, to test his faith in the Lord; yet we are to remember that all things are subject to him with whom we have to do, and whose service we have entered through vows of consecration.

In some instances it may please the Lord to grant a wonderful deliverance, as in the case of Daniel, while in other instances the providential dealings may result otherwise, as for instance in Stephen's case: his plain but kind statement of the truth to his Jewish brethren "cut them to the heart," and "they *gnashed on him with their teeth,* and cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord and cast him out of the city, and stoned him. . . . And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." But even in such a case the victory was with the Lord's servant, of whom we read, "But he, being full of the holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God." And the record further is that Stephen, in the midst of such persecution, had the peace of God which passeth all understanding, to such an extent that his face was "as the face of an angel"—serene, calm, unperturbed.—Acts 6:15; 7:54-60.

The Scriptural record is that after Daniel's deliverance King Darius caused all the conspirators to be cast into the den of lions, and that thus they were all destroyed. Josephus adds something from tradition, to the effect that, when Daniel was delivered the conspirators claimed that his preservation was due to the fact that some one had fed the lions before he was cast into the den, and that the king undertook to demonstrate the matter by having the lions liberally fed, and then casting into the den those conspirators, who were speedily devoured.

This reminds us of how Haman was hanged upon the very gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. The Psalmist seems to speak of it as a principle associated with the divine government, that those who dig pits for others are likely to fall therein themselves. (Psa. 7:15, 16; 9:15, 16) And who has not observed that those who gnash upon others with the tongue of scandal and falsehood, envy and malice, are likely in the end to be injured by the very falsehood and bitter words wherewith they seek to injure others? There is a law of retribution at work, in accordance with which a recompense of evil is dealt out to all evil-doers, either in the present life or in the life to come.

THE NEW HEART

Aug. 6.—Ezek. 36:25-36.

"A new heart also will I give you."

Ezekiel wrote the words of our lesson in Babylon. They are not to be esteemed as merely the exhortations of a preacher, although they do partake of this quality: they are more than this—a prophecy by the Lord respecting his future favors toward Israel. The context preceding reviews Israel's situation—the people in a foreign land, and their own Land of Promise a desolate wilderness because of their sinful neglect of their great King Jehovah, and of their covenant promises as his adopted people. While the Prophet's words declare a future recovery, not only as possible, but as sure to be accomplished, they nevertheless indicate certain changed conditions as necessary to such a recovery: it would not only be necessary for them to abandon idolatry, but they must obtain a new heart, a new mind, a new disposition, favorable to God and righteousness, ere such an abandonment of idolatry and sin would be permanent.

The Prophet does not here declare the time at which this new heart would be given to the people. He merely points out to them the necessity for such a new heart and the blessings of the Lord that would result from such a harmony with him; and tells them, "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them."—Verse 37.

As a matter of fact, this new condition of heart was not attained by Israel on their release by Cyrus from the captivity in Babylon. Although only a limited number, who had a respect for God and who trusted in the promises made to the fathers, had sufficient interest in the Holy Land to avail themselves of the proclamation made by Cyrus and to return to Palestine, and although we might say that by means of this captivity the Lord had sifted out of Israel the idolatrous and unfaithful majority, we still cannot say that those who returned with Ezra and Nehemiah enjoyed the new heart condition which the Lord stipulated through the Prophet was essential to a full reception of his favor.

While, so far as we know, gross forms of idolatry never prevailed in Israel after the return from captivity in Babylon, we nevertheless know that the more refined forms of idolatry continually existed amongst them, as amongst other civilized nations who do not bow to wood and stone, gold and silver—an idolatry of wealth, an idolatry of self, an idolatry of Judaism, prevailed amongst them, and they never attained the condition specified in this lesson. They did not get the new heart and right spirit; they did not get rid of the stony heart; they did not walk in the Lord's statutes and judgments, nor do them; they did not dwell in the land, but were cast out of it because of the stony character of their hearts, in the rejection and crucifixion of Messiah; and they who were called God's people were cast off, and are not called his people now; and they have not been prospered, but have been in fiery trials in the midst of their enemies, scattered amongst all nations from then until the present time. Nor have they yet loathed themselves, their iniquities and their abominations, nor been ashamed and confounded; nor is the desolate land tilled, and as the garden of Eden. Quite the contrary of all this is the truth.

What shall we say, then? Was Ezekiel a false prophet, or has God failed of accomplishing his good purposes toward Israel because of the weakness of their flesh and the hardness of their hearts? God forbid! On the contrary, we are to understand that the prophecy of this lesson belongs to a future time—to the Millennial day; and that whatever signs there are at the present time of the return of divine favor toward fleshly Israel and toward the land of promise are evidences that the time for the fulfilment of this prophecy is near at hand.

In corroboration of this position we cite Romans 11:25-32. Here the Apostle Paul shows that Israel after the flesh, not having zealously inquired for the new heart and the right spirit, not having sought it of the Lord, was unprepared in heart to receive Messiah, and instead with wicked hands crucified him. The Apostle shows us that, as a result, only a remnant was gathered out of Israel to be of the "bride" class, and that the nation as a whole stumbled into blindness, darkness, for a time determined of the Father—until the election to the "bride" class should be completed from among the Gentiles. Then, the Apostle assures us, Israel's blindness shall be turned away; they shall all be saved from that blindness. "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

It is this covenant of the Lord to Israel to take away their sins and to give them new hearts and right dispositions that is referred to in our lesson, and we look for the fulfilment with longing anticipation—realizing, as the Apostle points out, that Israel's recovery from blindness will mean nothing less than life from the dead; for if that nation, after crucifying Messiah, and being blind to the fulfilment of the prophecies made to their fathers, shall finally be awakened to see the Lord, and look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall have the spirit of prayer and of supplication poured upon them by the Lord's providential dealing, it will be a miracle similar to the causing of a dead person to live. And if God's mercy will thus be extended toward those who sinned most egregiously, and who crucified his Son, it will mean also the extending of divine mercy to all the families of the earth, according to the statement of the various promises.

More than this, the fulfilment of God's promise mentioned by the Apostle, "So all Israel shall be saved [recovered from blindness]" will not mean *merely* a figurative awakening of the dead: it will mean *also* a literal awakening of the dead; because many of "all Israel," millions of them, have gone down into actual death, and before they could be made the recipients of the favors of this promise, they must be awakened from the sleep of death. And likewise also the promises to the remainder of mankind are similarly brought before the eye of faith by such faithfulness toward Israel; for instance, the promise that all the families of the earth shall be blessed through the Seed of Abraham must include not only those who will be living at the time of Messiah's second advent and the establishment of his Millennial kingdom, but must include also all that are in the graves "who shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth" to a trial for life, secured by the great ransom sacrifice.

The sprinkling of clean water would seem to signify the application of the truth: and this perhaps had some fulfilment in those who returned from the Babylonian captivity—it was the truth, the influence of the promises made to the fathers, that affected the hearts of those who were disposed to return—in all only a remnant of fifty-five thousand out of seven millions. The influence of these promises served to separate them from their previous filthiness of idolatry. Had they earnestly gone forward seeking to realize the lengths and breadths of the divine will, they might have been ready in due time, at the first advent of our Lord, to have received the new heart; but they did not do so, hence that feature of the promise (not failing on account of their failure) carries forward more than eighteen hundred years, and becomes applicable at the second advent. Meantime a new nation, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, is sought and found by the Lord to be the spiritual seed of Abraham and to obtain the greatest blessings—the heavenly.—Rom. 9:30-33; 11:26-32.

But we will look down into the future and see what the fulfilment of this prophecy will mean to fleshly Israel, to whom it was made, and to whom it still pertains, because, as the Apostle declares, the gifts and callings of God are things of which he does not repent.

We are not to understand that the removal of the stony heart and the giving of the new heart of flesh will be an instantaneous work or a miraculous work. The Apostle explains the method by which the Lord will do this great thing for Israel, saying, "The Deliverer shall come out of Zion [the church of this Gospel age] and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

for this is my covenant with them [Jacob, fleshly Israel]." God has appointed a day for thus blessing Israel and ultimately blessing all the families of the earth—it is a thousand-year day, the Millennial day, but in it Israel's opportunity will come first. Israel is probably as much, and probably no more, affected with the stony heart condition than other nations. A hard or stony heart represents a selfish condition of mind and sentiment. This hardening process is a result of the fall, and through heredity and practice affects all of Adam's posterity. The stony heart condition is one of self-will as opposed to divine will; of self-gratification as opposed to righteousness; a love of self which hinders the love of God with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, and a love of the neighbor as oneself. The stony heart condition means "me," "my," "mine," "right if I can, wrong if I must."

The breaking up of this stony heart condition, other Scriptures show us, will be accomplished to a considerable degree by the trouble (political, ecclesiastical, financial and social) which will come upon the whole world in the "day of wrath," which is just before us; and this is particularly emphasized in the Scriptures as also being "the day of Jacob's trouble—but he shall be saved out of it." (Jer. 30:7) All men will come to appreciate better than they now do or ever have done in the past that the law of selfishness under which the whole world has been operating for this long time is an unjust law, and one which must ultimately work injury to all. Indeed, the great time of trouble will itself be the grand display of the ultimate tendencies of selfishness with all the brakes and restraints removed. It will speedily work the utter wreck of the highest development of human civilization. Apparently, natural Israel will be the first amongst the nations who will pass through this experience to learn the lesson, and to begin to seek after the new heart, renewed in righteousness and true submission to divine instruction.

The breaking of the stony hearts will come through the afflictions of the "day of wrath," but the transformation of those hearts into hearts of flesh will be more gradual. It will be accomplished by instructions in righteousness; for the glorified church, with Christ its Head, will be the great prophet or teacher of mankind, and fleshly Israel (their past experiences in many respects serving as a preparation) will speedily become associates in the reformation work. Indeed, all mankind then coming into harmony with the kingdom will be counted as Israelites—children of the true Israel of God—Christ. All such will be counted as "children of Abraham," who as a type of God is the "father of the faithful" with one seed (the heavenly, Christ and the church) as the stars of heaven, and another (faithful fleshly Israelites from all peoples, kindreds and tongues) as the sand by the seashore.—Gen. 22:17.

The promise of "hearts of flesh" or restored human perfection shows out strongly in contrast with the Lord's provision for the church of this Gospel age, which is not to receive human perfection, desirable as that will be, but instead are to become every whit new creatures in Christ Jesus: begotten of the spirit through the Word of truth, they will be in the resurrection born of the spirit to perfect spiritual conditions. The Lord's provision for the world of mankind, described as "hearts of flesh," conveys the thought of restitution, the image and likeness of God, to tender, gentle, sympathetic *human* or earthly conditions, very good, very acceptable to the Creator. Adam's disobedience resulted in the hardening of his heart in sin and selfishness, during the centuries of his degradation, outcast from divine favor as an alien, stranger, foreigner and enemy of God.

God's proposition to give them "a heart of flesh" signifies, therefore, the bringing of fleshly Israel back to the original condition proper to perfect manhood; and the method by which this softening and restitution of the heart sentiments shall be accomplished will involve a new *will*, a new *mind*, a new *disposition*, called in the text "a new spirit." This must really come first, before the new heart condition can be attained, and the new spirit, the new disposition, will be induced by the new view of matters which will then be clearly set before Israel and the world.

The difficulty at the present time is that Satan, the god of this world, deceives mankind into viewing evil things as desirable, and good things as undesirable: he puts light for darkness, darkness for light; and as the Scriptures declare, the whole world is at present blinded and deceived by him. (2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:3) When in due time the Lord's Anointed shall take the kingdom authority, purchased with his own precious blood, it will be for the very purpose of scattering the darkness with which "the prince of darkness" has blinded mankind. And not only is the new King designated the true Light, but his kingdom also is styled the kingdom of sunshine when it is declared, "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams."—Mal 4:2.

It should not be necessary to offer argument, either from facts or Scripture, to show that this Sun of Righteousness did not arise at the first advent, nor during "the dark ages," and that even at the second coming of the King there will be a night-time, and he will come "as a thief in the night" for his bride. (1 Thes. 5:2) Nor should it be necessary to prove that throughout the entire Gospel age the world has walked in darkness, while the Lord's people have only walked in the light by reason of having his Word as a lamp to their feet, a lantern to their foosteps. (Psa. 119:105) The promise held out before the church, and before fleshly Israel, and before the world, is —"The morning cometh;" and the additional assurance is given to the church, Zion, that "The Lord shall help her *early* in the morning." (Isa. 21:12; Psa. 46:5) Her deliverance shall come first, and then she "shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father." (Matt. 13:43) Then will come the blessing upon fleshly Israel and the message to her, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!" and ultimately this light of the New Jerusalem, reflected from the earthly Jerusalem, shall enlighten all the families of the earth, with the light of the knowledge of God, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The promise that the Lord would put his spirit within them, and cause them to walk in his statutes and keep his decrees and do them, is in full accord with the foregoing. This does not refer to spiritual Israel, altho spiritual Israel has a somewhat similar experience in advance, as we shall shortly show. This putting of the Lord's spirit, the spirit of righteousness, the spirit of truth, the spirit of love, upon fleshly Israel (and similarly upon all the families of the earth), is abundantly stated in the Scriptures to be distinctly separate from the pouring out of the Pentecostal blessing upon the church, the "little flock," the bride of Christ, during this age, and before the Sun of Righteousness arises, of which Sun of Righteousness these shall form a part.

For instance, note the prophecy by Joel (2:28, 29) that this promise of the holy Spirit is of two parts. One outpouring of God's Spirit upon his servants and hand-maidens ("new creatures in Christ") has already had its fulfilment throughout this Gospel age: the other promise, that God would pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, still awaits fulfilment, and will be accomplished after the overcoming church has been glorified and the blessing of all the families of the earth has begun. The matter is covered slightly from the attention of the ordinary reader by reason of the outpouring upon the church being mentioned last.

This same outpouring of the holy Spirit upon fleshly Israel is referred to by the Prophet Zechariah, and directly applied to the end of this age. In connection with telling how the Lord would at his second advent make himself known to Israel, and that they should look upon him whom they pierced, and mourn for him, the explicit statement is, "I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication."—Zech. 12:10.

The spirit of the Lord, the holy Spirit, is the spirit of the truth, and when the truth shall be made known to Israel and mankind, with that truth will go its spirit, its influence, its power to correct the heart and life, and to bring it into accord with God. For then, in the light of the truth, many will see God's character and plan in Christ as "the desire of all nations," and the great King himself as the one "altogether lovely." And the positive declaration is that all who will not hear (obey) that great Teacher—Prophet, Priest and King—shall be cut off from amongst his people in the second death. —Acts 3:23.

In connection with these transformations of heart and will, will come the blessing which the Lord promised upon the earth. It shall yield its increase; the wilderness shall blossom as the rose, and the whole earth shall become a Paradise of God. The beginning of these blessings will be with Israel, and thus all the Gentiles shall have not only the lessons of the Scriptures for their instruction in righteousness, but also the illustration of divine providence operating on behalf of those who are influenced by the truth and its spirit. Thus will be fulfilled the declaration, "This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden."—Ezek. 36:35.

While the Scriptures keep distinctly separate the nation of fleshly Israel and the new nation, Spiritual Israel, nevertheless, under divine providence, fleshly Israel was in many respects made a lesson, a type, an illustration, for Spiritual Israel; so that the Apostle could declare that many of the **things done for fleshly Israel were *shadows* of better things coming afterward for Spiritual Israel. Yet these are shadows**

only to those who discern them, and are profitable only to those who avail themselves of them.—Heb. 8:5.

The Scriptures point out to us that the new heart condition is essential also to spiritual Israel; that all who would be in harmony with the Lord must first get free from idols, and be separated to the Lord God; and that then they must inquire of the Lord that he may do for them the good things of his promise—working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. As the death of Christ was the turning point of fleshly Israel (Dives), and led them into blindness and trouble, so also it was the turning point or beginning of favor to spiritual Israel (Lazarus carried to Abraham's bosom)—the poor, the humble, acknowledging themselves to be sinners, were freely cleansed through the merits of Christ's sacrifice and made acceptable as the children of Abraham. This class, from the day of Pentecost to the present, have presented themselves in turn, fully and unreservedly to the Lord; to have his will, his spirit, renewed in them, and such have indeed received a newness of spirit, a newness of heart. But the new heart is not with them a heart of flesh, for they are begotten unto the high calling, to be children and heirs of God, joined in heirship with Jesus Christ their Lord—to partake of the divine nature, which already is reckoned as being begun in them through the begetting by the spirit of adoption. It is for these to remember that in order to develop in the spirit they must walk in the spirit, in the Lord's foosteps, observing to the best of their ability the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus—that thus they may be transformed by the renewing of their minds (wills) and be enabled to prove the good, the perfect, the acceptable will of God; and thus faithfully doing, to be ultimately received of him into all the exceeding glories promised to the new creatures in Christ, and to be joint-heirs with him in the great work of blessing Israel and the world through the Millennial kingdom.—Rom. 12:2; 8:17.

THE VISION OF DRY BONES

Aug. 13.—Ezek. 37:1-14.

"I will put my spirit within you."—Ezek. 36:27.

The Scripture of this lesson is frequently more or less of a confusion to the Lord's people, even after they have learned with considerable clearness what the Apostle Paul so positively declares—that the body sown in corruption, planted in death, is not the body which shall be in the resurrection; that the bones, sinews and flesh which go to corruption have nothing whatever to do with the resurrection body, which the Lord will provide. In examining this subject heretofore we have seen that the Apostle's statement is not only backed by his inspiration, but also that it is reasonable, logical: that one atom of matter is no more valuable or necessary than another in the great work of restitution which shall be accomplished in the world's resurrection. We have seen that the human body in corruption becomes food for plant life, producing apples, acorns, etc., which in turn become food for man and the lower animals, so that the atoms of matter composing a human body are continually changing, and in centuries would pass through many changes. We have seen, too, that this process of change progresses while we still live, so that science declares that a complete change in the human organism is effected every seven years. The atoms of matter which compose a man's body at the moment of his death are no more precious, valuable or necessary to the future body than were the atoms sloughed off through the natural channels during previous years. The important thing, the thing which God has promised shall have a resurrection, is the *being,* the *soul:* that in the resurrection God will give it a body as pleaseth him—to each kind of seed his own kind of body—to the natural man a natural, human body, through restitution; to the new creature in Christ a new spiritual body, according to divine promise.

The passage of Scripture under consideration was addressed by the Lord through the Prophet to fleshly Israel, then in captivity in Babylon. The dry bones represented the Israelites themselves. As a people they had lost heart, lost hope, and said, "Our strength is dried, and our hope is lost, we are cut off from our parts"—from all tribal and national union. If they looked at their present condition, they were strangers in a strange land, foreigners, without opportunity for patriotic feelings; if they looked backward, and remembered divine intervention on their behalf, their deliverance from Egypt, their favor as a nation under David and Solomon, etc., they could think of these only as bygones, lost blessings and opportunities; if they looked forward, they could see no possible hope of their ever again becoming a nation; and as for all the great expectations which they had once entertained respecting their nation, as God's favored people, and the heir of the promises made to Abraham, that they should rule and bless all the families of the earth—these hopes were dead, they were gone, they could have nothing of this kind in the future. The condition of Israel, scattered throughout Babylonia, was indeed well illustrated by the dry bones of the vision.

The hand (power) of the Lord was upon Ezekiel, causing him to see this vision—he was not literally transported to any literal valley of dry bones. In the vision he was caused to pass amongst the dry bones, that he might get a full view of the situation, as they lay strewn all over the valley, very dry. Then the Lord's explanation comes, that these dry bones are, or represent, the whole house of Israel. They did not represent merely the two tribes which went last into captivity, nor merely the ten tribes which went earlier, but the whole house of Israel, the twelve tribes. They were no longer to be considered as two distinct nations, as they had considered themselves for the preceding four hundred years. They were to understand that in divine providence they were henceforth a reunited nation, and the reunion is pictured in this same chapter (verses 15-22) by the miraculous uniting of two sticks into one in the hand of the Prophet.

And it was so: from the time Cyrus gave his decree that all the children of Israel should go free, and might return, if they chose, to their own land, the division into two nations was no longer recognized. The people that returned, though chiefly of the tribe of Judah, represented all of the various tribes who had faith in the Lord's promises, and desired to return to Palestine. The name Israel was applied to the returned and restored people, not only for the more than five centuries preceding our Lord's first advent, but also they were so recognized by our Lord in all of his ministry, and by the apostles in all of their writings, which constitute the New Testament. There are no ten lost tribes which some well-meaning but deluded people continually refer to, and seem to rest their hopes in, as instead of the hope set before us in the Gospel.

The Lord propounds the question, Is it possible that any vitality could ever come into these dry bones? Is there hope for the scattered people of Israel who not only in heart but in voice said, We are scattered, and no longer a homogeneous people, we are mixed and blended with our captors, who are heathen, in business, social and marriage relationships—there is no hope of a restored nation of Israel?

The Prophet, with quick confidence in the Almighty, refers the question back to God, as suggesting that any hope there could possibly be of a reorganization of Israel must come from God—could be looked for from no other quarter.

The Lord directed Ezekiel to prophesy, that is, to declare the divine message, and the divine message was a foretelling of the things which would, under divine providence, come to pass. The message to be declared was that God had the power and would exercise it, by which these who were dead, and dried as respected their national hopes, would be gradually revived, would gradually become one homogeneous people, a nation in their own land. It would not be done suddenly, but gradually, and that through attention to the divine message, which the Prophet was delivering. First the dried and hopeless ones would come together, then they would begin to unite one to the other, and gradually assume a national existence, and finally would be infused with the spirit of the Lord, as the breath or energy of national life, begotten of faith in the promises, and would stand again a nation.

The people's hopes, which were thus dead, were represented by the Lord as buried in the various provinces of Babylonia, and hence this figure is combined with the figure of the dry bones, and the Lord sends the message, "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel, and ye shall know that I am the Lord." As a further part of this symbolic picture the Prophet is in vision shown the process by which the dry bones would be gathered, reorganized and revivified. He says there was "a noise and a shaking." The *Revised Version,* apparently with propriety, renders this, "thunder and an earthquake." Following this demonstration the bones came together.

Undoubtedly one thing which contributed to Israel's despair was the mightiness of the empire which had taken them captive. Babylonia at that time was the most gigantic empire ever known amongst men. Her overthrow seemed impossible, and escape from her power not to be thought of. The thunder and great earthquake of the figure doubtless represented the commotions incident to the fall of Babylon and the transfer of the empire to the Medes and Persians. As a result of this the hopes of Israel in the divine promises began to revive, and shortly they were delivered.

While recognizing this primary fulfilment of the prophecy, we are not to forget the secondary fulfilment on a much larger scale, which is in progress at the present time. The withered hopes of Israel, scattered throughout the provinces of Babylonia, cut off from their parts, from one another, from tribal union and from national cohesion, was only a foreshadowing of the more general scattering of that nation among all the nations of the civilized world (mystic Babylon) during this Gospel age. With the vast majority all hopes of the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promise had died, had withered away, and had no more vitality than a dry bone. But now, in the end of this Gospel age, the due time has come for these dry bones, scattered all over mystic Babylon, to be gathered part to part, rehabilitated and revivified with hope in the promises made to the fathers. The great noise is the "seventh trumpet," which has begun to sound; the earthquake is the coming great revolution in which mystic Babylon will fall before the great Prince whom Cyrus in a measure prefigured. Meantime, as we look at the dry bones of Israel, we perceive that they already are in movement, that they are already drawing near one to another and organizing as "Zionists" with a view to national reorganization and a return to the land of promise. Probably the hopes of the Israelites began to revive as soon as they learned that the army of Cyrus had begun the conquest of Babylon, and so now the hopes of Israel are reviving as they witness the march of events, and realize that a great day of trouble is coming upon the nations of Christendom. Their hopes will more and more go out toward Palestine and national reorganization, as the troubles of the day of wrath draw near.

A lesson might also be drawn from this Scripture for spiritual Israelites. We are to remember that spiritual Israel also was permitted to go down into Babylon to be swallowed up of worldliness, as represented in our Lord's parable of the wheat-field, choked by the "tares." The field has really become a tare-field, although nominally called a wheat-field, because the promises are to the "wheat." For centuries the "Gospel of the Kingdom," which our Lord declared was the good seed which he sowed (Matt. 13:37-42), has been lost sight of, and kingdom hopes have lost their vitality, and the many promises of the Scriptures, relating to the kingdom of God, joint-heirship with Christ and a future blessing of the world, have become dead hopes, dead promises; and so far as these promises are concerned spiritual Israel has been cut off from its parts and mixed with the Babylonians, and has become interested in the hopes of Babylon rather than in the kingdom of God, in which all the original hopes and promises centered and flourished.

But now, in the end of this age, the time has come for God to call his people out of Babylon, and the voice of a greater than Cyrus is heard by those who have ears to hear, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen! . . . Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18:2-4) In connection with this message there is a commotion amongst the dry bones, amongst those who are Israelites indeed, whose hopes in the kingdom had perished, and the kingdom hopes are revived and the promises of God as related thereto are becoming more distinct. Nevertheless, we are not to expect that the "tare" class, the Babylonians, are represented in the movement of the dry bones, but merely the truly consecrated Israelites indeed. The Babylonians would be interested on the other side of the question —interested in perpetuating the greatness of Babylon, and in continuing the bondage of the true Israelites.

Nor do the kingdom hopes relate merely to the living. The organization of the Lord's faithful will not only include the gathering of the living, but also the gathering of all the members of the body of Christ, for "the dead in Christ shall rise first, and [then] we which are alive and remain shall be caught away together with them, to a meeting of the Lord in the air" —in spiritual power. So many as are able to do so should apply to themselves this feature of this lesson and exert themselves to be of those who shall now shortly be organized as the "body of Christ," "the Seed of Abraham," the kingdom of God, to bless the world.

INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I thank God earnestly and reverently for the DAWNS and TOWERS, and that my understanding has been opened to receive and see the truth. When the "key" is applied, how beautifully the Scriptures open and reveal God's wonderful plan. In the June number of the TOWER you speak of dispensing truth to others, that in feeding we are fed. I know that to be true, and have verified it on more than one occasion. Will you please send some free tracts to be given out in a Dawn Circle for Bible Study that I am trying to get started in a neighboring town?

I often wonder, Brother Russell, if you can read thoughts. Several times when I have been studying over certain points and could not quite determine what was right, the next WATCH TOWER would have a full explanation of the very subject I had been studying. Is it the holy Spirit that impresses your mind with the truth that puzzles others? It seems so. May the Lord bless the recent effort made here and your labors wherever they may be!

Yours in the fellowship of Christ. J. M. S.—*Ohio.*

[REPLY.—The EDITOR does not possess the gift of mind-reading, but our present Lord does, and undoubtedly in this "harvest" time, specially, he is watching over the interests of all those who are truly his. He knows exactly what kind of provender his "sheep" need, and according to promise provides "meat in due season for the household of faith."

Very many have made similar observations respecting the opportuneness of certain expositions which have appeared in the WATCH TOWER. We can only account for such repeated coincidences by acknowledging the Lord's knowledge and providential care, and we rejoice in the thought that he does take supervision of our humble efforts, to direct them and bless them in his service. Nevertheless, we are far from claiming any direct or plenary inspiration. We believe, however, that there are many ways in which the Lord can guide those who are anxious to serve him, without directly inspiring or in any manner interfering with their free agency. A careful examination of the subject leads us to the conclusion that the Lord providentially shapes our course so as to give us such personal experiences in life as will bring us to his Word for comfort and instruction in righteousness; and thus he permits us to sympathize with the experiences and questionings of his people, and then to present to them at appropriate times the lessons drawn from our own experiences, backed by the instructions and comfort of the Scriptures.—EDITOR.]

DEAR BROTHER:—In reading Isaiah, 2nd chapter, which seems to refer especially to the present time, I notice that in verse 16 we are informed of the judgment of the Lord on the ships of Tarshish, "And over all the ships of Tarshish." If I am correctly informed, Tarshish refers to Spain and especially to the city of Cadiz and the southwest part of Spain. The wonderful events that have occurred during the last year, resulting in the utter destruction of so many Spanish warships and with such slight injury to the American ships has suggested the thought that possibly these events may be a fulfilment. Respectfully submitted,

C. C. KELLY.—*Ohio.*

[We present the foregoing, because the application made seems to fit remarkably well to the general context. It will be noticed that the theme of the prophet concerns the last days, and the establishment of the Lord's kingdom, etc. (See verses 2, 3) Verses 19-22 seem to refer to the great time of trouble just before us, and frequently referred to throughout the Scriptures as the day of vengeance.—EDITOR.]

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I owe you more, I fear, than I will ever be able to repay for your many kind acts from time to time aside from a servant of the truth whom I love seemingly dearer than ever. But to say that my whole soul goes out in thankful appreciation for the brotherly interest you have manifested in my sufferings in overcoming the tobacco habit, seems to me, dear brother, only mildly to express my feelings on this point. When I requested Brother S ——— to lay my case before you for counsel and advice, which I knew you so well able to give from the standpoint of the Lord's word, I felt determined to "resist the devil" in his operations through the flesh in my case, if I conquered only through death. I am yet as fully determined, the Lord helping me.

The WATCH TOWERS of recent issue are appreciated as much as ever. How my heart went out to those dear brethren in New York when I read the article, "Think It Not Strange." Surely, Satan is getting desperate in his oppositions. In the *Methodist Recorder*, published at Pittsburgh, in their last week's issue, I have been told by a neighbor, appears an article by Rev. Daniel B. Turney, A. M., attacking the truth contained in the booklet, *What Say the Scriptures About Hell?* From what my friend tells me it must be one of the boldest misrepresentations the representatives of the Lord and his truth have yet suffered from such "high places." I sent the above named Mr. Turney one of the booklets referred to some time ago as a reply to some of his unscriptural writings concerning the "immortal essence of man," and I suppose this is the reward we and all who love the Lord can joyfully receive. (Matt. 5:11, 12) I trust you will be furnished with a copy of the above named publication.

I am glad to inform you that the interest here is growing, and we are having interesting times at our meetings every Sunday evening. How it rejoices our hearts to see the truth prosper, even though the "increase" may be small comparatively. But, dear brother, it is very evident that our influence for the truth's prosperity is nearly over; it seems that the time has almost come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but may we be enabled to understand and rejoice in the typical words of John the Baptist, "I must decrease." May we, dear brother, be enabled to suffer joyfully and under all circumstances to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bonds of love and peace. I am getting much benefit from the Sunday readings suggested some time ago. [See p. 2205, this volume].

Greetings to all the brethren. Yours in love,

J. M. G———, *Indiana.*

[Reply.—Respecting the decrease of the work: from our broader viewpoint it seems as though *much* work is yet to be accomplished; indeed, every month shows an increase for the past three years, and during the last year specially. The people are getting awake and groping about for truth, and now is the time to lend a helping hand to keep them from stumbling into Infidelity, Spiritism, Christian Science, Evolution, etc. The chief opponents of the truth are the "ministers," the very ones who are undermining faith in Christ as a Saviour from sin and death by teaching an Evolution salvation. Quite likely their opposition will become much more pronounced, and they may, in some form or many forms, "crucify" the members of the body of Christ: but this will furnish opportunities for attesting our love for the Lord's brethren. In view of our Lord's example and the Apostle's words, we should gladly let our light shine and render every other assistance, even though it test our willingness to "lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16).—Editor.]

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THE AT-ONE-MENT BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V

We have pleasure in announcing that Volume V. of Millennial Dawn series is now on the press. It will (d. v.) be sent to all paid up subscribers to Zion's Watch Tower (including those who have requested *credit* for the year, and those who are receiving it *free* as the Lord's poor)—as September 1st and 15th, and October 1st and 15th issues of this journal. There will be no other issues for the four dates named. If you do not receive a copy before Sept. 30th it will not be our fault. If your account differs from ours be sure to let us know all particulars. Notice the tag on the wrapper. Jun. 9 means that your subscription is settled for only to and including June, 1899—that you are in arrears. Dec. 9 means that your subscription is settled for, up to the end of the year and should be renewed in December.

This volume will, we believe, furnish an abundance of spiritual food for the two months (September and October). It should be thoroughly masticated, that it may be well digested and give strength to head and heart and hand. It is our prayer and hope that it may be a great blessing to the readers of this journal; and that through them as fellow servants of our one Lord and Master it may honor him and bless many.

THE RIVER OF SALVATION

Aug. 20.—Ezek. 47:1-12.

"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. 22:17.

Many of the particulars connected with this vision described by Ezekiel are so circumstantial to the land of Israel as to give considerable ground for belief that it will have a literal fulfilment in the future; and in connection with the vision is shown a new division of the land of Canaan amongst the twelve tribes. But whatever literal fulfilment the vision may have, we may be positive that it is to have a grand fulfilment as a symbol, for the life-giving river here brought to our attention is undoubtedly the same one described six hundred years later, by John the Revelator, and referred to in our Golden Text.

Referring to the description of the river starting from the Temple, Prof. Davidson says, "The natural fact upon which this conception rests is this, that there was a fountain connected with the Temple hill, the waters of which fell into the valley east of the city, and made their way toward the sea." So far as we may know, this fountain never was of any considerable size, and never would be, without more or less of a miracle, for at present the entire country is arid, except in the rainy season. From this fountain the Valley of Kedron leads directly to the Dead Sea, which, as is well known, has no connection with the ocean waters, either on the surface or subterraneously, and is 1308 feet below the sea level.

However, there are evidences that at one time the Dead Sea was on a level with the ocean, and if by earthquake or otherwise the connection between it and the ocean waters were re-established it would rise to its old level, which would make of it an inland sea 150 miles long, and five to ten miles wide. And such a filling up of its basin would have a marked effect, not only upon the humidity of the atmosphere in its vicinity, but also upon the water-springs of lower Palestine. The natural result would be, not only that the Dead Sea would be sweetened of its brackishness, and become like the ocean, but also that the springs in the vicinity of Jerusalem would be greatly enlarged so as to produce some such river as this described in the prophecy, and these springs in that now parched desert country would cause its vegetation to prosper. It is worthy of note that this valley now occupied by the Dead Sea was once most fertile,—before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. We read, "Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah,—even as the garden of the Lord." (Gen. 13:10) And the restitution of this country to a Paradisaic condition is what the Prophet Ezekiel describes, if his language be given a literal interpretation at all—and this it seems to demand, as well as the symbolic interpretation.

There are many who seek to apply this prophetic vision as a symbol to the present time, and claim that this river of salvation has been flowing through the world from the days of Ezekiel until now;—especially during this Gospel age. These interpreters claim that the depth of the water up to the ankles would represent a date when Christians numbered fifty millions; the depth of the water up to the knees a period when Christians numbered a hundred millions; a depth of water up to the loins a date when Christians numbered two hundred millions; and a river that could not be waded, representing the present time, when the population of Christendom is estimated at four hundred and fifteen millions. But can we agree with this interpretation? Is it reasonable, is it Scriptural?

(1) We answer, No; it is not a reasonable interpretation, for, if we may judge of the Christians so-called in the past by those so-called in the present, we must conclude that the river is far from pure, "clear as crystal:" indeed, all will agree that if nine-tenths of those who name the name of Christ, but who deny him in their daily lives, were to withdraw from all profession, the Christian church would be greatly blessed by their withdrawal and the influence of the church and the light from it would be increased many-fold. Bishop Foster, of the Methodist Episcopal church, sized up the situation well when comparing the professed church to a sheep-fold, he pronounced the vast majority "black, ring-streaked and speckled." We all are confident that only a comparatively little flock are of the class mentioned by the Lord as being reckonedly washed whiter than snow, through his grace and truth.

(2) It is not a Scriptural view. The Scriptures declare that God's grace at the present time is not comparable to a river, but in our Lord's words, "It shall be *in him* [each

believer] a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14) And those Christians in whom God's grace is a fountain of life and refreshment are comparatively few. They are those who have been "begotten of the spirit of truth" through the Word of truth. They are the "sanctified in Christ Jesus;" they are the "little flock," to the faithful of whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom.

No Scripture anywhere suggests that the water of eternal life is now *free;* nor that all are now called to drink of it. Our Lord Jesus himself declared the contrary of this, saying, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John 6:44) The drawing or calling of God through a knowledge of his grace is only unto those who have ears to hear, amongst those to whom the call is addressed: and the call has been specially sent to and has specially reached only comparatively few of the earth's fifteen hundred millions,—chiefly the inhabitants of Europe and America. And of this comparatively small number to whom the Word of the Lord has been sent, and of the still smaller number who have had "ears to hear" that call, only a still smaller number are chosen, as we read, "Many are called, but few chosen." (Matt. 20:16) Not many are called in proportion to the whole, but many are called in proportion to the number chosen, the few, the elect.

Returning to the Prophet's vision, we note that the waters flowed out from the house of the Lord, from the Temple, and that wherever they went they brought vitality and refreshment, healing, restitution, life—even to the Dead Sea. This to our understanding is a picture of the grace of God during the Millennial age, when from the church, the house of God, the temple, "the habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22), the stream of the water of life, healing, restoring, rejuvenating, shall flow to all the families of the earth, whose condition is represented by the wilderness eastward of Jerusalem. The result will be the blessing and restitution of all the living families of the earth willing to receive the blessing. And it means more: for the Dead Sea fitly represents the vast multitude of mankind which has gone into the tomb, and the water of life shall reach even these, and bring to them also awakening from death, opportunities of restitution.

That the fulfilment of this vision could not be a thing of the past nor of the present is evident when we remember that the house of God, the temple, the church, is not yet completed —that the present is the time in which the Lord is fitting the "living stones" for the temple,—is chiseling, fitting and polishing each for the place to which he is called. The present Gospel age was typified in the building of Solomon's Temple, by the period of preparation of the materials, after which we are informed that the whole house came together quickly, each stone fitting to its place and each timber to its position, and that without the sound of a hammer or any tool of iron. So with the "living stones," as the Apostle Peter calls the church. (1 Pet. 2:5) These are "builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit," and the building will not be completed until the last of these fitted and polished stones is laid in its position. Then the glory of the Lord shall fill the house,—the church will be glorified. Then will have come the time represented in this vision, when the stream of the water of life, truth and grace shall flow from the glorified temple.

As there is no completed temple yet, so there is no river yet; but when the temple is completed, when the various members of the body of Christ are brought together and united in glory, honor and immortality to the Head of the church, then from this united and glorified company of God's elect shall flow the symbolic river of water of life, clear as crystal. In each member of this temple class, in each of these "living stones," already is a well-spring of truth and grace, and when these many well-springs shall have thus been united to the great Head and Fountain, the result naturally will be a stream of good proportions,—a river. To this coming time of blessing of the world our Lord refers, saying, "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (Jno. 7:38) In order to be of this class in whom the great river of water of life will take its start, it is necessary, first, that the believer shall now come unto Jesus and drink of him, the great Fountain of life; and it will be as a result of this partaking of the great Fountain that all of the elect church shall become minor well-springs and fountains in due time.

Turning to the description of this same symbolic river, furnished us in the Book of Revelation (chapter 22), we find abundant evidences that it does not refer to the present time, but to the Millennial age. For instance, it is symbolically pictured as having trees of life on either side, whose leaves are for the healing of the *nations*—not for the healing of the *church,* which at this time is the glorified temple from which this river proceeds—and this healing of the nations signifies, as plainly as a symbolic picture could indicate it, *restitution,* —the healing of the woes of the groaning creation, its sin and sickness and imperfection.

We notice also that the proclamation which will then be made will not be restricted, as at the present time, to "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:39) It will not be to an "elect" class; it will no longer be said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father draw him." The call at that time will be general—to every creature—"*Whosoever will,* let him take the water of life freely." We notice further that that broad invitation is extended by God through the holy spirit and the glorified church, as it is written, "The spirit and the bride say, Come!" We notice further that this expression, "the bride," unquestionably places this call in the future, because, although the elect church of this Gospel age is called out from the world to become the bride of Christ, she does not become such, does not enter that exalted station, until in the end of the age she is perfected in glory and in the likeness of her Lord. Then will come "the marriage of the Lamb:" and not until after the marriage will there be a bride; and not until after the bride has thus been accepted as such can "the spirit *and the bride* say, Come!" to the nations.

This same glorious city (kingdom), the glorified New Jerusalem, the church, and the river of the water of life gushing forth therefrom, are brought to our attention in Psalm 46: "There is a river, the rivulets of which shall spring from the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God shall help her early in the morning." The connections here also show that these rivulets are not to be expected to flow out as a river, until the Millennial morning, and the context refers particularly to the time of trouble with which the present age shall end and the Millennial morning shall be introduced.

Those whom the Lord our God has called, and who, in obedience to that call, have come to Jesus, the Fountain of life, and through him have tasted that the Lord is gracious, should let the Word and grace of God dwell in them richly and abound, making them neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord and in his service. It is for these to seek enlargement in the grace of God, that as well-springs they may be deeper and wider and more and more filled to overflowing with that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. It is for these to see to it, each for himself, that he has not received the grace of God in vain, and that this well-spring does not become choked with the rubbish of this present evil world, its aims, its hopes, its ambitions, its pride, its desires of the flesh;—that thus, under divine providence and supervision, we may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and have fellowship with our glorious Lord and Head in the sending forth of the river of salvation unto the ends of the earth in "due time;"—the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, to whosoever will of all the families of the earth.—2 Pet. 1:4-11; 2 Cor. 6:1; Col. 1:12; 1 John 1:3.

INDIANAPOLIS CONVENTION ECHOES

Our recent "Believer's Convention" was certainly a success —so voted by all who were in attendance, so far as we have heard. It was a spiritual feast of fat things, for which we render thanks to the Giver of all good. Our present Lord seemed to gird himself and serve us with "meat in due season," and with the "wine" of his own spirit of love and devotion. It was good to be there. The attendance was about 250, of whom about 200 were visitors from twenty states of the Union, including Massachusetts on the East and Washington on the West, Texas on the South and North Dakota and Minnesota on the North.

The announced program was carried out with but slight modifications. Brother Owen, the leader of the Indianapolis meetings, conducted the opening "rally" so successfully that every one felt at home forthwith and well acquainted; indeed, there were quite a number of street and train recognitions without previous acquaintance or introductions—each seemed to recognize the spirit of love: as our Lord declared, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another."

Brother Owen's assurances that the Indianapolis Church most cordially welcomed us all was abundantly attested by the careful provisions and kind attentions shown to all—the poorer as well as the financially comfortable, and the blacks as well as the whites: for there were four or five deeply and intelligently interested colored brethren in attendance.

According to our custom no collections were taken up, either publicly or privately: indeed, the only semblance of a dispute during the three days' meetings was occasioned by some of the visiting brethren insisting with the Reception Committee that they be permitted to share some of the general expenses; while the latter insisted that they had everything provided for, and that the visitors had sufficient journey expenses. We mention this to illustrate the general spirit of the convention—the spirit of love and benevolence—so much in contrast with experiences we have all had in "Babylon."

One novelty of this convention which differentiated it, so far as we recall, from all others, was the attendance of two who had previously been spirit-mediums, but who now rejoice in the better knowledge of the truth. One of these declared in the Testimony Meeting that he had been a medium for fourteen years, but thanked God for deliverance through the reading of *What Say the Scriptures About Spiritism?*

It was remarked by some that while the managers of the Epworth League Convention had a Bishop present to discuss "The Life of Lincoln," and an ex-Confederate General to discuss "The Closing Days of the Confederacy," our convention, in almost continuous session from 8 A. M. to 10 P. M., had no time for social questions, and knew nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and the blessed hopes which center in the great transaction of Calvary.

One of the most impressive services was the baptism on Saturday afternoon in the Central Christian Church, kindly put at our disposal for two hours and a half. Forty-two symbolized their immersion into Christ's death, by immersion into water—twenty-two brethren and twenty sisters (two of the former colored). The youngest seemed about twenty-five and the oldest about seventy years old. It was a service long to be remembered, and brought a blessing to those who witnessed it as well as to the participants. Our prayer is that the convention as a whole may have buried us all more completely and more deeply into death with Christ, and that walking in newness of life now we may all be prepared to share with him in "his resurrection"—"the first resurrection."

RETURNING FROM CAPTIVITY

Aug. 27.—Ezra 1:1-11.

"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."—Psa. 126:3.

The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah are not prophetical, but historical; they take up the history of Israel where it was laid down by the scribes who wrote the Books of Chronicles. Ezra, the writer of the book bearing his name, was a scribe or educated man, whose genealogy is traced back through the priesthood to Aaron. (Ezra. 1-6) Ezra was not amongst those who went up first to Jerusalem under the proclamation of Cyrus: indeed, he was probably not born until a considerable time after that notable event.

The record of the first six chapters of Ezra covers a period of twenty years; and then an interval of about fifty years transpired before the events recorded in the seventh chapter—Ezra's commission under King Artaxerxes of Persia to go up to Jerusalem and establish the worship of God. The history of the return from captivity, and the experiences of the people and their difficulties in connection with the rebuilding of the Temple, Ezra probably got from the records of the scribes at Jerusalem.

The Book of Second Chronicles closes with the declaration that the king of the Chaldeans, Nebuchadnezzar, carried away the treasures of Jerusalem, broke down its walls, burned its palaces, and carried its people captive to Babylon, and then declares that this desolation of the land and the city was in fulfilment of prophecy, the word of the Lord by Jeremiah, that the land should lie desolate and keep a Sabbath of rest seventy years. It also declares that this seventy years' desolation was brought to an end by the decree of Cyrus in the first year of his reign. Thus has the Lord clearly marked the beginning of the seventy years and their end; yet we find that chronologists in general reject this plain statement of the Scriptures, and begin to count the seventy years at a much earlier date than the destruction of the city (for we are to remember that there were three distinct captivities at about that time).*

It seems to be no easy matter to determine the chronological order of Medo-Persia. Cyrus is called the Persian, and Darius is called the Median, and whether they reigned jointly for a time seems difficult to determine. It would appear that Cyrus was in some respects the chief, yet that Darius was the representative of authority in Babylon for a time, and that upon his death Cyrus became sole emperor. Daniel most positively declares that Darius the Median succeeded to Belshazzar's kingdom (Dan. 5:31; 6:28), and this was before even Daniel had thought to search the prophecy of Jeremiah and to calculate the date when the seventy years' desolation would end, and to pray for the preparation of Israel for the promised deliverance when it should come. (Dan. 9:1-16) Chronologists in general fall into error here in attempting to fit together the conflicting and disconnected scraps of secular history covering this period: they overlook the bridge over that period furnished by the Lord's testimony that the "*seventy years' desolation*" began with the close of Zedekiah's reign and ended with the first year of Cyrus,—a well established date, B. C. 536.

We are not told by what agencies the Lord operated when he "stirred up" the heart of Cyrus to fulfil his will, in letting go the captives, and hence we are at liberty to surmise on the subject. We presume it likely that, as Daniel was speedily made a high officer in the kingdom, he had access to King Cyrus, and quite probably called his attention to the Scriptural predictions which marked him as the divine agent, even referring to him by name.—Isa. 44:26, 28; 45:1-5; Jer. 25:1-12; 29:10.

It is quite possible, also, that the Lord used other means in stirring up the heart of Cyrus: possibly he reflected that by such a course he would firmly establish himself in the good will of the Israelites, who numbered millions amongst his new subjects, and comparatively few of whom he might feel sure would avail themselves of his generous offer of liberty to return to their native land. It would appear that this was the custom of Cyrus in respect to the religions of all the various peoples whom he conquered. Nebuchadnezzar had thought to unify the people by bringing to their minds one god, and compelling worship to him. Cyrus seems to have followed an opposite rule, and sought to make himself popular with his subjects of various religious inclinations by doing something to the honor of every prominent god whose devotees he conquered. Thus he posed as a general deliverer of the people and as the servant of all the gods.

Moreover, he may have had in mind the fact that Egypt was a country of great fertility, and that it would be of great convenience to have Jerusalem as a friendly way-station between his capital and Egypt, so that in case of war he would have friendly representatives at Jerusalem to spy upon the enemies and to render assistance to his forces. Possibly some of these, or possibly all of these, were the considerations by which the Lord stirred up the spirit or will of Cyrus to make the proclamation of liberty to the captives of Israel.

It was not an expulsion of the Israelites from the province of Babylon, for evidently as a people they were highly esteemed by their neighbors. The proclamation merely gave liberty to those who desired that they might return to Palestine, with the king's approval: and that those who remained might not feel that the king would be offended if they gave of their substance to help the enterprise, the proclamation made special mention of the fact that such co-operation would be pleasing to the king.

We may readily suppose that the majority of those who thought upon the Lord and who trusted in the promises made to the fathers, which centered in the Holy Land and the Holy City, were poor, for it seems that in every case poverty is more favorable to religious faithfulness and zeal than wealth; and yet that there were some both wealthy and zealous is abundantly testified to by the liberal contributions made by the captives themselves for the rebuilding of the Temple. The vast majority, however, were evidently well pleased with their foreign home, in which some of them had been living for seventy years, some for seventy-eight years, and some for eighty-nine years (those carried away captive at the same time as Daniel), while many of them were born in Babylonia. Many had intermarried with their neighbors, many were immersed in business projects, and many perhaps felt themselves too old for such an undertaking. Thus did the Lord sift them, that he might gather back to the Land of Promise such only as had a fervent zeal for the Lord and full trust in his promises.

The sifting of Israel began in the separation of the two tribes from the ten tribes, for the rapid spread of idolatry in the ten tribes gradually drew those faithful to Jehovah to the two-tribe kingdom, whose king was of the line which the Lord had promised to bless. Subsequently, when the two tribes also had grievously gone into idolatry, the Lord carried them all captive to Babylon, and now he stirred up Cyrus to make a proclamation for volunteers to return to the Land of Promise. The Lord, we may be sure, did not wish the return of any except those who had reverence for him and faith in his promises. We may therefore conclude that the company which did return, numbering in all not quite fifty thousand, was composed of the very choicest of all Israel out of all the tribes, the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi being most prominently represented amongst these returning ones, as most of the faithful ones for several centuries had been found in their tribes. It should be noticed, however, in reading Ezra's account of the return from captivity, that the division of the nation of Israel was no longer recognized after the return—they are invariably spoken of as "all the people of Israel," and the sacrifices offered were for "the twelve tribes of Israel," and these statements are repeated over and over again. The ten tribes were no more "lost" than were the great body of those carried captive from Judah lost when they neglected to return under the proclamation of Cyrus.

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* See Millennial Dawn, Vol. ii, Chap. 2.

The chief men of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and Levites took the lead in the matter of accepting the provisions of King Cyrus' decree, and we read concerning the others that they were "those whose spirit God had raised to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem." In what way the Lord raised their spirit or disposition we are not informed. We may suppose, however, that those whose hearts burned with faith in the divine promises to Israel and with zeal to be and to do what would be acceptable in God's sight, would be awakened, quickened, by the decree of Cyrus, which was of God's instigation. Moreover, the Lord may have providentially directed other matters not here particularized, in channels favorable to the return of those who had confidence in him and faith in his promises. The fact that many of these returning ones were of the poorer class is implied by the statement that many of their neighbors "strengthened their hands" with presents of money, goods, beasts and other valuables. Such offers would be a great encouragement and would probably be considered as the leadings of divine providence in the direction of the return by such as were looking for providential leadings. Furthermore, the generosity of Cyrus was manifested in his sending back the precious vessels of the Temple, which must have been of immense value. The larger vessels are enumerated, in all 2499. These, with the smaller articles not specified, amounted in all to 5400, as stated in verse 11.

Sheshbazzar (otherwise called Zerubbabel, which means, "Born in Babylon"), who was of the royal family of David and Solomon, was appointed the governor of the colony, which was nevertheless subject to the Persian empire and its successors,—the kingdom authority, removed from Zedekiah at the beginning of the seventy years' desolation, never being restored to the present time—as was foretold by the Lord through the Prophet, saying, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him"—Messiah, at his second advent.

We have already seen that natural Israel's captivity in Babylon is Scripturally represented as a figure of the captivity of spiritual Israel in mystic Babylon; and that the deliverance by Cyrus was to some extent a representation of the deliverance of Spiritual Israelites from mystic Babylon by Christ; that the fall of Babylon before Cyrus was figurative of the fall of "Babylon the Great," and that the message,* "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," applied not only to literal Babylon, but also now applies to mystic Babylon. In view of these things it is but proper that we should consider Israel's return from Babylon as to some extent representing the deliverance of the zealous of spiritual Israel from mystic Babylon—a work now in progress. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

But now, as then, comparatively few, even of the consecrated class, are willing to undertake the trials and difficulties incident to the leaving of the settled affairs, comfortable quarters, contracts, engagements, etc., entered into in Babylon. The only ones disposed to risk the hardships and to go forth into the desert, leaving the strong walls and protection of sectarianism, are those who have great confidence in God and great respect for the promises made to the Seed of Abraham. The call to return to the old paths, and to rebuild the Temple of the Lord, and to replace therein the vessels of gold and silver (the precious truths of the divine Word—setting them in order as at first) is appreciated by the few only; yet these are encouraged by the Lord's providences, by the riches bestowed upon them from every quarter—not riches of an earthly kind, but of a spiritual sort,—precious truths, valuable lessons and experiences, providential leadings, etc. These encourage such as are of faithful heart to go forward and by obedience to become heirs of those glorious things that God has promised to them that love him.

As all the bitter experiences through which Israel passed were, under providential guidance, used to sift, separate, purge and purify the proper class to be ultimately brought back into the Land of Promise as the heirs of the kingdom, so the experiences through which the Lord's people have passed during the "dark ages" in captivity to Babylon, no less than through recent experiences, all tend to show us the necessity for separation from the world and its spirit, all lead us to appreciate more than ever the divine arrangements by which the Lord is making ready for himself and his service a peculiar people, zealous for the kingdom, zealous for the Lord's Word, and zealous for all good works.—Tit. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9.

It is not for those who rejoice in the Lord's promises and leadings to be sad, and to leave Babylon with regrets ("Remember Lot's wife!"), but full of joy in the Lord and hope in his good promises; saying in the language of our Golden Text,—"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Those not thus stirred in spirit may as well stay in Babylon, as they would only prove snares and stumbling blocks to others.

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* See issue Jan. 1, 1919, p. 15, letter, "A Remarkable Confirmation."

WHO MAY BE COWORKERS

SEPT. 3.—EZRA 3:10 TO 4:5.

"The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."—1 Cor. 3:17.

About four months must have been required for the return of the captives from Babylon to Palestine, for later Ezra, with a smaller company, required that length of time. (Ezra 7:9) Arriving at their destination about July or August, probably the first steps were to provide at least temporary homes amid the ruins of Jerusalem and the small towns in that vicinity. But as it was a religious motive which prompted their return —faith in God and his promises—we find, as we might reasonably expect, that very speedily after their arrival the public worship of Jehovah was begun—probably about the beginning of their "new year," October.—Verse 6.

Evidently the Lord's hand was with them, and it was of his providential guidance that their first work, in connection with the restoration of the Temple and its divinely appointed services, was the building of the altar. This will at once appeal to the intelligent Christian as an illustration of the truth so forcefully set forth in the Scriptures, that all approach to God, all reconciliation, all at-one-ment with him, must be by and through the great sacrifice for sins which Israel's altar typically represented. Vain are all the approaches to God which recognize not as their basis the sin-offering which God himself provided—the "ransom for all."—1 Tim. 2:6.

The site of the Temple was Mount Moriah, and one of the most prominent spots on that mount is supposed to have been the site of the altar. This place selected for the altar, under divine guidance, is believed to have been the same spot upon which Abraham offered his son, Isaac, the type of Christ, and received him again as from the dead in a figure, the Lord providing as his representative, upon the same spot, the ram caught in a neighboring thicket.—Gen. 22:3-13; Heb. 11:17-19.

It is supposed that this same spot was subsequently the threshing-floor of Araunah, where David offered the acceptable sacrifice to the Lord which stayed the plague. (2 Sam. 24:21-25) The Mosque of Omar now occupies the site of the ancient Temple built by Solomon; and the Mohammedans, who have great respect for the holy places, have left the site of the ancient altar exposed to view, protecting it with a railing. The visitor may there see today the very spot on which thousands of typical sin-offerings were sacrificed, the base of the various altars which were erected from time to time. It is of solid rock, and has a rather distinct groove or trench about it, which probably conducted the blood of the slain animals to what seems to be a natural drain or sewer by which the blood flowed in the direction of the Valley of Jehoshaphat—the valley of graves.

As we viewed this historic rock some years ago, and thought of the thousands of beasts slain there as types of the great ransom sacrifice, and noted the natural passageway by which the blood was carried off, our thoughts reverted to the Lamb of God, the great sacrifice for sins, and how the life which he laid down became a fountain or stream of life, not only for the dead of Israel, but all who died in Adam. The flow of blood toward the valley of graves seems to speak symbolically of life for the dead, secured through our dear Redeemer's sacrifice. But we remember that not only the bullock of the sin-offering was slain at this altar, but as well the goat of the sin-offering was slain there: not only the blood of the typical bullock, but also the blood of the typical goat, then, must have passed through that natural channel or drain; and this reminds us of how the church, as members of the body of Christ, are during this age filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, sacrificing even unto death—for we know that, as the bullock represented the great High Priest, our Lord, so the goat represented the under-priests, the church which is his body.* (Col. 1:24; Rom. 8:17) And, as we have already seen, all the members of the body of Christ, the church, must finish their course and lay down their lives, before the great work of this Atonement Day, the Gospel age, will be accomplished, and the healing and life-giving stream reaches the dead world with blessings and opportunities of eternal life.

The beginning of the offering of sacrifices in connection with the Feast of Tabernacles, at the beginning of their "new year" (in the seventh month of their civil year), was a time of special rejoicing with the Israelites—it was always the most joyous season, but on this occasion the return from Babylon and recent evidences of returning divine favor added to its joys. And immediately the work of repairing the Temple was decided upon. They had brought certain gifts from the Israelites still remaining in Babylonia, and these were added to from the means of those who had returned, and the sum thus accumulated gives good evidence of the zeal of all concerned. As nearly as we may be able to judge, the total value of the gold and silver donated would amount to about $400,000. (Ezra 2:68, 69) It would appear that this sum was of three parts of about equal proportions, one-third contributed by those who remained in Babylonia, one-third by the few wealthy of the returned Israelites, and one-third contributed by the mass of the people, about $3 each.—Nehemiah 7:71, 72.

We have never considered it proper to solicit money for the Lord's cause, after the common custom; and yet we are thoroughly convinced that there is a great blessing in giving, and that those who do not learn to give deprive themselves of a great spiritual grace, and endanger their spiritual prosperity, if not their spiritual life itself. But the giving, to be acceptable in the Lord's sight, must be voluntary—free-will offerings—"not of constraint." Accordingly, it is our judgment that money raised by the various begging devices in the name of our Lord is offensive, unacceptable to him, and does not bring his blessing either upon the givers or the work accomplished. "The Lord loveth a cheerful [willing] giver." He seeketh such to worship him as worship and serve in spirit and in truth.—2 Cor. 9:7; John 4:23, 24.

Full of zeal for the Lord's cause, the people celebrated the corner-stone laying of the new Temple with great *eclat*. One of the special features of their worship was praise, and we think it safe to say that singing the Lord's praise has been amongst the greatest blessings and privileges of worship enjoyed by the largest number of the Lord's people throughout this Gospel age also. The power to praise God in song has been conferred upon man only of all earthly creatures, and how appropriate that he should use this power to praise the King of kings!

If those Israelites, the house of servants, returning from their bondage, and remembering the covenant promises of God to them, had cause for singing and shouting Jehovah's praise, much more have we, who belong to the house of sons, great cause to tell abroad the great things which the Lord hath done for us. We were all servants of sin once, under the bondage of sin, ignorance, superstition and death, but God, through the great Cyrus, has permitted us to go free. Appropriately, therefore, our first step should be to recognize the sacrifice of the altar, and then to offer praise to him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, for "He hath put a new song into our mouths, even the loving kindness of our God."

The Apostle assures us that, however appropriate, inspiring and refreshing are the songs of our lips, still more appropriate and still more appreciated of the Lord are our heart-songs, the joy and rejoicing of the new nature—"singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord." (Eph. 5:19) And this joy and singing in the heart, this heart-thankfulness to the giver of all good, necessarily finds expression, not only in Christian carols, but also in all the acts and words of life—all of which constitute the hymn of praise and thanksgiving continually ascending before God from his people.

"My life flows on in endless song,
  Above earth's lamentation;
I catch the sweet not far-off hymn
  That hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife
  I hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in my soul;
  How can I keep from singing!"

We read, "They sang one to another in praising and giving thanks to the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever toward Israel." (*Rev. Ver.*) This is considered by some to be an indication of the Lord's will respecting Christian worship—that it should be done by choirs instead of by the congregation, and that it should be in the nature of solos and choruses. There can be no doubt whatever that selected and trained choirs can render better music than can the general average of Christians. Nor can we doubt that this would be particularly true of the time mentioned in our lesson, when musical and other education was very deficient, and when the most that the majority of people could do was to "make a joyful *noise* unto the Lord." But two things in this connection should be kept in mind:—

(1) That so far as the Christian church is concerned, the Lord has left her entirely without restrictions in such matters —to praise the Lord with heart and voice, according to her love and zeal and judgment. It is not, therefore, for one to judge another respecting the use of his love, zeal and judgment in offering the Lord worship in songs of praise, whether with instrumental accompaniment or without: it is for each individual and each church to exercise the liberty which the Lord has granted. However, we do urge that all remember that it is not the excellence of our music that will make it acceptable to our Lord. For we may well suppose that the harmonies of the heavenly choirs quite outmeasure the best efforts of earthly choirs, and hence could not hope that the Lord will receive our songs of praise because of their intrinsic merit. Their acceptance at all will be because they are expressions of the heart sentiments; and this being true all who have heart sentiments of thankfulness and gratitude should be encouraged to make "a joyful noise unto the Lord," as acceptable and pleasing to him through the merit of our Redeemer.

"Let all his children sing
  Glad songs of praise to God!
The children of the heavenly King
  Should tell their joys abroad."

(2) It should be remembered that fleshly Israel was typical, and that their priests and Levites, selected for the offering of sacrifice and for the offering of praise, typified the church, the "royal priesthood," and household of faith. We are to remember, too, that their songs of praise typified the songs and melodies of *our hearts*. From this standpoint we see that the setting apart of a special choir of Levites for praise would not be in any sense of the word a sanction or command for the selection of trained choirs, separate and distinct from the congregation of the Lord's people: indeed, it would quite contradict the common practice of hiring unbelievers to do church singing. None can offer acceptable praise to God except those who are of the priestly tribe,—"the household of faith."

Amongst those who were present at the laying of the foundation stone at the rebuilding of the Temple were some who probably as small children could dimly recollect the glorious Temple of Solomon, and who now, returning from seventy years' captivity, were eighty or more years old. These wept as they contrasted the glorious things of the past with the small beginnings before them. Doubtless there was a great contrast, and yet quite probably distance and childhood's eyes lent an enchanted glory to their recollection of the former things. But their cries were drowned with the rejoicing of hope, and this was well. So with Christians who have gotten free from Babylon, and who are seeking by the Lord's grace to build their faith again on the old foundation laid by Christ and the apostles at the beginning of this age—they are apt to think backward to the blessings and privileges of the early church, and to weep and sigh for those by-gone blessings. It is well that we should highly esteem the favors of God manifested in the primitive church, its simplicity of worship and purity of faith and apostolic privileges, to the intent that these may stand before our minds as ideals in the work of reconstructing our faith and hope and love upon the old foundation; but it would be quite improper for us to give way to weeping at such moments; rather should the necessities and exigencies of our time lead us to energy and the thought of divine favor in our deliverance from Babylon, lead us to rejoice and to sing the new song which the Lord has put into our mouths, even his loving kindness.

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* See *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices.*

"The people of the land" were of mixed nationality, placed as colonists in that portion of the country of Palestine previously occupied by the ten tribes. This colonizing of mixed peoples was in pursuance of the general policy of the Assyrian and Chaldean empires, of removing captives from their native soil to new homes, thus breaking the ties of the fatherland, destroying patriotic feelings, that by these means the sympathies and interests of the people might be the more readily attracted to and united with the one central government at Babylon.

These "people of the land" (subsequently known as Samaritans) were disposed to be friendly to the returned Israelites, and proffered their aid in the building of the Temple, but their assistance was refused, the Israelites realizing that if these "strangers" were permitted to share in the work of constructing the Temple they could with propriety claim a share also in the character of the worship which would be established therein, and they foresaw that it would open the door to laxity in religious matters, and perhaps to the old idolatry, on account of which the Lord had so severely chastised them. Their course in this matter has been freely criticised as "narrow" and ungenerous, by those who have not rightly appreciated the situation. We are to remember that God's covenants were exclusively to the seed of Abraham, and not to other peoples, who were known as Gentiles.

As an illustration of this exclusiveness, and a proof of its propriety, we note the fact that our Lord did not preach to others than the seed of Abraham, saying to his disciples, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And of himself he said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 10:5; 15:24.

It would be well for those of spiritual Israel who are now returning from captivity in the various provinces of "Babylon the Great" to remember this lesson. They find mixed peoples ready to express more or less of sympathy with them, and to offer more or less of co-operation in the re-establishment of the true worship of God in its primitive simplicity. The natural inclination would be to accept such proffered assistance, and to call every such assistant a "brother," and to accept and use not only the labor but the gold proffered, regardless of the fact that it comes not from true Israelites. Indeed, the general tendency of our time is not only to be willing to accept the money and other aid of worldly people in the Lord's service, but to beg for it, and to scheme to get it by every device conceivable,—fairs, suppers, subscriptions, collections, etc., etc. The tendency in every case must be to bring in a foreign and unsanctified influence, and to do great injury to the true Israelites. This indeed may be said to be one of the chief troubles with nominal Protestantism today. Zion is full of "strange children," and their voice and influence predominate in the business affairs of the churches, in the doctrines, etc., etc. The true Israelites in comparison are but as a little flock of sheep amongst many goats and some wolves.

When "the people of the land" found that their money and services were not acceptable, and that they could have neither part nor lot in the construction of the Lord's house, it offended them and made them enemies; and from that time onward they persistently opposed the work of the Israelites. So it will be with spiritual Israel; those who conscientiously live separate from the world in spiritual matters, and recognize as brethren in Christ only those who confess to circumcision of the heart and adoption into God's family, will find themselves opposed by moralists, liberalists and higher critics, as well as by the masses, who hate the light, because it condemns their darkness—doctrinal and otherwise. Nevertheless, this is the only good and safe course to pursue. Better far is it that only true Israelites should be recognized as brethren, and thus the wheat be separated from the tares.

Some one has well said:—"The Christian in the world is like a ship in the ocean. The ship is safe in the ocean so long as the ocean is not in the ship." One of the great difficulties with Christianity today is that it has admitted the strangers, the "people of the land," and recognized them as Christians. It does injury, not only to the Christians, by lowering their standards (for the *average* will be considered the standard), but it also injures the "strangers," by causing many of them to believe themselves thoroughly safe, and needing no conversion, because they are outwardly respectable, and perhaps frequently attendants at public worship. It lowers the standard of doctrine also, because the minister who realizes that at least three-fourths of his congregation would be repelled by the presentation of strong meat of truth, withholds the same, and permits those who need the strong meat, and could appreciate and use it to advantage, to grow weak, to starve. Furthermore, the worldly spirit and the fuller treasury have attracted "strangers" into the professed ministry of the Gospel, many of whom know not the Lord, neither his Word, and who consequently are thoroughly unprepared to feed the true sheep, were they ever so well disposed.

The lesson in connection with the building of the temple, the Lord's church, "which temple ye are," is that worldly persons, worldly methods and worldly aid and wisdom are to be rejected. As all the living stones are to be polished, fitted and prepared under the eye and direction of the great master-builder, the Lord, so all the servants, all the ministers of the truth, engaging in this work, are to be, so far as we have to do with the matter, such only as manifest a circumcision of heart, and thus show themselves to be Israelites indeed. Much and serious has been the injury done to the Lord's cause by the selection of workmen whose chief recommendation has been that they had some ability as public speakers, a good address. Rather let us remember that none may engage in this work as true Israelites unless they be in full accord with the Master-builder, and by their ability in rightly dividing the Word of Truth show themselves to be workmen that need not to be ashamed.—1 Pet. 2:5, 9; 1 Cor. 3:17; 2 Tim. 2:15.

DESPISE NOT THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS

ZECH. 4:10.

Many, as they note the mighty opposition to present truth, and the comparatively few who have ears to hear it, and hearts to obey it, are inclined to discouragement. They are in danger of despising their God-given opportunities as a "day of small things," and hence of letting slip valuable opportunities for service to God and his people. For such the Lord sends a message, saying,—"Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm [make firm] the feeble knees. Say to the timid of heart, Be strong, fear not: Behold your God! Vengeance cometh! the recompense of God. He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped."—Isa. 35:3-5.

Think of the possibilities, remembering that now as in Elijah's day there are probably more than seven thousand Israelites indeed who have not bowed the knee to Baal. But consider the possibilities within reach of the twenty thousand readers of ZION'S WATCH TOWER as follows:—

If each one will interest another one this year, it will mean 40,000 in 1900.

If all have similar zeal and success it would mean 80,000 in 1901; and 160,000 in 1902; and 320,000 in 1903; and 640,000 in 1904; and 1,280,000 in 1905.

But suppose that only one in ten of the readers are fully consecrated—their all upon the Lord's altar as "living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God" and doing "their reasonable service,"—how then would it show? Thus:—

At present 2,000; in 1900 it would show 4,000; in 1901 it would show 8,000; in 1902 it would show 16,000; in 1903 it would show 32,000; in 1904 it would show 64,000; in 1905 it would show 128,000.

But the average should be more than this. Each of the consecrated, watching and praying and improving every opportunity, and permitting no day to pass without some special witness for the Lord and his truth either by word or pen, should expect to reach more than *one* each year. If they have not averaged better than this in the past, they should seek and pray for more opportunities and especially for more wisdom to see and to use their opportunities. Let us all make sure that the Master at last can say of us as he said of one of old,—"She hath done what she could."—Mark 14:8.

Never before were there so many *possibilities* of serving the truth—God's provision for his people.

(1) All the interested may have ZION'S WATCH TOWER regularly *free* if they cannot afford the moderate subscription price, and will *write* us to that effect: or they may have it on *credit*, if they prefer it so; and if they can never pay and will write us to this effect, the debt will be *cancelled*.

(2) All TOWER readers are supplied, *free*, all the tracts

they can use—for enclosing in their letters, for distribution on railway trains, at conventions, etc. Millions of tracts are thus circulated annually.

(3) For those who can devote their time to colporteuring the Dawns and booklets every reasonable arrangement is made; and about fifty brethren and sisters are giving their time and strength in this way.

(4) For others who cannot thus "minister," the Lord has opened a new department of "Volunteers" for Sunday service in the free circulation of the "meat in due season" represented in the booklet, *The Bible vs. Evolution*. Many have taken hold of this opportunity, and at present we are unable to meet the demand as promptly as we would like. We know not what results the reaping will show, but are sure that the "reapers" are being blest and strengthened by their service.

(5) Opportunity to secure the Dawns, etc., at extremely low rates for loaning to neighbors and friends.

Evidences multiply that all those facilities for service are at a most opportune time: when the fall of Babylon from steadfastness on even the first principles of the doctrines of Christ is awakening the Lord's people and calling them to come out of her; and when they need the helping hands of true "brethren" to guide them into the light of truth now shining. For we firmly believe that all in Babylon must come out of her, if they would be of the Bride class; and that none of the "brethren" who will be amongst the "overcomers" will be left in "darkness."—See 1 Thes. 5:2-5; Rev. 3:18-22; 13:14-16; 20:4.

"Lord, increase our *faith!*" If we *believe* that we are in the "harvest" time of this age, and that the "harvest" work is in progress, and we participators in it, let us believe also that the great Chief Reaper is thoroughly able to use us as well as to bless us in his service; and let none look at clouds and discouragements, but let each do with *his might* what his hands find to do, with the eye of faith "looking unto Jesus," our Captain, and determined that, whether or not he shall be able to bring many unto the kingdom, the King shall at least have evidence of his love and zeal and effort so to do.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question.—Are not present conditions less favorable to the performance of the injunctions of Eph. 4:28, and 2 Cor. 12:15, than were the conditions at the time the Apostle wrote? Is not the labor market more glutted now than then?

Answer.—No doubt circumstances and conditions varied in the Apostle's day as they do now, but we have no reason from history to suppose that the average working man of that time was more favorably situated in wages, opportunities for labor, etc., than at present. Indeed, it is very doubtful if labor was at any time in the past as well housed, as well clothed, and generally comfortable, as at the present time. This does not mean that we consider the laboring class too well cared for at the present time—nor that we think their condition all that could be desired. Gladly would we improve, if we could, the general conditions of labor. It is well, however, that we should not cultivate in ourselves or in each other a spirit of discontent, which can do no good, but is likely to work injury; and to this end it is well that we should not deceive ourselves or others into thinking our load unendurable or harder than that of other days, when it is really better by a very great deal.

Question.—In a family of seven, when all the incomes foot up an average of $1 per day for working days, how would it be possible, after providing food, clothing, rent and fuel, to put by anything or to give away anything?

Answer.—If you mean that the total income of seven persons is only $1 a day, $6 a week, we admit that it is small, and that it would require extraordinary economy to "provide things decent." But permit a kindly suggestion, dear brother, that there should be no family of seven persons at the present time unable to earn more than $6 per week—unless through some accident, some misfortune. A man who cannot earn more than a dollar a day ought to consider very earnestly the question whether or not he could afford to get married, and assume the responsibilities of a father, and any woman asked to become a wife should give earnest thought to the financial side of the problem before accepting such an invitation. Circumstances and prospects may have been more favorable at the time of marriage, but so soon as such circumstances became unfavorable the propagation of a family, for which only an unsatisfactory provision could be made, should not have continued—continence, self-denial, should be practiced by Christians under such circumstances, and be considered not merely a "virtue," but a "duty." Nor should they unduly bemoan their lot, but on the contrary remember what the Scriptures so clearly set forth—that the heavenly Father knoweth what things his children have need of. By cheerfully seeking to conform to the proper necessities of the case, and accepting such as divine providences in the case of the consecrated, a great blessing may result, for, as the Apostle declares, "All things work together for good to them that love God—to the called ones according to his purpose."

Question.—Under such circumstances, how is the father to follow the Scriptural injunction to lay up for his children? Did Mary make provision for her son Jesus? Did not the son make provision for the parent?

Answer.—"How just are God's commands,
How wise his precepts are!"

Scriptural injunctions we may understand to be applicable only so far as it is possible for us to follow them. If we find it impossible to lay by anything, we may consider ourselves excused from this provision or advice. But our *effort* should be to follow the Scriptural injunction, if it should only be to lay aside one or two or five cents out of each day's earnings. The Lord should at least see our effort to follow his instructions, and we would surely have a blessing in such endeavors.

We do not understand the Apostle to mean that aged parents should slave themselves to provide for grown and healthy children. While the offspring are children their future welfare should be provided for by reasonable education, etc., and when such children are grown, they should take pleasure in caring for their aged parents. Mary was probably at least fifty-five years of age when Jesus, having evidently cared for her himself, committed her at his death to the care of John. And the Apostle shows that his thoughts on the subject were in full harmony with this, for, when speaking of widows, he says, "If any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home [by caring for their dependent relatives], and to requite their parents: for this is good and acceptable before God."—1 Tim. 5:4.

Question.—Is there not in the Scriptures quoted a cold business tone, indicating that man's wisdom had more to do with them than the spirit of the Lord, who so tenderly spoke of the Father's care and love, and who must have known to what straits many of his people would be brought in taking up his cross and following on, and the separation from worldly ways and means of obtaining a living—clubs, labor unions, church unions, etc., in harmony with the injunction, "Come out from among them and be ye separate"?

Answer.—No, dear brother; we are to consider that the same holy spirit guided in all the writings of the apostles, and that God's Word is not yea and nay. Surely no Scripture writer more prominently or more fully set forth the Lord's love and care for his people, and the necessity for full separation from the world, than did the Apostle Paul who wrote the Scriptures which you criticise.

On the other hand, we are to realize that the circumstances in which we are placed have not come to us by accident, but, according to the Scriptures, have come to us under direct supervision of God,—if we are his consecrated people. Consequently, instead of repining, rebelling and bemoaning, we are to accept the Lord's provision as being the *best* for us, as "new creatures," according to his divine wisdom. We are to seek to do as nearly as he has directed us as lies within our power, and the remainder entirely beyond our power we should take to the Lord in prayer, asking increase of wisdom, increase of grace, increase of strength, to know and to do his will more and more perfectly for the future, and whatever may have been our errors in the past, our loving Father has made abundant provision in Christ for our forgiveness and aid. And doubtless God's reason for permitting some of our experiences is that we may learn just such lessons necessary to the shaping and moulding of our characters into most perfect harmony with the divine pattern, our Lord Jesus.

Question.—In the Old Testament we read, "Trust in the Lord and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed." I would like to know whether or not this and similar Old Testament expressions are applicable to the called-out ones of this Gospel age, or were they merely applicable to the Jewish age, when, according to the Law Covenant, God gave temporal rewards for obedience?

Answer.—As heretofore pointed out, the promises to fleshly Israel were temporal and, as you suggest, guaranteed temporal prosperity as a reward for obedience. But are the promises to the Lord's faithful ones of this Gospel age smaller or less precious, because they do not guarantee riches and friends and freedom from blight and drouth? May we not realize that the promises made to us are much more comprehensive, having the promise of the life which now is, and also of that which is to come? (1 Tim. 4:8) Is it not still true, and most abundantly emphasized in the New Testament, that "No *good* thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly"? If all things work together for *good* to them that love God, we may be sure that if riches or ease or luxury are withheld from us, they are withheld for our blessing; and we may rejoice in such evidences of the divine care. Is it not in the New Testament that the Apostle declares, "Godliness with contentment is great gain"? and must not therefore contentment be a possible thing to those who will live godly in this present time, even though they suffer persecution, and even though they be not so prosperous in temporal matters as some others?

The lesson of *faith*, dear brother, is an important one for all to learn and, if we are slow in learning it, we will probably be kept under the necessary experiences that much the longer—because the Father loveth us and seeketh in us this good quality. Faith will not look at any of the divine arrangements as unkind or cold, but will see in them all, and in all of life's experiences, the very blessing most needed, and can sing,

"Content, whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

Question.—Please consider, briefly, the following Scriptures additional to those recently sent you:—Phil. 4:10, 15-17; 1 Cor. 4:14; 2 Cor. 11:8, 9; Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 10:11.

Answer.—These Scriptures seem to be along the same lines as those considered in our last issue, to which we again refer all readers. We consider them in order.

(1) Phil. 4:10, 15-17:—This Scripture indicates that the Apostle, who was giving his entire time to the ministry of the Gospel, labored at tent-making or other secular business only when such a course was made necessary in providing things honest in the sight of all men—and rather than be burdensome to any, or even to request assistance. The Apostle here recognizes as the Lord's judgment that any laborer is worthy of his keep, unless he has missed his calling, or is incapacitated. The Apostle did not mistake his calling, and if the church recognized him as a servant called of the Lord and being used effectively in the ministry of reconciliation, it then became their privilege to co-operate with him in that ministry by supplying his temporal needs. And in the case of the church at Philippi it would appear from the Apostle's testimony that they had appreciated and used their opportunities properly and repeatedly. Not all are talented for public service of the truth, and whenever one is discovered by the brethren to have special gifts and talents and zeal for the ministry he should be encouraged in that direction, and the others less qualified in these respects should take pleasure in assisting such an one, and thus they would be reckoned as having a share with him in the fruit of their combined labors.

In the Apostle's case there was no room to doubt that his ministry was owned and accepted of the Lord, and that he was an apostle—one specially sent forth, and whose services were specially guided by the Master; and that his entire time was given to the work and was needed for the work.

(2) 1 Cor. 4:14:—The context preceding shows that the Apostle felt considerably hurt that the church at Corinth, which he himself had established through the preaching of the gospel, had been quickly turned aside by false teachers, who had denied Paul's apostleship. The church at Corinth had seemingly flourished financially and socially, and suffered little persecution. They were correspondingly unable to rightly sympathize with the Apostle in his active ministry of the truth, and the many hazardous incidents connected therewith. In the context he addresses them rather ironically, saying, "We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised, ... and labor, working with our hands." In the 14th verse the Apostle assures his readers that he is not so writing in order to cause them pain and shame, but to awaken them to a proper appreciation of the true situation, to the intent that they might be to a larger extent co-laborers with him—sharers in the sufferings of Christ, that in due time also they might have share in the glory to follow.

(3) 2 Cor. 11:8, 9:—These verses show us that the Apostle was careful to avoid the money question in his preaching. He never so much as asked assistance from the Corinthians while he was with them; not that he would have refused to accept assistance if it had been tendered, nor that he considered that it would have been any less than their duty and privilege to have assisted him, but that he had confidence that the Lord would supply his necessities in the best way, and was willing rather to present the Word of God without charge, to the intent that his ministry should be the more impressive, as an exhibition of the fact that he sought not their money but their highest welfare. He assured them of this by letter afterward, explaining to them that others had been more careful to look after his necessities than they, and had a corresponding blessing. The Apostle wrote of the matter subsequently, not because he desired a gift, but because he realized that whoever receives the truth into a good and honest heart and is really benefited by it must partake of its spirit of generosity, and do his share in forwarding the truth, else he will go backward and lose some of the blessing and light already received.

(4) Luke 6:38:—This verse represents the general principle of divine dealing—"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," and causes his smile and blessing to rest upon such, whereas those who receive the Lord's favor and fail to be exercised by the spirit of benevolence, receive correspondingly less of spiritual blessing.

(5) 2 Cor. 10:11:—This does not signify that if the Apostle wrote them respecting benevolence in money matters he would also preach to them upon this subject. His own expressions clearly indicate that he did not follow this course, and that his writing upon the subject of money-giving was from a standpoint wholly separate from any solicitations on his own account. The context shows that he was reproving some one in the church who had been walking according to the flesh and not according to the spirit, and his declaration here is that he would speak in the same denunciatory manner if he were present with them.

The day-time I spent looking up the odd ones, and hard work it was. London is such a big place, and some districts ten or more miles apart. I called upon our dear Brother Hart and spent some little time with him, besides seeing him three times at our meetings. Brother Guard is another dear brother, to all appearances sincerely desirous of pleasing God. He is rather stern in countenance, but very kindly in disposition, and I believe he does his best for the brethren. We had a good time together. Our meetings were attended by forty or more people, all apparently deeply interested. I found their meetings had been, to my mind, rather too open, inasmuch as they allow interruption at any time; indeed, they had taken the form of conversation more than not. As Brother Guard has some ability, I counseled him to develop the idea of worship more than they had, and let questions be asked and answered afterwards if need be. Or, in many cases it would be altogether preferable that a newly interested one should be allowed private opportunity rather than a whole company should be kept waiting whilst every old question is again threshed out.

There is, as you have often said, a tendency, when one is freed from Babylon's bondage, to swing to the other extreme not only in doctrine but ceremonies, and some forget the prime object of meeting together,—worship. I am thankful to God for Brother Guard and the dear brethren with him.

There was much to encourage one. One feels more than repaid by the hearty words "God bless you!" The brethren generally seemed helped and encouraged by my visit. Perhaps some of this was due to the form of worship we had. I judged the brethren were needing exhortation, and by the grace of God I was enabled to encourage them.

I was unable to get but a short time with Brother Sheward, but I was satisfied with even that. He was courteous, —one could expect that,—but he is developing a cynical trait of character, I am sorry to say. "I suppose you have some difference with Brother R., Brother Sheward?" "Well, yes! a little theoretically, but *practically nil*." This I found to be quite in error, for the practical difference is as between light and darkness. He could not define his position. On my saying it was negative, he admitted that was so. He denies the "high calling;" does not know what to hope for; neither does he know his position as touching the world, thinking there is probably the same hope for it as for us now. I pointed out to him how that his philosophy left a vacuum; which he also admitted. His chief claim is that *none* have understood or been "begotten of the Spirit" since the apostles' days, that Brother R. has made a brave attempt at the elucidation of the mystery, but has failed. "Brother R. has done a great work and is now exhausted; nothing more need be expected from him." Presumably we are to look to Brother Sheward (seeing he is not exhausted) for any further developments of truth (?).

I should say that Brother Sheward's theory of a spirit-begotten condition is "an ability to ring up Peter, for instance, and ask his statement as to an interpretation, etc." So we are to come to Spiritism by a new route. What assured him chiefly was that all the company meeting with him were agreed. As I asked for some Scripture for this or that statement, he admitted he could not prove, but claimed that I must disprove. There was not much opportunity for that, he was so busy telling me of his beliefs. Well! I came away quite sad, but assured, nothing could be done while he was in the same mind. To me it is another case of "the wisdom of this age." What a need for those who have responsibilities to guard themselves well! I did not seek opportunities of interviewing the members of his flock. He invited me to stay over Sunday and *listen* to them when they had a better opportunity of telling me, but I declined.

It seems as if the truth received into any other than "good ground" (sincere hearts) creates an insatiable desire for new things; and if nothing *new* be forthcoming, something must be *invented.*

I will write again shortly after I have given the brethren in Liverpool a call. With kindest good wishes in the Lord, I am, dear Brother,

Yours in the Lord, JESSE HEMERY,—*England.*

AN INTERESTING LETTER

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—At last I managed to get to London to see the brethren, being hindered from an earlier visit. Brother Guard very kindly provided for me whilst there. I found in London both that which cheered and that which made me sad. It may be said that there are three classes; (1) the scattered ones, whom I found generally lacking in interest; (2) a company who meet regularly in the north of London, and who reside chiefly in the West and North. Brother Sheward, as far as I could judge, is the main-stay of this meeting, which is now getting beyond things we understand; and (3) a meeting in Stratford, East London, which meets in Brother Guard's home and is in full sympathy with the TOWERS and DAWNS. It was with these all my meetings were held. I went on the 8th of June and held meetings the same day, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings, Sunday afternoon and evening, and Tuesday.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE PEACE CONFERENCE FAILURE

Czar Nicholas II. was no doubt greatly disappointed with the barren result of his recent Peace Conference. Called specially to induce a general disarmament on the part of civilized nations and for the institution of national courts of arbitration, the convention may be said to have failed utterly, in that the question of disarmament was totally rejected by Germany and therefore of necessity by her neighbors. The German emperor evidently realized that the disbandment of his great army would not only leave him with less power, but would throw another million able-bodied men upon Germany's labor market seeking employment, further depressing wages and precipitaing a panic and anarchy. He did the wisest thing for the present: but no human wisdom can long avert the impending time of trouble when there shall be no hire for man nor hire for beast, and no peace to him that goeth out nor to him that cometh in, because every man's hand shall be against (in competition with) his neighbor. (Zech. 8:10) The growth of intelligence is being fostered by the schooling connected with these standing armies, and labor-saving machinery is fast bringing these to the place where their increased intelligence will make them the more discontented and the less willing to step backward into serfdom at the command of giant Trusts.

Of the twenty-seven nations represented at the conference, sixteen agreed to favor and to seek to promote arbitration in settlements of national disputes, and about as many agreed to certain modifications of cruelties of war, which they evidently do not hope are ended. How evident it is that not humanity and not councils, but God who shall "speak peace to the Gentiles [the nations]."—Zech. 9:10.

And his voice commanding "Peace" will be in a very different tone from what is generally expected.—In tones that will shake not only the earth [social structure] but also the heavens [the ecclesiastical structure], he shall, by that awful time of anarchy when all the selfish passions of mankind shall be let loose, say—"Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the Gentiles, I will be exalted in the earth."—Psa. 46:8-10.

"KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED"—AND "THERE SHALL BE A TIME OF TROUBLE SUCH AS WAS NOT SINCE THERE WAS A NATION"

Another illustration of the fact that the impending trouble is being hastened and not hindered by education, comes to our knowledge. The security of the past was due, less to the fact that men were better in olden times than now, than to the fact that general intelligence being less men did not so well know how to do evil. A general increase of knowledge not accompanied by a conversion to righteousness and subjugation to the law of love is dangerous at the present time. The time for such general enlightenment will come safely when the kingdom of the Lord has been established and when its iron rule will hold in check the evilly-disposed, and teach them lessons of swift retribution.

The illustration of this subject is again in Russia, where, as noted a short time ago, the privilege of high-school and college education were greatly restricted by government authority. Now we clip the following respecting the unrest of the educated classes in Russia from the London *Spectator:*—

"The signs of unrest in Russia multiply. Apart from the local insurrections caused by the prevailing scarcity, which in some places, notably Kazan, are serious, there are the troubles which we noticed last week; and now the University students are in mutiny. Their real grievance is the brutality with which every expression of their feelings is suppressed by the Cossack police, who strike them with their whips, arrest, and otherwise maltreat them. The students have combined to protest against this treatment, and between their strikes and expulsions thirty thousand young men have left the universities, whose doors are closed in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kieff, Kharkoff, Odessa, Kazan, Tomsk and Warsaw. The female students will, it is stated, follow the example of the men, and are much more dangerous, as they at once become revolutionaries. Indeed, there would seem from some documents published to be small revolutionary parties embedded in the movement. As each student has many families interested in his success, the matter is a serious one for the government, which once again finds itself in collision with the whole educated class. Nothing will, or can, happen in Russia until the military class is discontented, or the Empire finds a reforming Czar, but no government likes to feel itself hated by the class, from which, after all, it must draw all its own agents. There is, however, no remedy to be perceived, except through the Emperor, and Nicholas II., tho he wishes thoroughly well to his people, has no strength of initiative."

PRESBYTERIANISM IN SCOTLAND

The claim is often set forth that Presbyterianism is drifting from its ancient moorings: and we regard this as having both a favorable and unfavorable aspect. It is favorable to the intelligence and heart of these people to find increasingly large numbers of them unwilling to admit the unreasonable side of the doctrine of election—that God predestinated the torture of hundreds of millions of his creatures before their creation and made provision for it by the creation of a vast torture-chamber called "hell" and the preparation of vast quantities of fuel for their torture. It is unfavorable when we find them drifting toward infidelity—the rejection of Christ's redemptive work and the gospel set forth in the Bible—under the influence of a higher criticism and evolution doctrine. And it appears that this movement is not confined to this country. An evidently well informed writer in the *N. Y. Tribune* says of this *progress* in Scotland,—

"Professor Briggs would not have been molested in the church founded by John Knox. On the contrary, he would have found in it scholars and thinkers like-minded with himself. Open-mindedness is the characteristic of the Scottish church. Implicitly, if not explicitly, truth is the first article of its creed, and all the other dogmatic articles of its creed are interpreted in the light of the truth. It is true the Biblical scholars and theologians of Scotland are more conservative than those of Germany. But, for all that, some of them would have as hard a time in the American Presbyterian church as Professor Briggs had. Nor is that all. A ritualistic tendency has grown up in the Scottish church that has for its object the restoration of some liturgical and ceremonial features that were discarded at the Reformation. This movement meets with a sympathetic response from the people in the larger towns, and bids fair to revolutionize the church. Only in the remote country districts will one find the typical Presbyterians of the old days, and as they die there are none to take their places. Thus, in spite of its strong government and its uncompromising creed, Scottish Presbyterianism finds itself moving along in the stream of tendency.

"But most remarkable of all is the drift away from the severe conception of life and religion that characterized the Scottish reformers. During the last few years there has been a noteworthy change of sentiment in regard to the observance of the Sabbath. Not long ago Principal Story, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Scottish church, preached a sermon on Sabbath observance in Edinburgh. In this sermon he made a strong plea for a less rigid observance of the day, and especially for the opening of clubs, public gardens, museums, art galleries and libraries."

If all the "old fashioned" Christians are dying out of the Presbyterian church and few or none of this class now being developed, and if this church is a fair sample of all churches, what can we expect? Just what the Master implied when speaking of the present time he said, "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find the faith on the earth?"—Luke 18:8.

It is the *errors* in the creeds of all churches that are causing the overthrow of the truths which they all hold, and which the errors discredit. Let all who have the true light now shining be zealous to lend a helping hand to these dear brethren—especially to the "old fashioned" ones.

BELIEVERS' CONVENTIONS—BOSTON AND ST. LOUIS

Two more Believers' Conventions are called under the auspices of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, as follows:—

At Boston, Mass., commencing Friday, Sept. 22d, at ten o'clock A. M., and lasting three days.

At St. Louis, Mo., commencing Friday, Oct. 6th, at ten o'clock A. M., and lasting three days.

At this writing we are unable to give full particulars respecting the program and speakers, except that the Editor of this journal will probably speak each afternoon, and that Pilgrim McPhail is expected to take part in the Boston Convention, while Pilgrims Draper, Willis and Ransom may be expected at St. Louis. The hours for meetings will be the same for both conventions; *viz.*,

Friday, 10 A. M., opening "rally" led by representatives of the home churches whose guests we will be, and who promise us a warm welcome. At 2 P. M., a Testimony Meeting. At 3 P. M., a discourse. At 7 P. M., a Testimony Meeting. At 8 P. M., a discourse.

Saturday, 9 A. M., a Testimony Meeting; at 10.30 A. M., a discourse; at 2.30 P. M., a discourse on Baptism, its import and its symbol,—with opportunities offered for its symbolization by any who may so desire. At 7 P. M., a Praise Meeting; at 7.45 P. M., a discourse illustrated by a large Chart of the Ages.

Sunday, at 9 A. M., a Prayer and Testimony Meeting; at 10.30 A. M., a discourse illustrated by the Chart of the Ages; at 2 P. M., Praise Service; at 3 P. M., a discourse; at 7.30 P. M., several speakers, subject, Preserving the Unity of the Spirit in the Bonds of Peace.

All Christians who trust in the precious blood of Christ for justification are cordially invited to convene with us for the study of our Father's Word;—and especially such of these as have made or desire to make full consecration of their justified selves to the service of the Father through the merit and mediation of our Redeemer-King.

RAILROAD RATES, ETC.

The Boston Convention is timed so as to give us the advantage of the "Congregational Convention," held at the same time. *Special* tickets should be inquired for at once, that the Railroad agents may have them on hand at proper time. These special tickets will cost full fare *going;* and will have an agreement attached, pledging the Ry. to sell a return ticket for *one-third* of full fare for return journey. Thus the round trip rates will be two-thirds of the usual. Get full particulars of your ticket agent.

The St. Louis Convention is timed to take advantage of the low rates granted to the "St. Louis Fair," *viz., one fare* for the round trip. These tickets will be on sale Oct. 2d to 7th and will be good for return until Oct. 10th. Remember that our Convention date there is 6th to 8th.

ACCOMMODATIONS, ETC.

Good, comfortable, clean accommodations will be arranged for at the rate of one dollar per day—board and lodging,—two in a bed (fifty cents extra where separate bed is insisted on). WATCH TOWER subscribers too poor to pay these moderate charges will be provided for, if they will request entertainment as *"the Lord's poor."*

This will be the only notification of these conventions,

DECIDE AT ONCE AND, IF COMING, NOTIFY US

as there will be no other issue of this journal in this form until Nov. 1, the special issue (DAWN, VOL. V.) taking the place of the Sept. and Oct. issues.

Therefore, decide as quickly as possible whether or not you will attend either of these conventions. If your decision is to go, write to the Watch Tower Office, heading your letter with the word *convention.* Tell us how many there will be of your party—males and females—and whether you desire us to secure $1 a day accommodations for you, or whether you desire provision as the *Lord's poor,* as above. Also state by what railway you will come and, if possible, the hour of your arrival. So far as possible there will be a Reception Committee to take charge of all comers at trains; and they may be known by their displaying a copy of MILLENNIAL DAWN or the WATCH TOWER. But more than this, your letter will be so answered as to give you full information how to find the lodging and meeting places.

Dear Brethren and Sisters, let all who attend these conventions go to them full of earnest desire to get good, and so far as possible to do good to others;—full of the spirit of loving devotion and prayer. All such will surely experience a great blessing—a feast of fat things, in fellowship with our Lord and his brethren.

"UNTO THE PURE ALL THINGS ARE PURE"

"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful nothing is pure; but both their mind and conscience are defiled: they profess to have known God, but by their works they renounce him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work worthless."—Tit. 1:15, 16.

Not sinners, not the worldly, are thus spoken of by the Apostle, but those who have enjoyed the truth, and who have enjoyed at least the first step in heart-purification, namely, justification; and whose hearts have become defiled through a failure to maintain in them the law of love as the ruling principle. Instead of being filled with love, selfishness, with its defilement, has been received back as the ruling principle of the heart. Such have the spirit of the world, and sometimes exercises it with a much greater degree of animosity than the world exhibits. They are specially ready, as the Apostle intimates, to impugn the conduct and motives of others; being selfish themselves, they attribute selfishness to everyone else; being impure themselves, they attribute impurity to others; having lost the spirit of love which thinketh no evil, their hearts rapidly fill up with selfish, envious, uncharitable, ungodly, unkind sentiments, toward those who are true, sincere and noble.

We have known such to go even to the extreme of impugning the motives of the great Jehovah and our Lord Jesus Christ. Unable to think of love and benevolence as motives for conduct, and accustomed in their own hearts to think merely of selfishness and personal aggrandizement as motives, they view the divine course from this standpoint, and esteem that God was moved by pride to recover man from sin and death, or by vanity, to show what he could do. They claim that our Lord Jesus was moved by selfish motives, of self-gratification, honor, increase of power, in becoming our Redeemer. They think of the loyalty of the angels from a selfish standpoint, as in hope of advancement, or in fear of punishment. Who can bring a clean thought out of an unclean heart? Who can expect benevolence, generous feelings, sentiments or words, except hypocritically, from a heart in which selfishness has the control? Who would expect generous considerations in a mind full of envy and self-seeking?

The Apostle suggests of such that not only their minds become corrupted, but also their consciences; so that they will do evil, speak evil, think evil, and yet their consciences do not reprove them; because their consciences and minds work in harmony, and, as the Scriptures declare, they become blinded, self-deceived. What a terrible condition this is, and how careful all of the Lord's people should be not only to have pure hearts, pure minds, but also to keep their consciences very tender, in close accord with the word of the Lord. This condition can only be maintained by judging ourselves, and that strictly and frequently, by the standard which God has given us, his law of love.

"I want the first approach to feel
Of pride or fond desire;
To catch the wandering of my will,
And quench the kindling fire."

As the Apostle points out, those whose minds become impure, poisoned by ambition or pride or selfishness, the spirit of evil, professing to have known God are apt to profess as loudly as ever, sometimes, indeed, becoming boastful of how much they know of God, and of his Word, and of how wise they are as respects its interpretation. Not by boasting of professions, therefore, can we always judge who are of pure minds and of good consciences, and in full harmony with the Lord. Rather by their fruits we shall know them, as the Master said—by their works, as the Apostle here points out. If any profess to know God, and yet by their works renounce him, we are fully justified in questioning whether or not they may not be self-deceived, whether or not their consciences, as well as their minds, may not have become defiled.

To renounce the Lord in our works, does not necessarily mean a resort to murder, robbery, licentiousness, etc. It means rather, in the beginning at least, that from the hitherto good fountain of a cleansed or renewed heart or will, from which issues purity, truth, sweetness, kindness, encouragement and refreshment for all who drank of its waters, in the home and family and neighborhood and amongst the Lord's people, would issue instead bitter waters, producing bitter feelings, watering and nourishing roots of bitterness, stirring up malice, envy, hatred, strife, etc. No wonder the Apostle says of such that they are abominable! All who have the spirit of the Lord must abominate the spirit of evil, however surprised and grieved they may be to find it issuing from one who previously gave forth sweetness, love, kindness, good works.

As the Master declared, if the professedly sweet fountain sends forth bitter waters, we may know that there is something wrong, something defiling, in the fountain, and are not to deceive ourselves respecting its waters, and to partake of its bitterness.

Commenting along the same line the Apostle James declares, "If any man among you *seemeth* to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain." Because the tongue is the index of the heart, because "out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh," therefore the unbridled tongue speaking selfishly, enviously, bitterly, boastfully, slanderously, proves that the heart from whose fullness these overflow is unsanctified, unholy, grievously lacking of the spirit of Christ,—hence, whatever religion it may have attained is thus far vain, as that heart is not saved nor in a salvable condition. No wonder the Apostle comments in our text, that such are "disobedient," only by disobedience to the law of the New Covenant, love, could anyone reach such a condition of heart and conscience defilement, after he had been purified through faith in the precious blood, and consecrated to the Lord.

The final statement of our text is that such an one, having lost the *spirit* of the truth, and having obtained instead a spirit of bitterness, rancor, evil, having a poisoned or defiled mind and conscience, is "to every good work *worthless*." No matter what work such an one might undertake to do, it would surely be spoiled, because the spirit of evil, the spirit of pride, the spirit of selfishness, the spirit of malice and envy, are so violently in opposition to every feature of righteousness and goodness and truth and love, that there can be no peace, no co-operation between them. And this reminds us of our Lord's words, to the effect that those who are his people and who have his spirit, are "the salt of the earth,"—preservative, so long as they have this spirit; but, as he suggests, if the salt lose its saltness—if the Christian lose those peculiar features of the spirit of Christ which constitute him different from the world, separate from the world, and a salting or preservative quality in the world—if he should lose these, what?—he would be worthless as bad salt, "to every good work worthless."—Tit. 1:16.

What course should be pursued by those who find themselves possessed of impure minds,—minds inclined to surmise evil rather than good, envious minds, selfish, resentful, bitter, unforgiving, minds, which love only those that love and flatter them? Is there any hope for these? Would God not utterly reject such?

God is very pitiful, and it was while all were thus "in the very gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity" that he provided for our redemption. There is hope for all such who see their defilement and who desire to be cleansed.

"His blood can make the foulest clean;
His blood avails for me."

But true repentance means both contrition and reformation: and for help in the latter we must go to the Great Physician who alone can cure such moral sickness; and of whom it is written, "Who healeth all thy diseases." All of his sanctified ones, it is safe to say, were at one time more or less diseased thus, and proportionately "*worthless*" for his service. True, it is worse for those who were once cleansed, if they "like the sow return to the wallowing in the mire" of sin,—but still there is hope, if the Good Physician's medicine be taken persistently the same as at first. The *danger* is that the *conscience*, becoming defiled, will so pervert the judgment that bitterness is esteemed to be sweetness, and envy and malice to be justice and duty, and the "mire" of sin to be beauty of holiness. Then only is the case practically a hopeless one.

SOME OF THE GOOD PHYSICIAN'S ANTIDOTES FOR HEART IMPURITY

The Good Physician has pointed out antidotes for soul-poisoning,—medicines which if properly taken according to directions will sweeten the bitter heart. Instead of envy it will produce love; instead of malice and hatred and strife, love and concord; instead of evil-speaking and backbiting and scandal mongering it will produce the love which thinketh no evil and which worketh no ill to his neighbor; which suffereth long and is kind, which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, which never faileth and which is the spirit of the Lord and the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Let us all take these medicines, for they are good not only for the violently sick, but for the convalescing and the well. The following are some of the prescriptions:—

(1) "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he [the Lord] is pure."—1 John 3:3.

The hope mentioned is that we have been adopted as sons of God, with the promise that if faithful we shall be like him and see him as he is and share his glory. As our minds and hearts expand with this hope and we begin to measure its lengths and breadths, its heights and depths, it surely does set before us the heavenly Father's love and the Redeemer's love in rainbow colors and we more and more love the Father and the Son because they first loved us. The divine form of love becomes more and more our ideal; and as we seek to reciprocate it and to copy it, the cleaning and purifying of our hearts follows: for looking into the perfect law of liberty—love—we become more and more ashamed of all the meanness and selfishness which the fall brought to us. And, once seen in their true light as works of the flesh and of the devil, all anger malice, wrath, envy, strife, evil-speaking, evil-surmising, backbiting and slander become more and more repulsive to us. And finally when we see that such as to any degree sympathize with these evil qualities are unfit for the kingdom and to every good work worthless, we flee from these evils of the soul as from deadly contagion. Our hearts (wills, intentions) become pure at once and we set a guard not only upon our lips but also upon our thoughts—that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts may be acceptable to the Lord.

(2) "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and *purify* unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."—Titus 2:14.

We might theorize much and very correctly upon how and when and by whom we were redeemed; but this all would avail little if we forget *why* we were redeemed. The redemption was not merely a redemption from the power of the grave;—it was chiefly "*from all iniquity.*" And the Lord is not merely seeking a peculiar people, but specially a people peculiarly cleansed, purified. This medicine will surely serve to purge us from iniquity if we are anxious to make our calling and election sure.

(3) "Pursue righteousness, fidelity, love, peace, with all who call upon the Lord with a pure heart."—2 Tim. 2:22.

We not only need to start right, but also to *pursue* a right course. We may not follow unrighteousness even for a moment; whatever it may cost, justice and righteousness must be followed. But here a difficulty arises with some: they do not know how to judge righteous judgment. They are too apt to judge according to rumor or appearances, or to accept the judgment of scribes and Pharisees as did the multitude which cried, "Crucify him! His blood be upon us and upon our children." Had they followed righteousness they would have seen the Lord's character in his good works as well as in his wonderful words of life: they would have seen that so far from being a blasphemer he was "holy, harmless, separate from sinners;" they would have seen that his accusers were moved by envy and hatred.

And it is just as necessary as ever to follow the Lord's injunction, "Judge righteous judgment," and whoever neglects it brings down "blood" upon his own head and becomes a sharer in the penalty due to false accusers. For as the Lord was treated so will his "brethren" be treated. And the more pure our hearts the less will they be affected by slanders and backbitings and evil-speakings, and the more will we realize that those who have bitter hearts from which arise bitter words are impure fountains in which is the gall of bitterness and not the sweetness of love.

Next comes fidelity, that is, faithfulness. The Lord declares his own fidelity or faithfulness and declares himself a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And even the worldly recognize fidelity as a grace: and by such it is often given first place; for many would commit theft or perjury through fidelity to a friend. But notice that God's Word puts righteousness *first.* Fidelity, love and peace can only be exercised in harmony with righteousness; but unrighteousness not being proven against a brother, our fidelity and love and peace toward him must continue, and indeed must increase in proportion as envy and slander and all the fiery darts of the Wicked One assail him "without a cause." This valuable prescription will help to keep our hearts free from the poison and bitterness of roots of bitterness which the Adversary keeps busily planting.

Justice is *purity* of heart—freedom from injustice.

Righteousness is *purity* of heart—freedom from unrighteousness.

Love is *purity* of heart—freedom from selfishness.

(4) "Seeing ye have *purified* your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit [the spirit of the truth] unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart, fervently."—1 Pet. 1:22.

This medicine is for those who have used the other prescriptions and gotten clean. It points out that the purity came not merely through *hearing* the truth, nor through *believing* the truth, but through *obeying* it. And not merely a *formal* obedience in outward ceremony and custom and polished manner, but through obedience to the *spirit* of truth—its real import. All this brought you to the point where the love of the "brethren" of Christ was *unfeigned,* genuine. At first you treated all with courtesy, or at least without impoliteness; but many of them you did not *like,* much less did you love them: they were poor, or shabby, or ignorant, or peculiar. But obeying the *spirit* of the truth you recognized that all who trust in the precious blood and are consecrated to the dear Redeemer and seeking to follow his leadings are "brethren," regardless of race or color or education or poverty or homeliness. You reached the point where your heart is so free from envy and pride and selfishness, and so full of the spirit of the Master, that you can honestly say, I love all the "brethren" with a love that is sincere and not at all feigned.

Now having gotten thus far along in the good way, the Lord through the Apostle tells us what next—that we may preserve our hearts pure—"See that ye love one another with a pure heart *fervently* [intensely]." Ah, yes, the pure heart must not be forgotten, else it might be but a step from pure love into a snare of the Adversary, carnal love. But the pure love is not to be cold and indifferent: it is to be so warm and so strong that we would be willing to "lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:16.

With such a love as this burning as incense to God upon the altar of our hearts there will be no room there for any selfish, envious thoughts or words or deeds. Oh, how blessed would all the gatherings of the "brethren" be, if such a spirit pervaded all of them! Can we doubt that, if it held sway in one-half or one-third or even one-fourth, it would speedily exercise a gracious influence upon all—for righteousness and fidelity and love and peace, and against envy, strife, malice, slanders and backbitings?

Let all the "brethren" more and more take these medicines which tend to sanctify and prepare us for the Master's service, here and hereafter.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

HOW CAN WE "GIVE TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH"?

Question.—What is the meaning of our Lord's words in Luke 6:30, "Give to every man that asketh?"

Answer.—Our Lord's discourse, of which this is a part, is given more fully, more completely, in Matt. 5:40-44. From Matthew's account it would appear that our Lord meant that when we are brought under compulsion, legally, we are to submit gracefully, and not to harbor resentment or grudgings. For instance, he says, "If any man *sue thee at the law,* and take away thy coat [by legal process], do not refuse him the cloak also." It does not follow that we are to allow him to take coat and cloak, etc., without the process of law-suit and compulsion. But whether we think the legal decision a just or an unjust one, we, as the Lord's disciples, are to be so law-abiding that we will offer not the slightest resistence to the enforcement of the legal decision, tho it take from us everything.

We should interpret Matt. 5:42, and Luke 6:30 in harmony with the foregoing, and assume that the asking means a *demand,* a compulsion. As for instance, if a highway robber were to "ask" or demand your money (as was much more customary in olden times than now, under present police regulations), surrender it without a fight. That this is the proper view is proven by the preceding statement, "If any man *sue thee at the law,* and take away thy coat," etc. If the coat were to be given freely for the *asking,* the injunction, respecting the law-suit to obtain it would be meaningless.

The succeeding statement is in harmony also, "From him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." Here the attitude of the borrower stands out in contrast with the attitude of the highway robber, who demands absolute possession. The Lord's followers are to be generously inclined toward all men, anxious to "do good and lend," and to use hospitality without selfishly hoping for return favors. If so situated that an enemy could demand of us our goods, we are to submit; but if so situated that we can resist legally, we are to resist any unjust demands, and compel a suit at law. If the suit at law shall go against us, we are to submit gracefully and heartily. The teachings of this verse seem to be that the Lord's people are to seek to be generous, peaceable and law-abiding under all circumstances and conditions.

WAS THE GOSPEL PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD IN PAUL'S DAY?

Question.—Please harmonize Matt. 24:14 and Col. 1:23, with your teachings.

Answer.—The statement of Matt. 24:14 does not imply that the whole world will receive the gospel and be converted by it, before the end of the Gospel age. Quite to the contrary, it expressly states that the preaching is to be for "a *witness* to the nations." From the form of your question, it would appear that you consider Col. 1:6 to mean that the gospel had already been preached to all the world in the Apostle Paul's day. If this be your thought, it is evidently quite incorrect, because, if the gospel had already been preached to every nation at that time, the end of the Gospel age should have come at that time, as our Lord declared, and the Millennial kingdom should have been set up and Satan been bound eighteen centuries ago. Besides, as we look over all the world to-day, we know that neither now nor at any time in the past has the gospel converted all the world: the most we can say to-day is that now, finally, the gospel has been *preached as a witness to every nation*—the Bible, which is the gospel message, has been translated into all the national tongues of the world, and thus every nation (through some representatives) has been made acquainted with the letter of God's message, at least; and this is in full agreement with our position that we are now in the "harvest" time or end of this gospel age, and in the dawning of the Millenium.

In respect to Col. 1:23, we will suppose that you refer to the clause which says, "The gospel which ye have heard, and which *was preached to every creature* which is under heaven." To assume, as you evidently do, that this implies that the gospel was already preached to every creature under heaven in the Apostle's day, and hence that there would be no need of a presentation of Christ to any in the future, because all have had a full and fair opportunity of knowing of the grace of God in the present life, is a most unreasonable interpretation of the Apostle's words. We submit to you that his meaning is as follows:—

God's grace for over two thousand years was restricted to Abraham and his seed,—the one nation of Israel; and was not sent to any other nation under heaven. (Amos 3:2) And even when the gospel "began to be preached by our Lord," it was restricted to the same "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24): it was not until Israel had stumbled through unbelief, and been rejected of God (Matt. 23:37, 38), and after our Lord Jesus had "tasted death for every man," "for the sins of the *whole world,*" and had risen from the dead, "Lord of *all,*" that he authorized the preaching of the gospel to others than the Jews—to the Gentiles. His message was, "Go ye and teach *all nations,*" etc. In harmony with this the Apostle tells us in Col. 1:23 that the gospel which we have heard is *open to every human creature* under heaven—there is no longer any restriction of it to the Jews.

The difficulty in the translation is in the word *to:* the proper thought would be better conveyed by the word *for.* The Greek word is *en,* and altho its strict meaning is *in,* yet it is frequently used in the sense of *for,* being so translated six times in the New Testament. Instances: "If ye be reproached *for* the name of Christ." (1 Pet. 4:14) "Well reported of *for* good works." (1 Tim. 5:10) "Think they shall be heard *for* their much speaking" (Matt. 6:7), etc.

"I, IF I BE LIFTED UP, WILL DRAW ALL MEN"

Question.—What is meant by "lifted up" in our Lord's expression, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me?"

Answer.—The primary thought undoubtedly is our Lord's crucifixion—his lifting up on the cross, as the great sin-offering on behalf of "the sins of the whole world." It is as a result or consequence of this sacrifice that all the blessings which God has purposed and promised shall eventually come to our race. Until the atonement for our sin had been made, nothing permanent could be done for man's release; for the sentence upon him was a death sentence. Our Lord's lifting up was as the antitype of the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness, looking to which the Israelites, bitten by the fiery serpents, were healed—in type of how the world of mankind, bitten by sin, poisoned and dying, may have life through the exercise of faith in the Redeemer, based upon his great sacrifice—his lifting up as our redemption price.

A secondary thought connected with this passage would be that our Lord's obedience in laying down his life as our sin-offering led directly to his own exaltation to power and great glory, as the Apostle has stated it, "*Wherefore* God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:10, 11.

It is by reason of our Lord's *lifting up,* in both of these senses, that the blessing is come to the world. His lifting up as the sin-offering was our purchase-price; his lifting up in exaltation as our great Prophet, Priest and King, is equally necessary to the drawing of the world of mankind, and the resultant blessing upon all who yield to the drawing influence.

While considering this passage, it is well to have a proper thought in mind respecting the *drawing.* That our Lord is not drawing all men to himself at the present time is evident to every one: moreover, the Scriptures assure us that he is *not* drawing men at the present time: on the contrary, his own words are that during the present age the Father does all the drawing: "No man cometh unto me, except the *Father* which sent me *draw* him." The drawing by the Son will not begin until the drawing by the Father has accomplished its intended purpose. That purpose, as Scripturally expressed, is "to take out of them a people for his name"—to gather out of the world an elect Church as a bride for his Son, to bear the name of Christ, to be his Bride and joint-heir, "members in particular of his body."

When the election of this Gospel age shall have accomplished this purpose, and the church shall have been glorified, Bride and Bridegroom made one, then, will begin the time in which the Son will "*draw all men,*" the world of mankind, as the Father has been drawing the church during this age. In this work of *drawing* all men, the church will be associated with the Lord as "members of his body," of which he is "the head over all, God blessed forever."

It has required this entire Gospel age to *lift up,* first the Head, and afterward the members of his body, joint-sacrificers with him. When all the sufferings of Christ are ended, and the last member of the body has finished his course in death, then, through the power of the first resurrection (which began with our Lord, and will finish with the change of the last member of his body) the entire church will be *lifted up* in the secondary sense, of exaltation, and then will begin the work of drawing the world—pointing all to the great sin-offering finished at Calvary.

That our Lord meant by this expression, "lifted up," more than his own crucifixion is evident from his words, "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, *then* shall ye know that I am he." The Jews do not yet know Christ as the Messiah: and this is an additional proof that his words include the lifting up, the crucifying, of all the members of his body—the church.

The drawing does not mean, as some have erroneously supposed, a compulsory forcing of mankind. Some Universalists have used this passage as tho it supported their contention; but rightly understood it is quite to the contrary. It intimates that the Lord will exert a drawing and helpful influence upon all men, but nevertheless leave their own wills free to act; for he seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. In proof that the word, "drawing," as used in the Scriptural sense, does not signify compulsion, note well the fact that the Father's drawing during this Gospel age has not been compulsory: it has consisted of enlightenment and help and opportunities which may be either accepted or resisted by all who experience the drawing. Thus we are distinctly told concerning this calling and drawing that "Many are called, but few chosen," because few make their calling and election sure by obedience to the terms of the call. So, too, it will be during the Millennial age; the light, the opportunities, the general influence of that time, will be so favorable, that "*all shall come to a knowledge of the truth*" (1 Tim. 2:4; Isa. 11:9) and to opportunities of harmony with God. And it shall come to pass that the soul who will not hear (obey) that Prophet, Priest and King, then in power, shall be cut off from amongst his people—in the second death.—Acts 3:23.

THE ONLY BEGOTTEN

From far in the great aions of eternity,
From space unlimited, unmeasured by the steps
Of worlds, from silence broken by the voice
Of him, the Self-Existent One, whose skilful word
Created him,* came forth the glorious Son of God.

(O sacred moment! which with shaded eyes we dare
With holy boldness to approach; not with a vain
Desire to see and know what God has hid, but drawn
Thereto by that blest Spirit which in reverence
Delights to search the deep and precious things revealed.†)

O glad Beginning of Creation's early morn!
O glorious Finish of Creation's noon and night!
O blessed Son, begotten of the Father's speech,
Thou Only Well-belov'd, in whom all fulness dwells!
Silence and space alone were found to worship thee!

But deep within the counsels of th' Eternal One
Lay countless hosts whose praise should celebrate the Son;
And to the Son was giv'n prerogative‡ to call
Them to existence, in abodes of him prepared,
And crown with happiness each creature in its sphere.

Rich in insignias of his high rank, he still
Delighted in the emblems of humility;
And wore upon his heart the gem obedience,
And clothed his arm with zeal, his feet with haste, to do
The holy will of Him who loved and cherished him.

And now reigns silence, solemn, still, as that which on
His natal day received him; for the angels watch,
With awe constrained, while he divests himself of all
His wealth and glory, and becomes a babe; then loud
Hosannas sing, "On earth be peace, good will to men!"

And lovingly they watch him as the perfect man's
Estate he magnifies with like obedience,
Unflinching loyalty and firm humility;
Till, daunted not by Calv'ry's cross and shame, he gives
His life—a ransom for a helpless, dying race.

That awful day the darkened sun and quaking earth
Creation's anguish voiced; but One yet reigned supreme,
Who loved him with the power of infinity,
And in His master-hand the mighty issues held—
The matchless Son had won the title to a throne!

What throne? Could all the boundless universe produce
A worthy coronet for his escutcheon which
Nor honor, glory, shame nor death could mar? Behold,
The heav'nly myriads worship, while the Father crowns
The risen Son—divine,* immortal,† Lord of all.‡

O hail, Immanuel! Prince of life and glory, hail!
Let earth with heaven unite in adoration, praise,
Thanksgiving to thy God, whose attributes thou hast
Exalted, and to thee, whose love and sacrifice
Constrain a race redeemed to endless gratitude!
—R. B. Hennings.

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* Rev. 3:14. † 1 or. 2:10. ‡ John 1:3.

* Heb. 1:3—*Diaglott.* † John 5:26. ‡ Rom. 14:9.

ENCOURAGING THE TEMPLE BUILDERS

Sept. 10.—Hag. 2:1-9.

"Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work, for I am with you."

Haggai's prophecy dates from a period fifteen years after the return of Israel from Babylonian captivity. In our last lesson we saw the corner-stone of the Temple laid with much rejoicing and hope, but it would appear that the builders soon became discouraged, and practically gave up the work. We are to remember that the work of reconstructing their homes, gardens, etc., would be considerable, and would keep them very busy for years. Besides, a new ruler of the Medo-Persian empire had succeeded Cyrus, *viz.*, Cambyses, and he with his hordes of soldiery had passed through Palestine en route for Egypt, which he conquered, and doubtless both going and returning the large number of poorly disciplined soldiers did considerable looting, and thus discouraged the hopes of those who so confidently looked for a return of national prosperity.

But apparently a considerable portion of the difficulty lay in a lukewarmness toward religion. The people, it would seem, had provided themselves with comfortable houses, gardens, etc., while the Temple, the Lord's house, lay desolate. This is implied in the Prophet's word's. (Haggai 1:4-6) Haggai not only came as a reprover of the people's neglect, but also as an encourager to a reformation in this matter. He pointed out to them that their crops were small, and prosperity was lacking, because they had neglected to honor the Lord with their substance. We remember that this was the Lord's covenant with Israel as a nation—that they should have temporal prosperities as a reward for faithfulness to the Lord, and temporal adversities as a punishment for neglect of their religious obligations. Hence the Prophet's words would be recognized by the people as in full accord with the Lord's predictions through Moses. (Deut. 28:1-42) And the appeal seems to have had the desired effect. The people began to realize that in neglecting the Lord's cause, and merely caring for their own temporalities, they had not only dishonored God, but had also justly hindered their own temporal prosperity. In consequence, a revival of religious interest followed, and the Temple reconstruction began again.

Many have failed to note the distinct difference between God's covenant with fleshly Israel and his covenant with spiritual Israel, and therefore are inclined to apply the above reasoning to Christian people of the present time, and to say that if anyone is not prosperous financially and socially it is an indication of his lack of religion and of divine disfavor. But the very reverse of this is frequently true now. If we see an individual, or a company of individuals, very prosperous in temporal things, experience would lead us to question whether or not the prosperous ones were living as near to God as when they were less prosperous, and whether or not their prosperity might imply extra danger from "the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches."—Mark 4:19.

True, riches do not in every case indicate worldliness. Apparently the Lord occasionally finds some earnest and faithful children to whom he can entrust a stewardship of riches for the furtherance of his cause, without injury; but observation shows that such instances are rare, and that as a rule not many great, not many rich, not many wise, not many learned, hath God chosen, but the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom.—1 Cor. 1:27; James 2:5.

If it be inquired, then, Wherein is the parallelism which we should expect to find between God's dealings with fleshly Israel under the Law Covenant, and his dealings with spiritual Israel under the New Covenant? we answer, The parallelism is there, but on a higher plane. The spiritual Israelite who is faithful to God will grow rich spiritually in deed and in truth, but if unfaithful to God he will grow poor spiritually in deed and in truth. And those who are poor in temporal things may be rich in spiritual things, but in any case will find that "godliness with contentment is great *gain*"—true riches.*

The date of Haggai's prophecy is given as the second year of the reign of Darius (1:1), but this Darius was not the one who succeeded Belshazzar, but Hystaspes, who succeeded Cambyses.

Haggai's message, as presented in the first chapter, had evidently aroused an interest in religion, as intended; and so we find that the second chapter, of which our lesson is a part, is in the nature of an exhortation and encouragement to "the people of the land." And by the way, this expression, which fifteen years before was considered applicable to the foreigners residing in Palestine, is now applied to the returned exiles; they were henceforth *the* people of *the* land—God's people in the Land of Promise. The encouragement, extended to the governor, the chief priest, and the people in general, was an exhortation to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might; and the basis of the encouragement was in the declaration, "I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts."

It is a mistake to suppose that God's people always need a berating. It is well to remember the weaknesses and discouragements with which all contend, and to administer the oil and wine of consolation and encouragement. We are to remember that when the Lord's people are weak in confidence in themselves is the most hopeful time to cultivate in themselves and each other a spirit of reliance upon the Lord and confidence in him. Fain would we say to the Lord's spiritual children these words of the Prophet, "Be strong, saith the Lord, and work; for I am with you."

It is when the Lord's people begin to feel that the Lord is afar off, and that they are depending on themselves or on each other, and when they realize their weaknesses, that discouragement is apt to creep in—especially upon those who, having returned from mystic Babylon, are seeking to build again the spiritual Temple, the Church, the Temple of the living God. There are many temptations to these to attend to earthly affairs, to build their own reputation and earthly prosperity, and to neglect the great work for which ostensibly they came out of Babylon. Let all such take courage from the Word of the Lord, through Haggai, "I am with you; be strong and *work*." To those who have no interest in the *work* the message respecting the Lord's presence will be undesirable; but it encourages and strengthens the truly devoted who are merely discouraged by the fightings without and within.

The Lord, through the Prophet, called the attention of the Israelites to the fact that he had made a covenant with them after they had come out of Egypt, assuring them of his willingness to perform it; and that his spirit, his power, his energy, was in their midst to guide, to overrule and to bless, and on this account they should not fear nor be discouraged. And if that Law Covenant, given at the hands of Moses, and ratified with the blood of bulls and of goats, was a cause of encouragement to fleshly Israel, much more should spiritual Israel remember the New Covenant, and its new Mediator, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, and to regard our welfare at the throne of the heavenly grace; and the precious blood by which the New Covenant was ratified. Spiritual Israel may well say, I will not fear; for if God so loved us while we were yet sinners, much more now that we are accepted in the beloved are we the special objects of divine care and grace.

The message of vss. 6-9 was doubtless considerable of a riddle to the Israelites who heard it. It seemed an extravagant statement; indeed, it was so, if applied to the house which they were seeking to reconstruct. But the holy spirit, through the Apostle, shows us that this prophecy did not relate wholly nor even specially to the literal temple at Jerusalem, but to the symbolic temple, the temple of God, "which temple are ye"—the church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven. This Gospel church is the "latter house" or temple, spiritual Israel, as the former house was natural Israel, represented in the natural Jerusalem and its temple. Ours is the New Jerusalem and our temple is being built by the new Master-builder himself, as it is written, "Ye are his workmanship." (Eph. 2:10) The Apostle shows us that Christ Jesus himself is the great Corner-Stone of this house of sons, and that all of the faithful followers of Christ are being shaped, fitted, polished, prepared, as "living stone," for places in this antitypical temple, whose builder and maker is God.—1 Pet. 2:7; Heb. 11:10.

It is only when we get a glimpse through the New Testament of the glory, honor and immortality which shall attach to the great spiritual temple now under construction, and realize by faith the "glory that shall be revealed in us," in God's due time, that we can realize even slightly the significance of the words of the Prophet, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace."

The peace and joy and blessing which the world needs and craves cannot come, will not come, until this latter house of the Lord's building shall be completed and filled with his glory—until the elect church, whose Head is Christ Jesus, shall be given the kingdom, the dominion of earth—then a King shall reign in righteousness and princes shall execute judgment, the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and none shall need to say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, and great shall be the peace of that Millennial day, when the Prince of Peace shall reign.—Luke 12:32; Rev. 5:10; Isa. 11:9; 32:1; 54:13.

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* See June 15, 1919, for critical examination of Covenants.

This prophecy respecting the shaking of the heavens and the earth is quoted in Heb. 12:26, and we there have an inspired comment upon it, showing that it will be fulfilled in the end of this Gospel age, and that it is a symbolic shaking and signifies the removal of everything that is unstable, transitory, imperfect,—in the great time of trouble with which this age will end and the Millennial age be ushered in. The Apostle assures us that the expression, "Yet once more," signifies a finality, that there will never more be requirement for shaking; for revolution, for changes, because with this great shaking, this great change, will be ushered in that perfection of the new order of things which cannot be shaken—the kingdom of God conditions.

The shaking of all nations is here, as everywhere, associated with the glory of the temple: in other words, the Scriptures show that the time of great trouble upon the world, in which all the kingdoms of this world and its various institutions, religious, political, social, shall fall, will be the very time when God's kingdom, God's church, shall be *"set up"* in power and great glory; to be his agency in blessing the world. And not only here but elsewhere we are assured that when this shall take place the Desire of all nations shall come.

All peoples have been looking with more or less earnestness and sincerity for a just and good government, however blindly they may have sought it, because the prince of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not through the weakness of their judgment and the selfishness of their hearts. But when the vail shall be taken away, and the blind shall see out of their obscurity, and God's kingdom shall have came and established peace and good will amongst men, and when the knowledge of the Lord shall have been caused to fill the earth, and when the evil-doers shall have been cut off from life, in the second death, verily then the desire of all nations will have come, and the desire of the Creator will have come too; for God's will shall yet be done on earth as it is done in heaven, as prophesied in our Lord's prayer.—Matt. 6:10.

Silver and gold, in the restoration of the temple, seem to have been lacking; hence the Lord's declaration that all the gold and all the silver are his. In the antitypical temple construction, it at times appears as tho the silver of divine truth were lacking, and the gold of the divine character insufficient, but all who have confidence in the Lord may rely upon his assurance that he has all things needful for the accomplishment of his purposes. "The Lord knoweth them that are his," Therefore, in the language of the text, let us all be strong, and work, for God is with us; we are merely coworkers together with him. He will surely accomplish the great work he has promised; the spiritual temple shall be built: but our individual blessing in connection with it will be in proportion as we have been strong in the Lord and full of faith and full of zeal, co-workers together with him. "I am with you, . . . *work!"*

"MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE"

Sept. 17.—Zech. 4:1-14.

"Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Zechariah the Prophet was a priest as well, and was a young man at the time of his return under the governor, Zerubbabel, from the Babylonian captivity. As a prophet he was the successor of Haggai, who was now old, and his career as such began in the second year of Darius Hystaspes, and continued about two years. It was part of his mission to encourage Zerubbabel and all who labored in the construction of the Temple, and who were beset by innumerable oppositions, difficulties, etc.—Neh. 12:4-7; Zech. 1:1; Ezra. 5:1; 6:14; 7:1.

There are two general views respecting this and all prophecies; one of them, the one favored by the "higher critics," is that the prophets of the Old Testament Scriptures were men of high moral attainment and faith in God's promises, who realized in advance of others and more keenly the true situation of things, and of their own volition, prompted by their own faith and zeal, exhorted the people, in parables that would be helpful, instructive, encouraging, etc. The other view is that God had the faith in his own promises and arrangements, and that he miraculously operated upon certain chosen persons, so that "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the holy spirit"—things which were not their own thoughts, but which encouraged themselves and inspired their own faith and zeal, as well as the faith and zeal of all about them. This view of the prophets and their prophecies gives the glory to God, and makes of the words of the prophets messages from God, and hence authoritative and reliable, while the fervent utterances of the very best men could not be considered reliable; but, as we all know, are frequently faulty, because of the fallibility of their authors. The Apostle Peter asserts this last view of the matter, and contradicts the former one.—1 Pet. 1:10-12.

Any other view than the latter would make the prophecies valueless as prophecies to the church of to-day. It is not until we realize that the prophecies, altho having some force and application to the times in which they were written, have a special force and application to us, as the antitypical Israel, and to the building of the antitypical Temple, that we get the true force, value and beauty of these prophecies—a force and meaning that is entirely lost to those who take the higher criticism view, and reduce the prophets of olden times to the level of street-corner preachers, who expressed truth in crude forms and figures, blended with considerable of untruth and human misjudgment.

Altogether the Lord gave the Prophet Zechariah seven different visions; and the fifth of the series is the subject of this lesson. It showed a large golden candlestick, or, as we would say, lampstand, with a large central bowl, and seven branches therefrom, each of which terminated in a lamp. The prophet, no doubt, was somewhat familar with such a lamp, since it in many particulars corresponded to the one made by divine direction, and kept in the holy apartment of the Tabernacle, and later of the Temple. The Prophet knew that this lamp represented in some manner divine favor, enlightenment and blessing as connected with the promises made to Israel. But the lampstand of the vision had a peculiarity all its own, for the Prophet beheld also two olive trees connected with it by golden pipes. (Vs. 12) Thus the Lord indicated that the supply of oil for Israel's candlestick and the supply of Israel's light was an inexhaustible one.

No doubt the Prophet himself, and those in that day who heard his prophecy, drew from this vision a considerable amount of blessing and encouragement. To them it would speak of the Lord's continued favor with them, notwithstanding the persecutions and difficulties on every hand. Quite probably they interpreted these two olive trees to represent in some manner the kingly and the priestly offices in Israel, which offices were now represented by Zerubbabel, the governor, and Joshua, the high priest, God's special representatives in the work of restoring Israel. No doubt the Lord wished those to whom Zechariah prophesied to get just such encouragement, and arranged that these two leaders of the people should be types of the Royal Priest—Christ Jesus.

Nevertheless, we believe that there is a much higher significance to the vision than this, for we find, not only the golden candlestick, but also the two olive trees, mentioned six hundred years later, in our Lord's revelation given to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos: and this is conclusive proof that the vision was more than merely a parable by Zechariah, and farther reaching than merely the encouragement of the builders of the typical temple. We will not here enter into the subject in detail, but merely call attention to the fact that the seven lamps or candlesticks shown in united form to the Prophet are shown as separate and distinct in the Book of Revelation, where each of the seven churches, or the seven epochs of the history of the church, is represented by a separate candlestick, or lamp.—Rev. 1:12, 20; 2:5; 11:4.

The message sent to Zerubbabel, the governor, no doubt carried with it the intended blessing and encouragement to that officer, and was in full accord with the candlestick vision. He was to learn, and all the people with him, that the success of their work was not by the *might*, influence and favor of the Persian monarch to whom they were subject, nor by the *power* and numbers and ability of themselves, as laborers and defenders of their cause against their nearby neighbors, the Samaritans. They were to learn that the success of their efforts should be attributed to God, whose holy spirit, power, influence, would guide and control the affairs of that nation, and accomplish in his own time and way the gracious things which he had promised them.

"Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain."

This probably referred to the mountain of difficulty which stood in the way of the Lord's work, and which had for some time prevented its completion, and at the present moment was a serious menace. The Lord's assurance, through the Prophet, was that the Temple should be completed, shall be finished; and not only so, but that Zerubbabel, who had laid the foundation stone, should also have the honor and privilege of completing it with the head-stone or cap-stone, and that when completed there would be great rejoicing and appreciation of the work, acclamations of "Grace, grace, unto it!" In harmony with this, Israel was exhorted, "Despise not the day of small things"—small beginnings, feeble efforts, discouraging conditions, etc.,—but to consider Zerubbabel the master-builder, the plummet-user, and to recognize the Lord's wisdom and power with him.

But the language used in this connection is entirely too strong to be applied solely to the insignificant little temple built by Zerubbabel and his associates. As we have seen that the former part of this vision applied to fleshly Israel only typically, so we see that this part also applies to Israel, and to Zerubbabel and to Joshua only typically.

Looking for the antitype, we find it in spiritual Israel, the spiritual temple which God is building. In Zerubbabel and Joshua we find the kingly and priestly offices of our Lord Jesus represented in two parts—the word Joshua in the Hebrew signifies *Saviour*, and in the Greek is *Jesus*, and the name Zerubbabel, as we have already seen, signifies *Born in Babylon*. The particular time typified would be the present time, when God's people are returning from Babylon, and when the work of Temple-reconstruction is in progress.

Our Lord Jesus himself laid the foundation of the spiritual Temple, and he himself will complete it as its top-stone, and it shall be acclaimed glorious, not only by men, but by angels, in God's due time. The work is in his hand, and although from outward appearances at the present time there may seem to be discouragements, and little progress may seem to have been made, yet his servants should be of good courage and should remember that their victory is to come, not through human might, popularity and influence, nor by their own power, but by the Lord's Spirit. The possession of his faith and his spirit will give us the victory over the world, the flesh and the Adversary, and make us more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood. Our struggles, our efforts, our building, are all on a discouragingly small and insignificant scale, but we see not and build not the real Temple, the living stones. We see each other according to the flesh, to some extent, despite our efforts to know no man after the flesh, and to recognize each other only as new creatures in Christ. We look more or less, however unintentionally, at the things that are seen, which are temporal and imperfect. We think more or less of the work of construction from the standpoint of numbers, influence, outward polish, etc. Instead, we should be looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, who laid the foundation-stone, and who is to be the finisher of it, and is the cap, the climax, of his great and wonderful work, the new creation in glory.

The "great mountain" of the present is the great kingdom of the Evil One, which has the appearance of being immovable, but which now speedily, in the great time of trouble and "shaking," shall pass away, leaving a plain, a highway of holiness on which whosoever wills of the world of mankind may return by restitution to full harmony with God under the great Prophet, Priest and King.

The antitypical temple will be complete when the power of the most high, represented by the oil of the candlestick, the holy spirit, shall rear up the living temple in resurrection power (from the dead) in the likeness of our Lord, in glory, honor and immortality. Then the glory of the Lord will fill the spiritual temple! Then will be the shoutings, "Grace, grace, unto it!" Then will begin the great work of blessing all the families of the earth, and the blessings shall flow from this spiritual Temple, a river of water of life, clear as crystal,—as seen in our lesson of August 20.

From this standpoint only, as applicable to the antitypical Zerubbabel, can we understand the reference to the "seven eyes" of the Lord which run to and fro through the whole earth. We can see that the eyes of the Lord (his perfect and much diversified wisdom) are necessary to be exercised throughout the whole world in connection with the work of preparing the living stones and rearing up the antitypical temple in the hands of the antitypical Zerubbabel, but we could not see how divine wisdom would be necessary in all parts of the earth to take supervision of the building of the little typical temple by the typical Zerubbabel.

No one can rightly appreciate the hopes and ambitions aroused in the minds of the Jewish nation by the Lord through the holy prophets, except as he realizes the fact that spiritual Israel has taken the place in large measure of natural Israel, whose branches were broken off, that we who were of the Gentiles might be grafted in and become heirs of the chiefest, the heavenly, the spiritual features of those promises. Nevertheless, we are to remember that there are also earthly features of those promises, which the Apostle assures us are still sure, and reserved for the natural seed of Abraham, and through the latter to extend to all the families of the earth, that whosoever will may become of the earthly seed of Abraham: for Abraham's seed is to be of two parts—"as the stars of heaven" and "as the sand of the seashore."—Rom. 11:26-33; Gen. 22:17.

SEPTEMBER 24—REVIEW

AN INTERESTING LETTER

Dear Brother Russell:—I thought I would drop you a few lines as to my experience in my recently begun work as a colporteur. In company with Brothers Richardson and Barbour I came to Washington, Pa., a nice town of about 20,000 population. For the most part its people are very intelligent and independent. I found Dawns and tracts in many of the houses, and a strong feeling of suspicion as well as of opposition against both. For this the ministers of the place are evidently responsible; the most of them had never read what they blindly oppose. Thus they are guilty of expressing judgment in advance of knowledge!

The Watch Tower readers have just distributed *The Bible vs. the Evolution Theory*. In a majority of the houses at which I called I found that excellent booklet, and upon inquiry learned that nearly all who had it had read it with benefit, and some were loud in their praise of such "a good and timely tract." On the strength of this tract many gave me their orders for Dawns, saying that "the author of such a tract would certainly produce a readable and profitable book." One old "brother" said he "knew something heavier was coming." He gave me his order for the books that he might learn more of the truth.

One of the ministers of the city was very industriously engaged in misrepresenting the Dawn, going about from house to house counseling his flock not to read the book, but to exercise the same caution concerning it as they would relative to a dose of poison. He told some of them that if they had any faith at all the book would eclipse it with the darkness of unbelief. That if they had the least hope, they would be deprived of it should they read the Dawn! This "shepherd" and I came near forming acquaintance; he was always one door ahead of me! The first house I saw him come out of I went into. The "lady of the house" recognized me as if by instinct. "Good morning," I said. "Good morning, Sir; you are the man that's around with that book, Millennial Dawn?" "Yes; and I will be only too glad to call your attention to the book for just a few moments." "Oh, no! our minister was just here and told me not to read the book, nor receive you into my house, nor bid you God-speed; for your book was full of infidelity, and neither you nor the book believed in God, heaven or hell."

I replied, "Sister, I am confident the minister never read the book, does not know what it contains, and am sure he is entirely wrong; for the book treats on all these subjects; and, besides, if you will read it, you will find as much hell taught as you could wish." "Oh, well, if that is the kind of book it is you may bring it to me," said she. I thanked her, and in leaving the house was just in time to see the good minister emerging from another house.

I made my way to this residence and was received with a way-below-zero air, and at once told that "We do not want the book, and would not give it house-room." The minister, she said, had told her not to read the book, and that was enough for her! I said, "Lady, do you do everything your minister tells you to do?" She said, "No, not everything." I said, "If he would tell you to put your head in the fire, would you do that?" "No," said she. Then with true womanly curiosity she inquired: "What's in the book, anyway? It must be a funny book; everybody has so much to say about it." This opened the way, and after rehearsing some of the leading points she said: "If it's a book like that you may bring it, for I have often wondered what was to become of the heathen, anyway!" I recorded her order, and in leaving was just in time to catch a glimpse of my adversary leaving another house. I was soon in the presence of the "lady of the house," who at once advised me that I was wasting time at her house with the book; that when she wanted to read Ingersoll she would procure his works! I said, "Now, lady, why don't you want my book? I am sure it contains heart-satisfying and mind-catching explanations of the very things you wish to know about, and concerning which you have inquired of your minister and others many times, only to be left in the dark. You have, I am sure, been all your life querying respecting how the death of your Redeemer and the love and justice of God can and will affect the heathen. How and what will be the general judgment? When and how God's kingdom will come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven? Why God has permitted evil so wide an influence? etc. You have never found satisfactory answers to these questions, but can have them now in the Millennial Dawn. Besides, a lady of your intelligence should read for herself, as I am sure you do." "Well," said she, "bring me the first volume; and if it holds out, I will have the rest." I thanked her, adding, "I am confident you will have all the books. You do not look like a woman who will abide having her reading matter selected for her. The book may cut the corners of your creed, but"—. "I don't care anything about the creed, I never read the creed! I don't know it. Bring me all the books! How much are they?" she interrupted.

It is strange how little mental and moral independence some people have! Yet, there are instances where some go to extremes with what they do possess. For instance, in this town of Washington is a beautiful college building filled with the young of both sexes. The learned "Doctor" who presides over the institution, told Brother Barbour, who was presenting the claims of Dawn, that when he was a young man the question of the second coming of Christ troubled him very much. But as he grew in years and wisdom (?) the question did not bother him any more, and said: "I have absolutely no interest in the question of the second coming of Christ, and do not wish anything to do with the question." "No, young man, I don't want your book."

Although I have been a minister of the Gospel for nearly a quarter of a century and thought I knew something about matters and things, yet I realize that much of that service, though rendered in all good conscience, seems to have been worse than wasted, for evidently my conceptions of the character and work of God were to a considerable extent decidedly wrong. Now with more correct and enlightened views of the lengths and breadths, and heights and depths of the justice, wisdom, love and power of our heavenly Father, I am glad to avail myself of this new ministry which enables me to leave from sixteen to fifty printed sermons with the truth-hungry with whom I meet.

Praying the blessing of our heavenly Father upon you, dear brother, and that you may be spared to us and to his service unto the end, I am,

Yours in his service, C. W. Cooper.

Vol. XX ALLEGHENY, PA., SEPT. 1-15, OCT. 1-15, 1899 Nos. 17, 18, 19, 20

MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V.—"AT-ONE-MENT"

Copies of Dawn v. (500 pages), have been sent to all on the Watch Tower lists whose subscription is not in arrears—including all of the *"Lord's poor,"* who applied as per above terms, during the present year. This represents our issues for September and October, as mentioned in August 1st Tower. Any who expected it and have not received it, and whose reckonings would thus appear to be different from ours, are requested (1) to ask their postmaster to *look for it* in his office, and then if not found (2) to at once notify us, mentioning date of last remittance and *how* forwarded.

Vol. XX ALLEGHENY, PA., NOVEMBER 1, 1899 No. 21

THE VOLUNTEER WORK

In our issue of April 15 the offer was made that wherever the friends of present truth would *volunteer* to serve the Lord and his brethren by distributing the booklet, *The Bible vs. the Evolution Theory*, to the Church people of their cities and towns the same (a 5 cent pamphlet) would be supplied *free*.

The motive behind this large expenditure is the hope of reaching some of the Israelites indeed, in Babylon; and we know of no better method of serving the truth to such that is open to the majority of those who have pledged themselves living sacrifices to lay down their lives for the brethren.—1 John 3:16.

Brothers and Sisters in all parts of our land and in Great Britain promptly responded; and as a result we are only now getting ahead of the home demand, and preparing a large shipment for England. Now the Transvaal war excitement makes it advisable to postpone the distribution in England; and hence we inquire for *more* volunteers at home, who can be promptly supplied: our British brethren can be supplied later from those now on the press.

The dear "volunteers" who have already engaged in this service report great blessings upon their own hearts in this little service for our King and his "brethren." Some, having finished the work in their own cities, are reaching out into adjacent towns. Some have been led to study the truth because of their appreciation of the faithfulness to principle exhibited by these "volunteers."

The volunteers of each town should act in unison, as much as possible. Make out your list of Protestant churches in your place, and estimate the probable *attendance* (not membership): then appoint one of your number your scribe to report to us the number of churches and the number of booklets you can judiciously use. All want some part in this "harvest" work. The Master says, "He that reapeth receiveth wages [blessings, now] and gathereth fruit unto everlasting life."

THE BOSTON AND ST. LOUIS CONVENTIONS

Blessed seasons of spiritual refreshing both of our conventions proved to be. We have every reason to believe that the Lord not only used them as channels of blessing to the "brethren" already interested, but also to others who came with friends or through curiosity. Under the Lord's providence the daily press of both cities gave us liberal notices which reached some of the Lord's hungry sheep.

The Watch Tower announcement styled these "Believers' Conventions,"—as signifying believers in God's Word at this time, when so many professed Christians are falling into disbelief through the influence of the Evolution theory, "higher criticism," infidelity, etc. And the word "believers" is widely known as signifying adherents to the doctrine of the second coming of our Lord. We are "believers" and hope always to be such, but let us beware of thinking of or using this as a distinctive or sectarian name—to distinguish and separate us from other Christian *believers.* We do not want to be separated from other believers, but to continue to love and cherish and fully fellowship all who with us trust in the sure Word of God, even though they do not yet see eye to eye with us on all points respecting that Word's teachings.

The announced programs were pretty generally carried out: at Boston addresses were delivered by Bros. Thorne and Graham of the Boston company, Bro. Alexander of the Yonkers, N. Y., company, Bro. Barton of the Philadelphia company, Bro. Weber of Maryland, Bro. Lewis of Cohoes, N. Y., Pilgrim Bro. McPhail of the Chicago company (who also conducted the musical features) and by the Editor of this journal. And in the testimony meetings all had good opportunity of which very many availed themselves. Visitors about 100: attendance on Sunday about 250. Many strengthened; all refreshed; and so far as we know none disappointed and turned empty away.

St. Louis had a larger territory to draw from, being more central, and the number of visitors was about 200, and the Sunday attendance about 400. Amongst the speakers were Bro. Moffatt of Florida, Bro. Henninges of Allegheny, Bro. Owen of Indianapolis, Bro. Weber of Maryland, Pilgrim Bros. Willis and Draper, and a number of others. Your servant, the Editor of this journal, was obliged in obedience to the wishes of the friends, to occupy very much more than his proportion of the time at both conventions;—especially at the last one.

In both conventions the spirit of love and fellowship prevailed; and if even one jar occurred or one discordant note sounded, we did not learn of it. The local churches had given careful attention to every detail of arrangement for the visiting "brethren"—including the free entertainment of those who needed such provision. Their reception committees in both instances were tireless in their loving endeavors to make all comfortable. May the Lord abundantly reward them each and all!

At Boston, *symbolic* baptism was administered to twenty-three, at the hands of Bro. Woodworth. At St. Louis, forty-one (21 males and 20 females), at the hands of Bro. Henninges. Bro. Dann informs us that as a result of the convention they have an increase of about 30 in attendance, and that several more desire to confess Christ in symbolic baptism. The meetings have been forced to move to the more spacious quarters at Nineteenth and Morgan streets.

As usual, the money question was kept out of notice. One dear brother came to us, saying, "Brother Russell, I wanted to contribute something toward the expenses of this convention, but they will not accept it. I want to get even on the matter somehow, so you must accept it for the Tract Fund. Another dear brother sent ten dollars by mail, saying that he could not attend, but wanted a share in the good work and would be glad to help meet the expenses of some of the poor in attendance. Indeed, several have since sent "Convention Thank Offerings" to the Tract Fund.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

WHICH IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?

[With the exception of the paragraph below, this article was reprinted in issue of March 15, 1900, which please see.]

From the St. Louis *Republic*, Oct. 9, 1899.

Sermon delivered before the St. Louis Convention of Believers in the Second Advent, by Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., at the "Tabernacle," cor. Nineteenth and Morgan streets, St. Louis, Mo.
Sunday afternoon, October 8, 1899.

The speaker took for his text the words of the Apostle, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."—Rom. 1:16.

The speaker declared his desire to present a true gospel sermon, yet he reflected that this expression, "gospel sermon," had become so perverted that many Christian people might expect to hear the very reverse in some respects of what he would have to say on this subject. By common consent a gospel sermon has come to be understood to signify the shaking of the congregation, and indeed of nearly all mankind, over an imaginary abyss of everlasting torture, with the effort to intimidate them thereby to a thorough reformation of life in hope of thereby escaping an awful eternity. True, this gospel of damnation is not so generally preached as it once was, because the more enlightened minds of cultured people repudiate it as a fetish of the past. But it is still to be heard in country places, occasionally in a city pulpit and at a campmeeting, and at the street meetings of the Salvation Army and at their barracks. The speaker did not wish for a moment to criticise the honesty of intention of those who thus preach. He was not speaking in criticism of persons but of doctrines, when he declared such preaching to be as far from the Gospel as the east is from the west, as he hoped to show before finishing his discourse.

Before proceeding to present the true Gospel of the Scriptures he considered it only proper that he and his audience should first hear from the general mass of Christian people on this subject. "After eighteen centuries of theological study and Christian development in thought, what does Christianity present to the world today as the Gospel of Christ?" The speaker begged his hearers to remember that if any remarks should be dropped which might be construed as not complimentary to any of the creeds of leading denominations, no uncomplimentary remarks would be made respecting fellow-Christians themselves, for he desired to respect every true Christian and his conscientious convictions. But in demonstration of the truth he found it necessary to hold up some of the published creeds of Christendom, and to show their inconsistencies in the light of the Scriptures and in the light of the intelligent consciences of those who subscribed to these creeds, some of whom doubtless had never realized fully to what they had committed themselves when they affirmed these creeds to be truthful representations of their Christian faiths. Everything that the speaker would say would be said in the kindest of spirit and with the best of intention to lift up the light of truth and to draw the hearts of all the Lord's people to him, and to put to shame only those elements of darkness and falsity which are contrary to the Scriptures, contrary to sanctified common sense, contrary to all that is holy and just and true. And he expected to make his remarks so moderate that not a solitary intelligent Christian within the sound of his voice could take the slightest exception.

NEHEMIAH'S CONSECRATION AND PRAYER

Nov. 5.—NEH. 1:1-11.

"Prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day."

Although the book of Nehemiah is a historical one—that is to say, not a prophetical or inspired one—we are nevertheless to regard its historical presentations as having been supervised by divine providence and intended for the instruction and edification of God's people. In these respects it corresponds to the books of Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Esther, etc., and in these respects it differs from the prophetical books which present to us directly the words of divine inspiration. This book is sometimes recognized as the Second book of Ezra, because its narrative is the sequel to the book of Ezra. Undoubtedly, however, Nehemiah was the writer of the major part of it, additions being made of other features by some other historian. Portions of the book are apparently copied from the State archives and written in the third person, while Nehemiah evidently was the writer of the portion presented in the first person.

Dr. Howard Crosby calls attention to the fact that although the Book of Nehemiah is strictly historical, it nevertheless in a very remarkable manner outlines or shadows in various parts a Christian's experience. He says:—

"It is interesting to see how admirably the Book of Nehemiah tells the story of the soul's renewal. In the first chapter is the conviction and confession of sin and unrighteousness; in the second, the determination to rebuild with God's grace; in the third, the actual rebuilding of the soul's defences in sanctification; in the fourth, the attacks upon the soul from without; in the fifth, the assaults from within; in the sixth, the sly temptations of the Adversary, in the guise of reasonableness; in the seventh, the successful accomplishment of the spiritual work and ordering of the soul in godliness; in the eighth, the study of the Word; in the ninth, the Christian's faith confessing its weakness; in the tenth, the covenant relationship emphasized; in the eleventh, the systematizing of the advanced soul in the godly life; in the twelfth, the thankful acknowledgment of God in everything; and in the thirteenth, the sad exhibition of the Christian's fall, and need of the renewed influences of the spirit. When, on the close examination of the book, we see how exactly this outline is filled up, we can hardly believe that such a spiritual application was not intended in the recorded history. It is probable that Bunyan took his *Mansoul* from the study of this book."

Nehemiah informs us that he held the office of Cup-bearer to the king of Persia, at his palace, Shushan—the principal of the three Persian capitals. In ancient times the Cup-bearer was a confidential favorite with the monarch, highly trusted; he had access to the king's presence continually, and not merely on state occasions, as the political officers. His office was in the nature of trusted friend and counsellor, through whom instructions were sent, not only to the king's household servants, but also to ministers of the realm. Such trusted servants were expected to have a general oversight, especially of the household, and to be able to guarantee the king against conspiracies upon his life; he was expected to taste of the king's food in his presence as an assurance or guarantee that it had not been poisoned. In presenting wine to the king, it was the custom for this officer to pour out a sample for himself, and from this probably originated the title of Cup-bearer. Somewhat similarly, in Great Britain, various persons of high rank are known as Chamberlain, Master of the Household, etc.

It may be inferred from various statements of chapter five, especially vss. 16-18, that Nehemiah had inherited great wealth, and we must think of him as a young man, gifted, educated, and highly honored by the monarch in the position which he held. That it was not impossible for Hebrews to occupy confidential and high positions in the Persian empire is shown in the cases of Daniel, Esther and Mordecai.

We saw in a previous lesson (August 27) that those who returned to Jerusalem under the proclamation of Cyrus were for the most part the poorer of the captives who had not prospered exceedingly in the provinces of Babylonia. Nehemiah's parents had possibly been too comfortably situated and too prosperous to take a deep interest in the return. Nehemiah himself, as a young man in good position, had probably not given great thought to the fact that God's chosen nation was at this time for the most part a homeless people, and that the holy city was in a deplorable condition. Josephus informs us that while walking outside the city wall Nehemiah noticed some travel-stained strangers, was attracted to them by their Hebrew language, and conversing with them found one of them to be a relative of his, and that they had recently returned from Jerusalem, which they described as being in a deplorable condition.

The Lord evidently permitted this circumstance, which exercised a great influence upon the mind of Nehemiah, stirring up the naturally good soil of his heart not only to sympathy with his persecuted co-religionists at Jerusalem, but also to consider the whole question of Israel's rejection from divine favor, and the forewarnings of this rejection given in the Law and the prophets, and the promises of a return of divine favor with the return of Israel to a proper condition of heart. As he thought upon the question his entire nature was stirred, plowed to its very depths; and he resolved that he would not only pray the Lord for divine blessing upon the true holy city, but that he would consecrate himself and the wealth which God had committed to his care, and his favored confidential relationship with the king—all these he would devote to the answering of his own prayers.

He realized, however, that the work he was undertaking was of no small magnitude: he realized that to express to the king a sympathy for his own nation and its captive city might readily be misunderstood to be a lack of loyalty, and that thus he might not only fail to have the king's favor and assistance in connection with the project, but might, on the other hand, arouse his opposition and enmity, not only against himself, but also against his people. And at that time for a chamberlain to arouse his monarch's ill-will might readily mean, not merely his removal from office, but the confiscation of his property, or even the taking of his life.

With these facts before our minds, we not only gain an exalted opinion of Nehemiah's consecration to the Lord and the service of his people, but we also perceive the reasonableness, nay, the necessity, for his continuing in an attitude of mourning, fasting and praying, and waiting for the Lord to open a favorable opportunity for nearly four months before that opportunity came.—Neh. 1:12; 2:1.

The mourning probably came first; then followed the fasting, self-denial, self-correction, that he might know the better the mind of the Lord on the subject; then discerning what he concluded was the Lord's will in respect to himself, the use of his time, talent, influence and means in the relief of his brethren, and consecrating his all fully to this service, his mourning, fasting and praying continued until the day that the Lord opened to him the door of opportunity, thus accepting his offer, his sacrifice.

We may pause here to note the fact that all Christians today should have much of the spirit, the disposition, of Nehemiah. Being Israelites after the spirit and not after the flesh, their interest will chiefly be in the prosperity of spiritual Israel. Numbers of these, like Nehemiah, are still in Babylon, and a few of them, like him, possess wealth and influence there. Such as take note of the dishonor and contempt and abuse aroused against their faithful brethren will be touched with love and sympathy for the brethren. Their hearts will thus be turned longingly to look for the promises of God respecting spiritual Zion and her ultimate deliverance, and they will feel an earnest desire to be with and of the Lord's faithful ones, and such true fellowship will make them ready to sacrifice their temporal interests in the Lord's cause as well as to fast and pray for it. Those with such a spirit will be sure to have an increase of divine favor which will permit them to sacrifice their all and to share the privations and oppositions to which their brethren are subject, and being in a right condition of heart they will appreciate this as being a great *privilege*, a great *honor*.

Such, however, will do wisely if they follow Nehemiah's course of earnest prayer and constant seeking for the opportunity which will permit them not only to make their sacrifice, but to make it most effectively as respects the Lord's cause.

Our previous studies on this subject showed us that the wall of Jerusalem had been considerably repaired after the return from Babylon, but this repair work had been discontinued by imperial decree because of the representations made by the rulers of the Samaritans, who, we remember, were provoked by the refusal of the Israelites to permit them to join in the work and to consider them as Israelites; subsequently this hatred was intensified by Israel's course in instructing the people that those who had married Samaritan wives had violated the divine command. We cannot doubt that the return of these wives would be taken as a gross insult by the Samaritans, who evidently felt that under all the circumstances they were at liberty to oppose these poor Jews in every way in their power, even resorting to open attacks upon the people and the breaking down of the walls, the burning of the gates, etc. They felt secure in this lawlessness, because the imperial government of Persia showed the Jews no favor.

However, we see that God used this very matter of trouble upon the Jews to raise up for them wealthy and friendly brethren yet in Babylon to come to their relief. Just so it is sometimes with the spiritual Israelite—the trials and difficulties which seem most discouraging and disadvantageous are often the very means which God employs for stirring up others of his people and bringing them needed relief. This again emphasizes the lesson which is taught throughout this narrative of Nehemiah respecting trust in the divine supervision of his people's interests, and the propriety of our not only trusting God but seeking to cowork with him along the lines of his providence.

The condensed statement of Nehemiah's prayers which he furnishes us is interesting and instructive. The opening sentence reminds us of the opening statement of that which we designate the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." It is an acknowledgment of the divine greatness and relatively of the petitioner's littleness. It is a recognition also of God's faithfulness: His name is honorable, his character is unassailable, his ways just and true. Nehemiah, after acknowledging God's faithfulness toward those who love and obey him, acknowledged that the entire difficulty which had led to all the trouble upon Israel resulted from their sins—their neglect of God and his promises, their failure to keep their part of the covenant.

And properly he included himself in this matter, for heretofore he had been like the others, chiefly careful for the things of this life, and though doubtless honest and honorable in his dealings, he had been neglectful of the great promises of which he was an heir with the others of his nation. Although he had not been sharing personally in the severe afflictions, he now shared them sympathetically with the faithful ones who had returned to the Land of Promise, and he might therefore voice a prayer for all. He summarizes the divine threatenings and promises expressed by Moses' lips (Deut. 28), expressing his thorough confidence in the Lord, that as the punishments predicted had been meted out to Israel as a people, so assuredly the promises of the regathering could be relied upon implicitly.—Rom. 11:29, 32.

There are lessons here profitable to all Israelites indeed who are in trouble because of past unfaithfulness to their covenant. All such should remember that the very fact that their indifference and neglect of the Lord has separated them from him according to the declaration of his Word, only proves the fact that God who is the same yesterday, today and forever is ready and willing to receive them back into harmony and favor if they but retrace their steps. To all such the Lord says, "Draw nigh unto me and I will draw nigh unto you."

Nehemiah's prayer reminds us also of the fact that Israel was not gathered at the first advent because as a nation they did not come into the attitude of heart here exemplified by Nehemiah. Had the whole nation been of Nehemiah's attitude at our Lord's first advent the gathering of the elect would have been accomplished there: the Bride class would have been selected from the twelve tribes, the Kingdom would have been established, and the work of blessing all the families of the earth would have begun there. But as we have already seen* the unreadiness of that nation resulted in their receiving a "double" of chastisement from the Lord—so that they have since received as long a period of punishment without favor as they previously received with favor. And now their

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* See Millennial Dawn, Vol. II, Chap. 7.

"double" being ended, the Lord's message to them is, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people; speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her appointed time is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received at the Lord's hands *double* for all her sins." (Isa. 40:1, 2) Now the recovery of Israel is due and is in progress, and as soon as the spiritual Israel is complete and glorified the light will begin to shine upon fleshly Israel.—Rom. 11: 25-27.

Thus we see that Nehemiah's prayer has not yet been fully answered. The Lord has not yet gathered the natural seed of Abraham, who have faith in him, from the uttermost parts of the earth: but we do see that he is ready to do this quickly now, so soon as he shall have gathered the spiritual seed to heavenly conditions through the first resurrection. The gathering of natural Israel will not of course include all Jews, but merely such of that blinded people as maintain their Abrahamic faith in the divine promises. And these doubtless will be gathered through a great time of trouble through which fleshly Israel may still expect to pass. Their favor-time has commenced, and hence the "Zionist movement," but it will be requisite as a part of the favor, which shall bring them near to the Lord and back to the Land of Promise, that they shall endure great persecutions, from which the Lord shall deliver them.

But although Nehemiah's prayer was not fulfilled on the large scale he had before his mind, because the Lord's due time had not yet come and because the people were not then ready for such blessing, nevertheless his prayer was *answered*, for he was granted the desired opportunity to devote himself, his influence, his wealth and his time to the Lord's cause. And even though the results were far from what he expected, we may be sure that they brought to his heart a rest and a blessing: and we may be sure also that they brought him into that condition of mind which was pleasing to the Lord, and we may reasonably expect that Nehemiah will be one of the class mentioned by the Apostle in Heb. 11:39, 40, for whom is reserved a share in the earthly ministration of the Millennial age under the glorified church.

A lesson for the spiritual Israelite in this is that although his prayers may not be answered in the manner he had anticipated, nevertheless he may rest assured that all things are working together for good to him; and that the Lord's way eventually will work out a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory. Therefore let us, as spiritual Israelites, perform our consecration and pour out before the Lord our prayers in harmony with his promise, and realize that in the end, when we shall know as we are known, we will see clearly that the Lord was answering our prayers in the most efficacious manner.

NEHEMIAH'S FAITH AND WORKS

Nov. 12.—NEH. 4:7-18.

"Watch and pray."—Matt. 26:41.

Nehemiah's earnest desire to spend himself and his service for the Lord's glory and for the blessing of his people inspired his prayers, and such prayers always bring an answer of some kind: such prayers mean faith and co-operating works. Charles Reade, the converted novelist, briefly sums up the circumstances by which Nehemiah's heart-burden was brought to the favorable attention of the king, as follows:—

"The answer came (1) through an arbitrary, self-willed and passionate king, who a few years before had issued an edict against Jerusalem, and put a stop to the building of its walls. (Ezra 4:8-24) (2) It came through Nehemiah himself, and the feelings which prompted his prayer. The burden of his spirit and the earnestness of his fasting and praying left their marks on his countenance. Usually he was able to conceal his heart's sorrow (2:1); or during these four months it was the turn of others to serve the king. When he came again before the king the change was apparent, and the king noticed it. 'Why is your countenance sad?' No reply. 'You are not sick?' Still no reply. 'This is sorrow and nothing else.' Then Nehemiah was sore afraid, and I will tell you why. His wife was in danger. Even a modern autocrat like Louis XIV. expected everybody's face to shine if he did but appear, and how much more an Artaxerxes. If he had ordered this melancholy visage away to prison or death it would have been justified by precedent."

God gave Nehemiah favor with the king so that he not only was permitted leave of absence to engage in the work which his heart yearned for, but in addition he was appointed Governor of Judea, with letters instructing other governors en route to Jerusalem to grant him necessary aid, together with a safe military escort. Apparently the preparations for the journey occupied nearly a month, and the journey itself about three months, bringing Nehemiah and his retinue of servants to Jerusalem about July.

It will be remembered that Ezra, in making this journey through a country infested with thieves and brigands, would not ask a military escort from the king lest it should seem a reflection against the divine providential care, of which he had spoken to the king: but Nehemiah, being offered the escort, did not permit any spirit of bravado to hinder his acceptance of it. In both cases we see that the right course was pursued, though in some respects the conditions were opposites. Spiritual Israelites need to learn both of these lessons—to trust fully in the Lord's provision, be it great or small, and in no case to refuse reasonable safeguards, when under the Lord's providence they are furnished. We remember that one of our Lord's temptations was along this line—to perform a hazardous action for which there was no necessity—to leap from the pinnacle of the Temple. Frequently the Lord's people are beset by the great Adversary to attempt foolish or impossible or unnecessary things, simply to *show their faith.* Such should take a lesson from our Lord's reply in his temptation, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God:"—we are not to tempt divine providence, nor to expect miracles to be wrought on our behalf where the divine arrangement has not made them necessary.

Arrived at Jerusalem, Nehemiah did not at first tell the chiefs of the Jews of his purposes; but secretly, in company with his personal attendants, he took a survey of the condition of the city walls by moonlight for three nights, meanwhile maturing in his mind the plan he was about to suggest. There is a valuable lesson here for spiritual Israelites: how necessary it is that if we desire to do a good work we first thoroughly inform ourselves respecting the needs of the case, so that our course of conduct may be both reasonable and efficient. This is none the less true and important if the walls which need repairing and building are the walls of spiritual Zion, the church of the living God, the holy Jerusalem; nor less so if they are the walls of our characters, our own hearts, our own dispositions. We want to take a full survey of the weaknesses and deficiencies in order to be able, under the Lord's direction and by his assistance, to build up ourselves in the most holy faith, and to similarly build up others of the true Zion. Inspection properly precedes intelligent and profitable reformation of any kind.

Nehemiah did not begin his work by chiding his brethren with unfaithfulness to God or lack of enterprise, etc.; such a course would have further discouraged them, and would have made them feel antagonistic, and perhaps to say, "You will see how it is yourself when you are here a few years," and some would then have taken pleasure in his failure to do more than they had accomplished. Neither did he begin by boastfully saying, "I have come here to do such a work, and within an incredibly short time you will see it accomplished; I will accomplish in days what you have failed to accomplish in as many years." To have taken such a course would have been to arouse the opposition of the very ones without whose aid his mission, humanly speaking, would be sure to be a failure.

Many Christian people can learn a valuable lesson here: the lesson that whoever desires to be a co-worker with God should work in the Lord's way and be guided by the spirit of love—for love does not think unkindly or ungenerously or slightingly of the efforts of others, nor is it boastful. On the contrary, its trust is in the Lord, and its boast therefore must be in him. This lesson is valuable to us also in respect to individual efforts in our own hearts—to build up good characters acceptable in God's sight through Christ Jesus. We are to remember that nothing is gained, but much to be lost, by thinking or feeling boastfully of what we hope to attain in self-control and character-likeness to the Lord: nor is much to be gained by mourning and weeping over misspent opportunities of the past. The proper course is to begin work afresh with confidence, not in ourselves, but in him who called us and who has given such exceeding great and precious promises. This is our way to success in individual development, and also in our labors upon the walls of Zion, as it was Nehemiah's successful method for the building of the natural, typical Jerusalem.

In answer to his prayer and earnest study, God gave Nehemiah great wisdom and tact in his work, and calling together the chief representatives of the people he laid before them his plans, in which they were *all* to be associates and partners in whatever blessing and honor might accrue from this service. His plan was to divide the work on the wall so that each person of prominence and capability should have a certain share of the work and the responsibility, as well as of the subsequent honor of success. Moreover, his plan was that each should undertake the building of the wall nearest to his own residence: he would not only be interested in having the work done, but also in having it substantial, (1) because of the credit for the rapid and good workmanship, and (2) because he would be anxious that the wall should be strong in the vicinity of his own home.

There is a lesson here for us: our Lord declares that he gave "to every man [in the church] his work" (Mark 13:34), represented by his talents, and each should seek to know his talents and to use them, and should not attempt the use of talents not given him, and a work therefore not committed to him. Again, each of us should begin "over against his house;" we, too, should begin our reform work at home.

In our experience in character-building, the same lesson of turning everything to good account may be profitably applied; for instance, if by nature we are quick and impulsive, let us not only seek to restrain such impulsiveness from speaking evil and wrong, but let us exercise it in the speaking of that which is good and profitable for edifying, gradually accustoming ourselves to use this talent in a favorable and not in an unfavorable manner. Have we large combativeness, let us, while seeking to restrain this quality of our being as respects evil doing and injury to others, learn to exercise it kindly, lovingly, in opposing wrong, "in *contending* earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." And so with all the so-called baser organs of our fallen, unbalanced condition—they may all be turned to usefulness and helpfulness if but rightly directed by our wills and the spirit of a sound mind—"the mind of the Lord."

The text of our lesson particularly relates to the difficulties and emergencies which arose after Nehemiah had wisely gained the assent and co-operation of the leaders of the people, inspiring them with his enthusiasm—after the work of building the wall had been begun. Then it was that enemies and oppositions began to show themselves. The leaders of the surrounding peoples had for centuries cultivated a hatred of the Jews, (1) on account of their exclusiveness when obedient to the Lord's command; (2) because of their racial differences and animosities, including the differences of their religions; (3) they had all experienced the fact that the Israelites, when under divine favor, were prosperous and capable beyond themselves—the same reason which today causes such a hatred of the Jew throughout Europe: (4) like birds of prey, they had been fattening at the expense of the Jews, and this marauding would be interfered with by the rebuilding of the wall and the establishment of a more permanent government in Jerusalem.

Just so it is with individuals who, having learned the weaknesses of their own characters, resolve by the grace of God to build themselves up along the lines of justice, meekness, patience, love. They immediately find themselves beset with enemies bent on hindering their work for selfish reasons; the lust of the flesh and the eye, and the pride of life, like Philistines, Ammonites and Arabians, take council together against the building up of a character with which they would not be in accord, and which would hinder the exercise of their depraved instincts. Such a uniting of forces, such a conspiracy against the "new creature," is not begun until he begins the work of rectifying, building in his life the wall of righteousness.

Similarly, this illustrates the position of the Lord's people as a church. So long as they live carelessly, drowsily, inattentive to the doctrinal and the practical bulwarks of Zion, they are not subjected to specific attacks from the great enemy and his deluded servants. But from the time that they realize that in the rubbish pile of human tradition and falsity are to be found gold, silver and precious stones for the erection of the walls of Zion—from the moment that they begin to use the same, and to build according to the original pattern, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints—from that moment, we say, they are subjected to the conspiracies of the great deceiver and his Philistine and Ishmael hosts—Babylon—and then for the first time every faction and party is ready to conspire and unite against them, wroth, angry, not because injury has been done them, but because the progress of the truth is of itself a rebuke to all who are not of the truth.

Apparently the most zealous of the Israelites resided in Jerusalem, or near it, while others, less zealous, resided in various favorable localities nearer to the Samaritans, etc., and were more or less influenced by their customs, methods and views, and therefore were less in sympathy with the repair work at Jerusalem. These seemingly are referred to as Judah (vs. 10), and expressed their doubts respecting the prosperity of the work, saying that it was useless to attempt so great a work because of the amount of rubbish requiring to be handled and disposed of, both to make ready for the work on the foundations and also to secure the suitable building stones. These early proclaimed that the laborers would soon weary of their task, and the builders be forced to suspend the work. They were not enemies of the Jews, and are not here classed as their adversaries, but they were lacking in faith, and hence were hindrances to the work by reason of their discouraging suggestions. Just so in the individual case, where reforms and character-building are commenced, he finds in himself various disheartening suggestions respecting the difficulties and impossibility of the work he is undertaking. These must be resisted. Similarly, in the work of Zion, in building up the waste places, reassembling the stones of precious truth from the rubbish-heaps of sectarianism: there are those who are in sympathy with the apostolic teachings who nevertheless clearly discourage the builders, and are thus, without intending it, to a considerable extent adversaries of the work.

As for the open adversaries, their first attempt was to stop the work with ridicule (2:19; 4:1-3), "Even that which they build, if a fox go up he shall even break down their stone walls." Sarcasm is one of the most successful of our Adversary's weapons, and with it he slays many and hinders many from progress in the work of building their own characters and from the work of building upon the walls of the true Zion: but the faithful are not to be disconcerted by scorn or ridicule or irony; they build on and their Adversary becomes the more aggressive as he finds that he cannot stop them with ridicule. So it was with these open adversaries of Nehemiah and his faithful co-workers. They planned a sudden assault by which they would take the builders unawares, and by killing off some of their leaders would stop the work.

The people of Judah who did not favor the building and who lived amongst the Samaritans, etc., learned of this conspiracy, and having a brotherly interest in the builders, sent them word, apparently advising them to desist from the work lest it would bring against them the destruction contemplated. But the builders were not to be thus intimidated, and instead of stopping the work they armed themselves for defence, Nehemiah setting bodies of men upon the eminences behind the lowest parts of the unfinished walls, the points where the attack would most likely be made, and where their enemies would most surely see them ready for defence. But finding them forewarned and forearmed, the projected attack was abandoned.

Just so it is with the individual: when he cannot be dissuaded from his work of character-building by sneers and sarcasm, the attempt is made to vanquish him before he has gone far in his reformatory work. He is attacked along the lines of his weaknesses by the great Adversary, and finds necessity for the armor of the Lord, the shield of faith, the sword of the spirit, the helmet of salvation, etc., that he may withstand the attacks from the fiery darts of the wicked one. And just so it is with the Lord's people as they unite together for the study of his Word, as he has counseled them—"forgetting not the assembling of themselves." The Adversary will attack them as a little company, endeavor to frustrate the object of their assembling, endeavor to dishearten them before they have made much progress in the knowledge and practice of the truth. But if they will only go to the armory they will find that the Captain of our salvation has made abundant provision that we should not be helpless in the hands of our Adversary, for, as the Apostle declares, "we are not ignorant of his devices." And here it is well to remember what proved so helpful to Nehemiah and his faithful little band, of which he says, "We made a prayer unto God and set a watch against them day and night." This is our Captain's instruction to the Christian soldier, "Watch and pray." Let us not forget either of these important prerequisites to safety and victory.—Eph. 6:10-17; Heb. 10:25; 2 Cor. 2:11.

Not only did Nehemiah see to the arming and preparation of his band, but additionally he stimulated their faith, saying, "Be not afraid of them: remember the Lord, who is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren," etc. We are to remember, as soldiers of the cross, that our Captain has instructed us that to be full of faith, full of good courage in our reliance upon him, is a matter of primary importance in respect to our work and victory. His word is, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." In our battle against sin and everything that would hinder the work to which the Lord has called us, and to which we have consecrated ourselves, we fight for the new creature, not for the old; yea, we expect to lay down the old nature in death, and already we reckon it dead, and put forth all of our efforts on behalf of the new creature. And similarly our brethren for whom we are fighting are contending earnestly for their deliverance from the thraldom of sin and of error—these brethren are also new creatures, brethren of Christ, sons of God; and the Apostle exhorts us, saying, "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:16.

As is often the case, the preparation for the conflict was all that hindered it; and so with the Lord's people, those who most carefully prepare themselves with the armor of God are much less frequently attacked than those who neglect it.

Thenceforth, not only Nehemiah's servants, but all the people, seem to have maintained their armament, while they prosecuted their work, and so must the Christian church and Christian as an individual maintain their defensive armor and keep watch against the Adversary while seeking to build up themselves and others in the most holy faith. Our faith and our works must co-operate to bring the desired success, and as success attended Nehemiah's efforts and that of his coadjuters, so success is *sure* to come to all of the Lord's people who follow this prescribed course. "If ye do these things ye shall never fall, but so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 1:4-11.

INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR SIR AND BROTHERS:—I have just completed the first reading of VOL. v. and it is not necessary to commend it. It commends itself to every thinking mind that will weigh its arguments. There is however one position taken on page 352 in reference to 1 Thes. 4:14 that confuses me, and if your position be the correct one and the sleepers referred to in verse 15 are the same sleepers referred to in verse 14 it would imply that the general resurrection of all the dead must take place before the glorification of those of the church who are alive at that time. I state the matter as clearly as I can in the hope that you will point out wherein my difficulty lies.

Yours in the hope founded on the Ransom,

A. F. HENKELS.—*Pennsylvania.*

[REPLY.—Your favor of the 6th is at hand. I am glad to know that you have enjoyed thus far the study of DAWN VOL. v., and that it commends itself to your heart and head, except on the one point mentioned. On that point I would say:

We must distinguish as between references to the church and references to the world. Both classes die, both classes sleep, both classes need resurrection, yet they are different classes in every respect. In 1 Cor. 15 the apostle points out that "as by a man came death, by a man came also the resurrection of the dead." He further points out that "As all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive," but "every man in his own *order*" or class. Some will be made alive in Christ now at the end of the present age as his bride and joint-heir, and will be of the first order or first resurrection: others will be made alive in Christ during the Millennial age, completed at its close as his children, and will constitute the second order or subsequent resurrection. Both orders are referred to in the same connection.

Now in reference to the text which troubles you, 1 Thes. 4:14, 15. Verse 14 refers to mankind in general, and verse 15 to the church. All mankind "sleep in Jesus" as we show on page 352 of VOL. v., and all mankind are to be awakened, but not all in the first order or first resurrection. The apostle passes from the consideration of the general fact to the consideration of the first order, the church, which is always made most prominent throughout the New Testament as most interesting to the Lord's people. Thus in verse 15 he speaks of the last members of the church at the close of this age, indicating that the change of the remaining members will not precede that of the same class who have already fallen asleep. That this second class refers not to the world in general who "sleep in Jesus," but to the saints, is clearly indicated in the 16th verse, where they are spoken of as the "dead *in Christ.*" The whole world sleeps in Jesus in the sense that Jesus bought the whole world, and is to be the quickener or life-giver to the whole world: but only the saints are *dead in Christ*—members of Christ's body, the anointed body. I trust this will make the subject more clear to you.—EDITOR.]

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Inasmuch as it has been something more than a year since I have written you I feel at liberty to trespass upon your time for a little while now to thank you for VOL. v. of MILLENNIAL DAWN. It is, in my judgment, with the possible exception of VOL. 1, the most instructive of the DAWN series yet published. I feel assured that members of the household of faith privileged to peruse its pages will with myself acknowledge having received from it a blessing and spiritual uplift.

While my most earnest studies during the past years have been to be thoroughly clear upon the foundation stone of the gospel—the Ransom, yet in this work I have been permitted to see many new beauties of the height and depth and length and breadth of God's love through our dear Redeemer toward us as a class and the entire race as a whole. Many of the points brought out in the chapters devoted to the operations of the Spirit, as for example, "the spirit of fear," as treated on pages 213 and 214, must of necessity be exceedingly helpful, as I feel confident all true children of God have had similar tempting and discouragements.

The short chapter upon "the spirit of a sound mind" also will be especially helpful to other dear ones who like myself are found by the truth a little lower down the scale of Christian character than the majority of professing followers of our dear Master at least appear to be. All of the company here in Philadelphia are quite hearty in their praise of the whole subject from first to last and acknowledge having received great blessings from it for which we thank our heavenly Father sincerely.

We continue to have excellent meetings at which the spirit of our dear Master is displayed by all. The number attending and interest shown is, I think, all we could look for, inasmuch as we are so scattered.

Hoping this may find you well and enjoying all spiritual and needful temporal blessings, with Christian love to yourself and all your household, I remain,

Yours in the love and service of our Redeemer and King.

J. WYLIE MACALLISTER.—*Pennsylvania.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I have received VOL. v. of DAWN and I am reading it very carefully. I think, as do all with whom I have talked, that it is "meat in due season" and my prayer is that all may benefit by it and be able to "give a reason for the hope that is in them." There are some who have not received theirs as yet. Will you let me know when you can let me have 25 or 30 of them and the price, paper covers? There are a great many who have read the four volumes that do not subscribe for the TOWER that are anxious for it. I consider it good for those who have never read any of the other volumes. The "atonement" is a grand theme for every Christian to fully understand. Please find checks and orders. And may that peace and fellowship of Christ which prevailed at our Boston Convention remain with us forever, is the prayer of,

Your Brother in Christ,

WM. J. DAVIS.—*Massachusetts.*

[We now have DAWN VOL v. in good supply. For prices see second page of this journal. Encourage all who manifest any interest in present truth to become WATCH TOWER subscribers. Assure them that if too poor to pay they are thoroughly welcome to its visits free upon the terms stated on page 2. Those who hope to be able to pay in the future may say so and have it continued year by year indefinitely; so long as they continue to ask for it. We desire that so far as possible the WATCH TOWER lists may represent all who are interested in the Divine plan of salvation as presented in MILLENNIAL DAWN: nevertheless we are all aware that this would increase its issues three or four fold. And this is what we desire—not for our gain but for the assistance which we believe would thus be rendered to many who need it.—EDITOR.]

VOL. XX ALLEGHENY, PA., NOVEMBER 15, 1899 No. 22

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

ZIONISM MAKING PROGRESS

Zionism is not dying out, as some of its enemies predicted it would. It progresses steadily—the last of its three annual congresses at Basle (Aug., '99) being the best attended of all and one of deep interest. Three hundred representative Jews gathered from all parts of the world—some of them quite influential rabbis.

Three different sets of ideas prevail among Jews interested in Zionism. Some of them view the matter as a political measure, believing that the Jew would be more respected if he had a home of his own. Others favor it as a social move essential to the future welfare of Israelites all over Europe: they see a growing Jew-hatred in Russia, Austria, France and Germany, and even some signs of ill-will in England and the United States, and they argue truly that the day is not far distant when a still more open persecution will compel extensive emigration of Jews to somewhere; and that Palestine has some attractions over and above any other land. The third class views the subject from the religious standpoint, longing for a fulfilment of the promises of God through the prophets, recorded in the Bible. And with this view are more or less intermingled Messianic hopes: some however hold that the nation of Israel restored is to be the Messiah for the other nations. The religious standpoint of interest seems to be growing—even Dr. T. Herzl at one time regarded as an agnostic—an infidel—is of late giving evidence of a deep interest in the movement as a *prophetic fulfilment*.

The religious view in Zionism is reinforced by practical experience. Baron Hirsch, disregarding the religious or prophetic view, spent millions of dollars in planting Jewish colonies in Argentina, South America and in New Jersey, U. S., etc., but these are all failures, tho not yet wholly abandoned. On the other hand Baron Rothschild and others planted colonies in Palestine which have flourished exceedingly. If trials and discouragements arise there, they do not utterly dishearten, for the prophetically inspired hope prevents this. It is said that a portion of the Baron Hirsch funds will be hereafter used in Palestine.

The subscriptions to the Zionist Bank stock come in but slowly, however, and mostly from the poorer classes,—a little over one-seventh of the £2,000,000 ($9,750,000) being thus far taken. On this bank fund depends the present project, humanly speaking: for the scheme of the projectors seems to be to use this bank's capital in assisting commercial enterprises in the Holy Land. It is not the intention, as we understand the matter, to collect this money as a banking capital and then to offer the sum to the Turkish government, as a purchase price for the freedom of Palestine: no, but to collect the sum and then, showing the facts to the Sultan, to request of him civil, commercial and religious liberty for the Jews in Palestine: guaranteeing him by this sum raised throughout the world that the territory would not be inundated by pauper Jews from whom no revenue could be derived, but by a thrifty, intelligent people, whose yearly taxes would double the imperial revenues from that quarter. When the Lord's time arrives, wealthy Jews will take a hand, and the door to Palestine closed to the Jew since 1891 will be opened.

Rabbi Dr. Gaster of London, interviewed by a newspaper reporter, is accredited with having made the following remarks on Zionism,—since the August congress:—

"A great step in the Zionist movement is the establishment of our bank. Of this Dr. Wolffson of Cologne is president, and there are seven directors, who founded the bank at a cost of $40,000 and paid the sum out of their private purses. Since the shares of the bank have been placed on sale 300,000 have been sold; $200,000 having been taken in Russia, $40,000 in Roumania and the rest by Jews all over the world, so that now, when asking the Sultan to give Palestine to us, we have a cash guarantee with which to back our good faith.

"When Palestine is ours, every office will be filled by the elective vote of the people. It will be much the Biblical form of government; the head being a governor, supported by a privy council and a legislature. The Jewish authorities will levy taxes, and the people will reap the fruits of them.

"Turkey will derive then a greater revenue from Palestine than she does now. We have great faith in the Turks. No one who has ever lived among them will fail to uphold me when I say that there is no race more honorable nor whose word is more sacred. Their laws, if rightly administered, are even wiser and more liberal than those of the United States. And I say, and have authority for the statement, that the Turkish government never has molested, for religious reasons, a race over which they had power. The Armenians brought their troubles on themselves. Jerusalem and Palestine now are downtrodden by the Turkish officials, but unscrupulous officials are to be found in every land.

"Jerusalem is, unfortunately, a kind of a festering sore. It is there, first of all places, that 'sanitation' must take place. It is filled with beggers and with old men who have gone to lay their bones there. When my people went to Palestine, I said to them, 'Go north; for in the south are those who have gone there to die. You go to live.' In Jerusalem three religions meet, and that is a ticklish thing, and mixed with it is the depravity of the officials, living on money extorted from those under them."

"And when the country is ready for the new colonization, will the Jews go there?"

"It will be a flood. They will go in millions: that is the great danger. The persecution of the race has spurred them on. They are enthusiastic now—then they will be wild. It will be a rush that I tremble to think of. Why, our shares, now placed on sale, are being bought up by people all over the world. They are being taken by men in the mines of Siberia, in South Africa, in Russia, in the west, the United States. When a London Jew has put aside a pound he comes and buys a share, and so it is all over the world. It is the poor Jews who are buying the shares, not the rich ones. The rich are not all with us. Our movement makes them remember the past of their race, and they do not wish to remember it. They have for years been trying to open the door of society with a gold key, and they want society to forget their history. They argue against us, and say that patriotism to their native land would interfere with their nationalism.

"We must find some way of checking this rush to Palestine when it comes. When the Jews realize that there is a land—and that their mother country—with Jews forming its government and peopled by their race, Europe will be almost depopulated by them. And when we have gone, Europe will look around her in bewilderment. The war between capital and labor is coming—it is now begun, and the Jew in Europe is its natural scapegoat. When that scapegoat is gone the two powers will have to face each other.

"And nothing except Palestine will satisfy us. At Basle, when Mr. Trietsch, the American, asked for my support of his scheme to form a Jewish colony in Cyprus, I said: 'That plan now has advantages over a hasty colonization of Palestine, and I will aid you in it, but not under the flag of Zionism. Zionism means Palestine, or it means nothing.' And when he proposed his plans before the congress, the people were enraged. No sooner was his purpose put into words than every delegate was on his feet, crying as one man, 'Down with him!' "

Many exaggerated statements are made respecting the numbers of Jews now in Jerusalem and Palestine: old reports are taken as a basis of a guess-work calculation—in ignorance of or overlooking the fact that no Jews have been allowed to locate in Palestine for more than six years. The Hebrew Almanac, published at Jerusalem in 1897, gives that city's population as 45,420—composed of 28,112 Jews, 8,500 Mohammedans and 8,780 Christians. The population of the whole land is estimated at 650,000, and of these about one-twelfth are Jews, *viz.*, 55,000.

Meantime persecutions against the Jews are breaking out afresh in Austria. A cablegram of the Associated Press dated Vienna, Oct. 23d, says:—

"Anti-Semitic riots broke out at Halleschau, Moravia, yesterday evening. Jewish houses were stoned, stores were pillaged, a house was burned and the gendarmes charged the rioters, killing three persons, and injuring several others. The military finally restored order."

Strange to say, the basis of these persecutions is the old charge of using Christian *blood* for baking, for washing and for religious ritual,—the same charges brought against these innocent people in the persecutions of the long ago, without a shadow of reason. If the word *blood* were used figuratively as when we speak of blood-money, there would perhaps be something in it: but literal blood is meant and charged, of course by ignorant people.

Rabbi Doctor Gudeman, Jewish leader in Vienna, who opposed the Zionist movement, is now astounded and is holding public meetings at which he makes oath that nothing in the Jewish ritual sanctions blood, and points out that the Jewish law in every sense is to the contrary—pointing out that all Christians have that same law in their Bibles and well know that it sanctions nothing of the kind. Speaking of the charge the Rabbi characterized it as "low, shameless falsification of the truth," and has drawn against himself considerable bitterness. Perhaps thus the Lord is teaching him and others the necessity for Zionism. We expect much more persecution before the Jews get thoroughly awake to the fact that "the time to favor Zion" is at hand.

TIME'S SECRETS REVEALING

Scientists and "higher critics" have for years been declaring the Bible narrative incorrect, especially its chronology;—that the histories of China and of Egypt proved this conclusively, showing that the world is several thousand years older than the Bible chronology would indicate (now 6,027 years A. M.). Great stress has been laid on the testimony of papyrus records found in ancient Egyptian cities, whose ruins are being exhumed: these proved the xii. Dynasty of Egypt, according to *M. Maretta* to have held sway in 3,064 b. c. or about six hundred years before the Bible's date for the flood—with no destruction of those ruins by the waters of the flood and no record of a blotting out of Egypt's population. According to *Prof. Lepsius* the xii. Dynasty of Egypt flourished b. c. 2,380 or about 88 years after the deluge date furnished by the Bible's chronology: and of course it would be impossible for eleven dynasties to have flourished in so short a period and for Egypt to be the great country it evidently was at that time—with its pyramids already built. Hence "science" laughed the Bible to scorn and ridiculed the idea of divine providence in its preparation.

But now, what? The ruins of Egypt are contradicting the scientists and confirming in a general way the Bible chronology, by the showing of papyrus documents that were written during the reign of Usertesen iii. of the xii. Dynasty of Egypt, and prove their date to be 1872 b. c. (possibly 1876)—six hundred years after the Bible's date for the deluge* and about fifteen years before Joseph was sold into Egypt.

Below is the story of this valuable find narrated by *Prof. T. H. Breastead,* Secretary of the Egyptological section of the International Congress of Orientalists, upon adjournment of the congress.

TEMPLE ARCHIVES

"The first fixed date in human history has been discovered. It is disclosed in Egyptian papyri nearly 4,000 years old. Announcement of its discovery has just been made at the twelfth international congress of orientalists, now being held in this city.

"Last winter Dr. Borchardt, scientific attache of the German legation in Cairo, and Dr. Shaefer, assistant director of the Egyptian Museum in Berlin, discovered a mass of papyri near the pyramid of Usertesen iii. at Illahun, about fifty miles above Cairo and about 175 miles above the mouth of the Nile.

"These papyri have proved of the greatest interest. They consist of a series of temple archives and records of temple administration in the twelfth dynasty, about 2,000 years before Christ. They have been deposited in the Royal Museum at Berlin, and there Dr. Borchardt has spent the past summer in giving them a preliminary examination and classifying them.

"The lists of temple offerings and temple officials are chiefly of interest to the specialist, but there are many letters from one official to another particularly interesting as showing how these functionaries did business in the days of Abraham.

"It is of one particular letter in this collection, however, that I wish to speak—the letter by means of which the date referred to is established. There was no more important religious feast among the Egyptians than the celebration of the rising of the star Sirius, or, as the Greeks called this star, Sothis. It is easy to understand, therefore, why the chief temple-official should write the accompanying letter. It is in *hieratic,* that is, the handwriting of the ancient Egyptians, as distinguished from the elaborate hieroglyphic used in stone inscriptions. I translate the essential portions of a letter sent to Pepy-hetep, the chief ritual priest, twenty days before the rising of Sothis, in order to give him ample time to make ready for the feast:

" 'Copy of the letter . . . which the prince, the overseer of the temple, Nub-Kau-Resent, saying to the chief ritual priest, Pepy-hetep: "Take note that the rising of Sothis occurs in the fourth winter month, on the xvith day. Give notice to the lay priests . . . and post this letter upon the bulletin board of the temple.' "

The feast was duly celebrated by the chief ritual priest on the 16th, and on the 17th he made note of the various offerings consumed at the feast, as follows:—

" 'Year vii., fourth winter month, xviith day. . . . Gifts of the feast of the rising of Sothis: 200 various loaves, 60 jars of beer . . .'

"The two documents therefore coincide perfectly, and it is as certain as evidence can make it that Sothis rose on the 16th day of the fourth winter month.

"When this fact is established the chronological reckoning is very simple. The Egyptian calendar year contained 365 days, being one-fourth of one day shorter than the astronomical year. The calendar year therefore gained a quarter of a day each year on the astronomical year, or an entire day every four years. This can be made very simple in this way: Suppose we have a clock which gains a quarter of an hour every day. In four days it will have gained an hour, and in eight days two hours, etc. You will see that by comparing this clock with correct time and exactly measuring the gain, you can instantly compute how long it took the clock to make that gain. It is just so here. The occurrence of the rising of Sothis, an astronomical event, is here given in terms of the calendar year; we can thus check off this calendar and tell how far it has run ahead of real time, as we did with the fast running clock. Doing so, we find it has run ahead in all four months and nineteen days. The question now is, how long did it take the calendar to gain four months and nineteen days at the rate of a day every four years?

IN 1872 OR 1876 B. C.

"Without going into the reckoning further I will only say that the result brings us either to 1872 or 1876 b. c., a margin of four years being unavoidable.

"This is the oldest *fixed date* in human history. There are dates which belong at least 1,000 [?] years earlier in Egyptian history, but we are unable to fix [!] them; *they may be anywhere within a period of 500 or 600 years, so wide apart are the limits of possible variation.*

[This is according to "science," which does not regard anything as *fixed* by the Bible's testimony.—Editor.]

"The date of Sargon i. in Babylonian history claimed as fixed at 3,750 b. c. by many Assyriologists is supported by only one document, *written over 3,200 years later than the date which it is quoted to support,* and as far removed in time from the date of Sargon, as Queen Victoria is from Moses. It is properly looked upon with distrust by many orientalists.

"But the date 1872 (or 1876) b. c. established by the new papyri rests upon *contemporary evidence. There is no doubt of its correctness;* and with this remarkable discovery we enter upon a new epoch in the chronology of oriental history.

"To Chicagoans this discovery is of especial interest, for the new date belongs to the reign of the same king whose funeral barge (or that of his family) is in the Field Museum. All will recollect the large Egyptian barge standing in the east hall of the museum. It was acquired by the enterprise of Mr. Ayer and the generosity of Mrs. McCormick. The king to whose funeral furniture this barge belongs was Usertesen iii. of the twelfth dynasty.

"The second document is dated in his seventh year—that is, 1872 or 1876 b. c. From the middle of the nineteenth century b. c. to the end of the nineteenth century a. d. the barge lay covered by the Sahara sands beside the king's pyramid, some thirty miles above Cairo. In 1894, after its discovery by De Morgan, it was removed to Cairo and thence to Chicago. *This now certain date of the barge is several centuries later than that posted on the large gilded sign hanging over it in the museum.*

"Of course the announcement of this new date created great interest among the members of the congress. Unfortunately, Dr. Borchardt was called away by official duties in Egypt before the date for reading his paper announcing his discovery. The paper was read by Prof. Erman, in Borchardt's absence, and Professor Erman accepted for him the warm congratulations of the congress.—*Rome, Oct. 14th, 1899.*"

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* See Millennial Dawn, Vol. ii, Chap. 2.

THE POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD

Nov. 19.—Neh. 8:1-12.

"The ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the Law."—Nehemiah 8:3.

Rebuilding the city wall tended to unify the hearts of Israel and to revive faith in the Lord, and in his gracious promises to that nation. Nehemiah was wise in beginning the reformation movement as he did, and his wisdom undoubtedly was of the Lord and in harmony with his prayers for wisdom and usefulness. So all who would engage in divine service require not only zeal but also the wisdom which cometh from above, and only those who seek it prayerfully will be in condition to be used of the Lord and to be helpful as reformers amongst their brethren.

As illustrating different methods of serving the Lord, and how some methods are wiser and more successful than others, and as a means of adding to our own wisdom respecting methods of serving the truth, let us here contrast the efforts of Nehemiah with those of Ezra. For instance Ezra seemed to find only faults in the chiefs of the people, and berated them as tho they had nothing commendable in them. Nehemiah, on the contrary, began his work by ignoring some of the evils which he doubtless quickly discerned, and sought the co-operation of the nobles in the general cause. Subsequently at a favorable opportunity, when the people cried out because of usury and oppression, he very wisely yet very moderately remonstrated against their course, pointing out in kindly words yet boldly their wrong, and he was successful in correcting the wrong without antagonizing the wrongdoers. (Neh. 5:7-13) Ezra, full of zeal and anxious for quick reform, convened the people, in the rain, without shelter. (Ezra 10:9-13) Nehemiah, on the contrary, not only chose the pleasant season, but also the accustomed occasion, for his gathering of the people. Ezra attacked the one particular sin of intermarrying with the surrounding peoples, and thus held up one particular class of the people to special shame and confusion: Nehemiah seems to have taken a broader view and to have assailed sin in general, showing that all were sinners in some respects, and that all needed reformation. Ezra's method was the more aggressive, accompanied by legal prosecutions, penalties, etc. (Ezra 10:8, 14) Nehemiah's method was to make general a knowledge of the divine law, and through it to appeal to the awakened consciences of the people, that each might act for himself, heartily as unto the Lord. Without finding fault with Ezra's intentions, all reformers may profitably apply the lessons of this contrast to themselves, and seek to use Nehemiah's wise and gentle method in dealing with those who are in error, either doctrinally or otherwise.

With the completion of the wall and the security thus realized and the faith and hopes thus inspired, it was but reasonable that the event would be celebrated with feasting and rejoicing. But Nehemiah wisely waited this until he had reorganized the people socially according to the heads of their families, especially the priests and Levites, who were the divinely appointed ministers and teachers of the people. (See Chap. 7:63-73) Meantime also, donations were received for the Temple and its service, and Nehemiah, himself very wealthy, setting an example of liberality in his large gifts, was imitated by many. By this time the "Feast of Trumpets" on the first day of the seventh month drew near. It was a time for the general gathering of the people, the beginning of their civil year, announced by trumpet blowing. Here the narrative of our lesson begins, with the spontaneous gathering of the people in an open place, a plaza, near the water gate, called here a "street."

In all probability this congregation of the people was instigated, first by Nehemiah the Tirshatha (Persian for provincial governor), and secondly, through the heads of the people and the priests and Levites. Evidently preparations had been made for such a gathering, for a large platform, called a "pulpit," had been erected. When the people assembled and called for the reading of The Book of the Law of Jehovah, appropriate at this season, all things were in readiness, and Ezra the priest, accompanied by thirteen men, evidently chiefs of the people, representing the various tribes, took their appointed places on the platform or "pulpit" to give dignity and importance to the service.

Apparently the convention was opened with prayer. "Ezra blessed Jehovah the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads and worshiped Jehovah with their faces to the ground." They were about to begin a study of the divine Word, as expressed in the law, and no one is in the proper attitude of mind to be taught and blessed by the Lord's Word unless he be in the attitude of heart which appreciates the greatness of God and the unworthiness of himself. Such a condition of heart is essential to true hearing and understanding. And here we have the secret of much of the failure to understand God's Word—today as well as in times past. "He that seeketh findeth; to him that knocketh it shall be opened," and the "seeking" consists not merely in church attendance or Bible reading, but in a heart-hunger to know the truth and to obey it.

The service began early in the morning, "From the morning [daybreak] until midday," and during that time we are told that "the ears of all the people were unto the book of the law," that is, they gave close attention to hear and to understand every word. It was not only necessary that they should desire to know and that they should be in the attitude of heart to implore divine blessing and assistance, but it was also necessary that they should be *attentive*, giving ear. And more than this, it was necessary that there should be amongst them teachers capable of expounding the Law, explaining the meaning of words, and how the divine law was to be applied to the daily life, and what it signifies. Thirteen teachers (Joshua and twelve others) are indicated by name. These probably were priests, and the statement is that associated with him were "the Levites." These "caused the people to understand the law, and the people stood in their place." We are not to understand that the people *stood* for five hours: they stood while the law was being read, and sat down, after the eastern custom, on their haunches, during the time explanations were being given. The expression "all the people stood in their place" signifies that the teachers mentioned moved about amongst the people, instructing them, answering their questions, making plain the meaning of the features of the Law just read, while the people remained in their places.

There is a lesson here for God's people of today—all who are interested in the welfare of Zion and in the repair of her walls of righteousness. As Nehemiah looked up the genealogies of the priests, it is appropriate for us to recognize the difference between the consecrated, whose names are *written in the Lamb's book of life*, and the unconsecrated, whose names assuredly are not so written, and who therefore cannot be recognized as religious teachers in any sense. So also today our Governor, the Lord Jesus, is searching amongst the people and separating to himself those whose names are written—*the consecrated*—for his kings and priests—a "royal priesthood." Arrangements are already made for the great antitypical "Feast of Trumpets," and the beginning of a new civil year or Millennial era for mankind—for all who desire to be the Lord's people, to hear his Word and to obey it. Raised above the people, on a *higher plane of being*, will be Christ, the great Priest, and his associates, spiritual Israel, to declare the Word of Jehovah, the law of righteousness, the truth; and amongst the people, to teach them and to expound the law to them, will be the ancient worthies, representatives of Israel in the flesh, and the Levites, all who believe, the entire household of faith aside from the elect and then glorified church.

The blowing of the trumpets announcing the beginning of the antitypical Jubilee year will soon be heard throughout all the world, and the true-hearted will speedily respond. Meantime our great and wise Governor is instructing the royal priesthood, and thus preparing for the great work of the future. The arrangements are all so perfect and so complete that when the declaration comes the people will all hear the word of the Lord "distinctly," and they will get the "sense" and "understanding" of it. It will no longer be as in the past and at the present time, a din, a Babylon of confused noises, misrepresenting the divine message, and confusing those who desire to know the will of the Lord. The first result of that presentation will be weeping and mourning for sin, but the message of the great Priest and Governor will go forth to the people, to the effect that they need not weep and mourn, because the great sacrifice for sins has already been offered, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and that in consequence the Millennial day in which they will be living is not to be a day of mourning but a day of rejoicing, a day of acceptance of divine favor, a day of newness of life and of consecration to the Lord.

The message will then be similar to the one which Governor Nehemiah promulgated, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink the sweet [enjoy the wonderful provisions of God's bounty with thankfulness and pleasure] and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared [cause the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth], for this day is holy unto the Lord: neither be ye sorry, for the pleasure of Jehovah is your strength"—rejoice that you are restored to divine favor. And all the people will rejoice, because they will understand the words of the divine law—because they will see and appreciate the divine arrangement, and find it to be indeed "good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people."

These blessings which will be to the world in the future may already be appropriated in a measure by the Lord's consecrated people—the Gospel church, the royal priesthood. By faith we are permitted to hear the words of the divine law in advance of their public proclamation, to the whole world, and therefore blessed are our ears which hear and our eyes which see, for many have not seen and have not heard,—the god of this world at the present time blinding their minds so that they cannot. To us, too, the first hearing of the divine law should perhaps bring remorse and tears as we realize our shortcomings, and that with our very best efforts we cannot measure up to the perfect standard. But to us also comes the Lord's message, through his servants our brethren, saying, 'Weep not, but rejoice. Behold the goodness as well as the severity of God, behold his Love as well as his Justice, and that he has made through Christ a full propitiation, not only for the sins that are past, but also for the inherited weaknesses and blemishes of the present and future—that all of our blemishes have been covered with the great sin-offering finished at Calvary.'

It is our privilege, therefore, to dry our tears and to rejoice in the God of our salvation, and to eat of the fat things of his Word, the exceeding great and precious promises given to us, and to drink of the sweets of his favor, and to send portions of this our blessing to others who have not yet seen and have not yet heard and who have not yet tasted of the riches of divine grace. And whoever receives the grace of God not in vain will be prompt and zealous, not only in his own rejoicing, but also in his endeavors to communicate his blessings to others.

Another lesson here is that while God has all power he nevertheless uses human instrumentalities. He could have spoken from heaven, instead of sending Nehemiah; but he did not. He could have thundered his law without having it read by Ezra; but he did not choose to do so. He could have instructed the people without using the priests and Levites or any human instrumentality for exposition; but such was not his method. And the Lord's dealings in the past are our best guides respecting his mind on such subjects and respecting what are likely to be his methods for the present and the future. In full harmony with this thought is the apostolic statement that "God has set the various members in the body [the church] as it hath pleased him." Are all apostles? are all teachers? are all orators? Evidently not! And amongst the Lord's people the desire should be to know the Master's will, to know what talents have been entrusted to him, and to use those zealously, and to wait for others to be given, rather than to neglect the talents possessed or to seek to use those not possessed. "Do with thy might what thy hand findeth to do."

"The Word of God is quick and powerful." (Heb. 4:12) There is much need that this lesson be thoroughly learned by the Lord's people. Nothing can take the place of the Lord's Word; and all teachings, whether oral or printed, should be recognized as secondary to the inspired Word, and should be received only as corroborated by the Scriptures. Or rather, they are to be appreciated only as they *unlock* the treasures of wisdom hidden in the Bible—riches of which the world in general is ignorant, and of which even the majority of Christian people, altho they have Bibles by the million, know comparatively little. Indeed, as Bibles become more numerous the great Adversary seems to be permitted to have the greater power to deceive and to mislead respecting its teachings; so that today, with its greatest opportunities, is witnessing a general *decline of faith* in the Scriptures—"a great falling away," led by some of the principal luminaries in the nominal systems—falling from their steadfastness of faith, falling into scepticism and into the radically anti-Biblical theory of evolution—under the lead of so-called "higher criticism" and scholasticism.

The more the Lord's people shall be able to discern that we are already in the "evil day" mentioned by the Apostle, in which many shall stumble and fall from their steadfastness of faith, the more should they give earnest heed lest they should let slip the precious things of the divine Word, which is a lamp to their pathway, and through which God supplies the needed aids for walkink the narrow way which leads to the kingdom.—Eph. 6:13; Heb. 2:1; Psa. 119:105.

And let us beware also in this day of the "new lights" and of many presenting themselves as special teachers, that we permit none to lead us away from the Lord's Word, and to confuse us in our understanding. "Let us hold fast the confidence of our rejoicing [in Christ and his redemptive work—and not in our righteousness] firm unto the end." Let us earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, of which the ransom is the very center or hub into which and from which every other truth must and does fit perfectly. And let us remember that whatever assists us in this direction is a teaching that is from God, while whatever leads in another direction must evidently be not of God but of the adversary. While proving the things which we receive, by their harmony with the Scriptures and their ability to unlock them and make clear their meaning, we may well remember the Master's words: "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God,"—and the reverse of this is evidently equally true.—John 3:20, 21; Heb. 3:6; Jude 3; 1 Thes. 5:21.

"WINE IS A MOCKER"

Nov. 26.—Prov. 23:29-35.

"Wine is a mocker; strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."—Prov. 20:1.

Very rarely indeed do we discuss the subject of intemperance: not because we do not realize it to be a crying evil, one of the most dreadful elements of and accessories to the degradation of our race, but because so far as we know our readers few of them would have need of advice or reproof along this line. As for the world, it is not our attempt to revolutionize and reform it along the lines of total abstinence or temperance in respect to the liquor evil, the profanity evil, the backbiting evil, the war evil, the lying evil, or others. And this is not because we have no sympathy with reforms in all these various directions, but because, according to our understanding of the divine Word, it is God's plan that another and higher work be attended to *now* by the Lord's ambassadors; *viz.*, the work of gathering out a people for his name, spiritual Israel, the holy nation, the peculiar people, the royal priesthood, the church, the body of Christ—under whose ministration in glory, in a coming age, the world's reformatory uplift is to be accomplished, under conditions that will be adequate and make success certain.

An intelligent and very earnest reader of the WATCH TOWER publications remarked the fact that he had been struck with the absence of all appeals on the liquor question, the tobacco question, gambling, etc., yet he said, "When I began reading these publications I was a moderate drinker, an habitual smoker and chewer of tobacco, and altho not a gambler I was well versed in cardplaying as a social diversion and time-killer. But since reading the WATCH TOWER publications my life has undergone a complete change in respect to all of these things. I asked myself the question, Have I or have I not consecrated my all to the Lord, covenanting with him to use life, voice, strength, influence, and means to his glory, to the best of my knowledge and ability? I answered, Yes. The question then came, Can you see in what manner your drinking of wine or smoking or chewing tobacco or playing a social game of cards will be to the Lord's glory, to the increase of your influence for righteousness, or a proper expenditure of time and money, in harmony with your covenant? I was obliged to answer myself, No; that these things would all be contrary to my covenant, and I therefore abandoned them in the Lord's name and strength. But now what I want to know is, what was the nature of the influence upon my mind by the reading of MILLENNIAL DAWN which produced or helped to produce these results? for, as I said before, I cannot remember anything directly upon these subjects in this reading matter, and on the contrary, other books which I have had and read which did deal with these subjects pointedly and explicitly, failed utterly to make any impression upon me. Why is this? How is this? What is it that has such influence over me?"

We answered, that undoubtedly the good influence exercised was the spirit of the truth, operating upon the good ground of an honest and consecrated heart. We pointed out that the effort of our publications is to strike the axe of truth at the root of the evil tree, instead of attempting to lop off the various evil branches. A thorough consecration to the Lord is in opposition to every form of sin and in harmony with everything that is good, noble, true, pure. The difficulty with a majority of those who are truly consecrated to the Lord is that they have been mistaught. They have been misled to believe that Christianity is merely morality and civilization, instead of being taught by the divine Word that Christianity is a following of Jesus' footsteps in full consecration to the heavenly Father's will in all matters.

They have been taught that the chief work of the Christian is to get saved and to save others; and by saved is generally understood a breaking off of the gross immoralities, a conformity to civilized usages, and a membership in some earthly church. False views of the church's mission evidently have much to do with this setting up of false standards in the name of Christianity. Thinking men have realized the impossibility of securing the conversion of the world along the Scriptural lines of full consecration to the Lord. It was realized long, long ago that such hopes are baseless from what we know of humanity in general, and having in mind the erroneous thoughts that God had committed the conversion of the world to the church, the effort was made to bring about at least a partial reformation of the conduct of the world. Thus the high standard for the Lord's people as set forth in his Word has been, to the majority of Christian people, a dead letter, and to the majority of ministers an unknown or at least an untaught lesson, because in violent opposition to their cherished but unscriptural theory respecting the conversion of the world by human agencies.

Thus we see what a great loss true Christianity and true

Christian teaching sustained through the introduction of a false hope, a false theory, and through the abandonment of the original hope set before us in the gospel—the faith, the hope, that God is now electing, selecting, polishing and preparing a little flock of faithful covenanters, who in his own due time, as the body, the bride, the joint-heirs with Christ glorified, will be given the power and great glory necessary to the establishment of righteousness in the world,—the binding of Satan and of sin, the opening of the blind eyes of corrupted humanity, and the unstopping of the dull ears that all may hear, and know the truth respecting the divine character and gracious provision of our heavenly Father's plan for the world's salvation—and to an opportunity of sharing in that salvation everlastingly, if they will.

While still adhering strictly to the same principles, *viz.*, the pointing out of the necessity for full consecration on the part of those who would be of the Lord's flock, we nevertheless think it not amiss to occasionally draw attention to the Scriptural presentation on the subject of intemperance in the use of intoxicating liquors. It is neither necessary nor proper that we should take the radical and unscriptural ground seemingly taken by so many who advocate total abstinence, *viz.*, that to even taste liquor is a sin, a grievous sin. We can go no further on any point than do the Scriptures, when they declare, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is *not wise.*" In harmony with the intimation of these inspired words is the thought that whoever trifles with this mocker is in danger of being deceived by it, of being ensnared, of being wrecked.

We can certainly without impropriety urge upon the Lord's people the language of the Apostle, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is *excess*, but be filled with the spirit [the new wine, the new exhilarant, the new antidote for care and pain and trouble]." (Eph. 5:18) Realizing the nervous pressure of our day we may certainly urge that each should consider for himself whether or not the use of wine at all under present conditions might not be improper, as being dangerous. And it would appear that those who get most thoroughly filled with the spirit have in it the new wine, the new exhilarant of the new nature in which they can rejoice most, and of which they cannot partake to excess and injury.

It is in place here for us to remind ourselves of our Lord's words, through the Apostle, that no drunkards shall inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 6:10; Gal. 5:21) We are not to understand these texts to teach that no one who has *ever* been drunk can enter into the kingdom of God, but rather that whoever has come under the influence of the Gospel call and been begotten of the holy Spirit must of necessity receive so much of the spirit of a sound mind that he would not be deceived by the mocking wine and the insane influence of strong drink. (2 Tim. 1:7) On the contrary, if any had been unwisely addicted to the use of liquors to intoxication he must, under the instructions of the Lord's Word and the leadings of his holy Spirit, become more thoroughly instructed in the way of righteousness, and sanctified to God, else he can never be accepted as one of the overcomers, one of the "little flock," who through the wisdom that cometh from above, and in laying hold upon the power of God in Christ, are enabled to break the bonds of Satan which have enslaved them.

NOAH'S INTOXICATION EXCUSABLE

For the sake of some who may be inclined to excuse a certain amount of dissipation in view of Noah's drunkenness (Gen. 9:20, 21), we should say a word in defence of the patriarch. The record is that Noah was a God-fearing man whom God recognized and especially favored because of his righteousness; and the fact that he became intoxicated after having had six hundred years of experience has not only struck Christian people with astonishment, but has inclined some weaker characters to excuse their own unwisdom by his course.

In Noah's defence we call attention to the fact that his intoxication was after the flood and was purely accidental. The flood itself was a part of a great change in the aerial conditions of our earth: to our understanding the flood was produced by the precipitation to the earth of an immense quantity of water which previously had surrounded the earth at a distance as a cloudy canopy.

The breaking of this canopy or envelope of water not only produced the flood, but altered the conditions of nature so that storms, rains, etc., resulted, things which had never been before. (Gen. 2:5, 6) Another result, we believe, was the production of an *aciditous* condition of the atmosphere tending toward ferment, which directly affected human longevity, so that according to the Scripture records the average of human life quickly decreased from eight and nine hundred years to one hundred. This ferment from the changed atmosphere, affecting the grape, produces "must," and thence the alcoholic condition which produces drunkenness. According to the record, Noah's drunkenness was the result of the first vintage of grapes after the flood, and it evidently was contrary to all his experiences preceding the flood. As we have no record of his ever having become intoxicated afterward we are justified in supposing that this one instance was the result of ignorance respecting the changed character of the grape product fermented. From this standpoint nothing will be seen in Noah's conduct calculated to encourage or excuse drunkenness on the part of those who know very well that "wine is a mocker."

Those who have received the holy Spirit and who have found it to be the spirit of a sound mind should seek to inculcate some of their new soundness of judgment on all matters to others as they have opportunity—especially to their children, who subsequently learning the source of that sound judgment may be the more favorably influenced toward a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, thus saving them from many disasters, moral and physical, to which they may be exposed if left without the wise counsel of those to whom they should and do look naturally for lessons of instruction and for helps in the way to nobility of life and character.

We give below a portion of the lesson under consideration in the form of a wine glass, and some remarks of an unknown author in the form of a decanter, which may be interesting to the children and impressive to their memories.

THE DRUNKARD'S WOE-CUP

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath
contentions? who hath complaining? who
hath wounds without cause, who hath
redness of eyes? They that tarry
long at the wine; they that go
to seek out mixed wine.
Look not thou upon the
wine when it is red,
when it giveth
its color
in the
cup,
when it goeth
down
smooth-
ly: at the
last it biteth
like a serpent, and
stingeth like an adder."

THE OLD DECANTER

"There was an old decanter,
and its mouth was gaping
wide; the rosy wine had
ebbed away and left its
crystal side; and the
wind went humming
humming, up and
down the sides it
flew, and through
its reed-like, hollow
neck, the wildest notes
it blew. I placed it in
the window, where the
blast was blowing free, and
fancied that its pale mouth
sang the queerest strains to me.
"They tell me—puny conquerors!
the Plague has slain his ten, and
War his hundred thousand of the very
best of men; but I,"—'twas thus the bottle
spake—"but I have conquered more than all
your famous conquerors so feared and famed of
yore. Then come, ye youths and maidens all, come
drink from out my cup, the beverage that dulls the
brains and burns the spirits up; that puts to shame
your conquerors that slay their scores below, for
this has deluged millions with the lava tide of
woe. Though in the path of battle dark-
est waves of blood may roll; yet while
I killed the body, I have damned
the very soul. The cholera,
the plague, the sword, such
ruin never wrought as I, in mirth or
malice, on the innocent have brought.
And still I breathe upon them, and they
shrink before my breath; and year by year my
thousands tread the dismal road of Death."

NEHEMIAH'S CORRECTION OF SABBATH-BREAKING

Dec. 3.—Neh. 13:15-22.

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."—Exod. 20:8.

Nehemiah remained with his people as its Persian governor for twelve years, when he was recalled to the palace by Artaxerxes. (Neb. 13:6) He returned to Jerusalem by the king's permission probably five years afterward. Meantime the interests of the Israelites had prospered in temporal matters, but suffered from a moral and religious standpoint. Malachi prophesied during this period, and from his book we get a clear insight into some of the degeneracy of that time. The demoralization seems to have started with the desire to be on friendly terms with the gentiles in that vicinity, contrary to divine command.

This led to more mixed marriages, and correspondingly to a growing lack of interest in the divine law and worship. The high priest's grandson, Manasseh, married the daughter of Sanballat, once a prominent enemy of the Jews, and a man of influence; and one of the tithe-chambers of the Temple was desecrated by fitting it up as a dwelling place for Tobiah, the Ammonite, who by marriage became related to the high priest: and this policy, sanctioned by such high authority, was greatly followed by others. (Neh. 13:4, 5, 28; Mal. 2:14-16) It is not surprising that such disregard of divine law led naturally and quickly to the neglect of tithes for the support of the ministers of the Temple, leading also to further selfishness, which, if it brought a sacrifice to the Lord at all was disposed to bring the poor, the lame and the blind of the flock, not the unblemished fatling. It is no wonder, either, that there followed in the wake of these things sorcery, adultery, false swearing, oppression, defrauding of widows and fatherless, etc.—Mal. 1:7, 8; 3:5, 9.

But our lesson deals particularly with another evil of that time—Sabbath-breaking. The policy of those who succeeded Nehemiah on his return to Persia was, as we have seen, to conciliate foreigners, and this, no doubt, largely in the interest of commerce. With the coming of heathen wives and the relaxing interest in the Lord and his commandments, and the frequent intercommunication with heathen who observed no Sabbath day, Sabbath day regulations were quickly broken down.

We may draw a lesson here for spiritual Israel; and apply the Apostle's words, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and our Lord's words, "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world." The spiritual Israelite is commanded to be separate from the world, and to seek his fellowships with his *own* people, the Lord's people, and not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. (2 Cor. 6:14) We may apply this specially to marriage, but to some extent it might be regarded as applicable also to business partnership, etc. As the heathen peoples surrounding Israel exercised a continual pressure upon them, so worldly influences surrounding the spiritual Israelites continually press them with the spirit of worldliness, which needs to be continually repelled; for once this spirit is admitted to the citadel of the heart it wars against the spirit of holiness, devotion to God, etc., and to whatever extent the worldly spirit invades the family, in that proportion the sanctifying of the spirit of truth is antagonized and off-set. Let us, as Israelites indeed, be continually on guard against all alien and alienating influences of the world, the flesh and the devil.

Nehemiah, on his return to the governorship, at once addressed himself to the rectification of the disorders described, beginning with the cleansing of the Temple, the restoration of its service, and the proper supplies for its ministers. Then he came to the question of Sabbath desecration, with which our lesson particularly deals. He remonstrated with the nobles against such a violation of the divine command—the fourth in Israel's Decalogue. He pointed out to them the fact that Sabbath desecration had much to do with their Babylonish captivity. It will be remembered that in explaining the seventy years' desolation of the land of Israel the Lord declared that he would make it desolate seventy years until it should have fulfilled its Sabbaths—its Jubilee years. (2 Chron. 36:21) True, those were year-Sabbaths, and not day-Sabbaths, but we are to remember the Sabbath system (the seventh day and the fiftieth day, the seventh year, and the fiftieth year) was a *connected whole:* and doubtless had Israel properly observed their Sabbath days they would also have properly observed their Sabbath years and Jubilees.*

Nehemiah, after thus discoursing with the nobles on the propriety of the matter and the danger to the nation of thus violating the divine Law, began a reformation by closing the gates of Jerusalem at sundown of the sixth day of the week (Friday), and keeping them closed until sundown of the seventh day of the week (Saturday). The foreign tradesmen coming for business on the Sabbath were disappointed and obliged to camp outside the city; but in expectation that the reformation would be shortlived they came in like manner the next Sabbath. Nehemiah then warned them that to come again for Sabbath trade and to keep up a commotion around the gates of the city on the Sabbath day would subject them to arrest as disturbers of the law and peace of the city, and they were thus restrained. We must all commend Nehemiah's devotion to the divine law and must concede that he in no sense of the word exceeded its requirements.

The spiritual Israelite, altho in no sense of the word under the Law of Sinai, which was given exclusively to the fleshly Israelite, has nevertheless his Sabbath day—his rest day. It is a larger and a fuller day than was the Jewish one, as his rest is a grander and more perfect rest than the physical one of the Jew. The spiritual Israelite rests in faith, rests in Christ. Having taken upon him the yoke of his new Master he finds, as was promised, *rest to his soul,* and not merely rest to his flesh—mind-rest, not merely bodily rest. (Matt. 11:29) This is the rest or Sabbath mentioned by the Apostle (Heb. 4:3) saying, "We which have believed do enter into rest." Our rest in the Lord is as complete as is our belief in him. He who believes fully *rests* fully; he who believes only partially *rests* but partially. The ideal condition of the spiritual Israelite is the attainment of a perfect rest, a perfect Sabbath-keeping, in his present experience, and a waiting and laboring for another and still more complete rest—the actual rest of the perfected condition—the rest that remains for the people of God. "Let us therefore labor to enter into that rest [Sabbath], lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief [of fleshly Israel.]"—Heb. 4:9-11.

While the spiritual Israelite should never lose sight of these, his real Sabbaths, the antitypes of fleshly Israel's Sabbath *days* and Sabbath *years,* and while he should never forget that he is completely freed from the Law of Sinai respecting any and all Sabbaths, holy days, new moons, etc. (Col. 2:16), nevertheless he does rejoice in and should avail himself of any arrangements of nominal Christendom which may appear to be favorable to his spiritual resting, his continual Sabbath-keeping.

It so happens that nominal Christendom has set apart one day in seven as a Sabbath of rest—not the seventh day, which was commanded to the Jews, but the first day of the week, which was never commanded to anyone by divine authority. No matter by whatsoever misconception this first day of the week, called Sun-day in commemoration of the ancient heathen worship of the sun, was originally set apart as sacred and is still set apart by the laws of Christendom, it contains a great blessing, not only to the people at large but especially to the true Israelites.

(1) To the people at large it means a day of rest from toil, a day of recreation, refreshment, change; a day for different sights and sounds, a day different from other days immersed in toil; a day of opportunity for mental development according to the best lines they may have knowledge of and be willing to follow. For a time some laborers, mechanics and merchants regarded the compulsory cessation of toil as a hardship, injurious to their interests, but they very generally have come to see that there is an over-supply of labor anyway, and that as far as the whole people is concerned, the labor of the six days will be worth exactly as much as the labor of seven. Consequently we find that now labor organizations are earnest for the enforcement of Sunday laws, and that practically the only persons of contrary mind are those who own and operate machinery. In 1886 a thousand carpenters in Berlin petitioned the government for protection against Sunday labor; in the same year a Socialistic congress in Belgium propounded as one of its chief demands Sunday rest. In Holland there is at present in progress an effort for emancipation from Sunday work; and recently in Wisconsin a Law and Order League was organized to enforce Sunday laws, etc. Working men are finding that in losing Sunday they gain nothing to compensate them.

While the fourth commandment to fleshly Israel was chiefly in the nature of a type, foreshadowing the rest coming to spiritual Israelites, nevertheless, like every divine law, it was in no wise injurious, but on the contrary very beneficial to fleshly Israel to observe the seventh day, even as it is now beneficial to all mankind to observe a seventh day,—whether the first day of the week, observed by Christendom, or the seventh day of the week observed by the Jews. Experience proves that such a rest is necessary from the human and physical standpoint.

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* See Millennial Dawn, Vol. ii, Chap. 6.

(2) To the true spiritual Israelite Sunday is and for long centuries has been a great boon, a great blessing—the only drawback has been that not infrequently he has been mistaught to believe that Sunday is the Jewish Sabbath or a divinely appointed substitute for it, and in consequence has been brought under a bondage—the bondage of the Jewish Law, with which really the spiritual Israelite has nothing whatever to do, he being under a *new* covenant with a *new* law and a *new* Mediator.* (Heb. 8:6) But the spiritual Israelite, already resting in heart (Sabbath-keeping antitypically, by faith in the Redeemer's finished work), rightly understanding the matter and appreciating the privileges which a general Sunday observance brings, may use this day to wonderful profit and blessing. And the fact that he has an opportunity so to do means to him an obligation so to do; because, though without stipulations of law to bind him, he is under the general law of love, and by it is obligated to do with his might what his hands find to do—to glorify the Lord, to bless the brethren, and to do good unto all men as he may have opportunity: and the day and customs are favorable to his exercise in all these respects.

The spiritual Israelite is to esteem that whatever mistaken notions humanity may have had which led them to set apart the first day of the week, the matter has nevertheless been evidently of divine providence to present special opportunities for profit and progress to the spiritual Israelites now called to be of the royal priesthood. And such are prompt to avail themselves of these privileges and opportunities; to assemble themselves for the study of the divine Word, for praise, for prayer and for spiritual fellowship,—building one another up in the most holy faith.

In view of the fact that the majority of the Lord's consecrated people are poor,—not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many rich—how necessary it has been that the Lord should provide such an opportunity as this day affords for release from earthly toil and spiritual refreshment; and how fortunate it is for such that the masses of Christendom esteem rest on this day to be compulsory from the divine standpoint.

Of all the people in the world, therefore, those who enjoy the light of present truth and recognize this day as a God-given *privilege,* and not as compulsory, should be the very last to either do or say anything which would bring discredit on the day and its sacred observance as a day of rest. This, of course, does not mean that we should advocate its observance with the usual arguments; but it does mean that all such should be careful in their observance of the day for three reasons:

(1) Because they would not wish to see the day fall into disuse or disrespect in the esteem of the world in general, for humanity's sake, as well as for their own sakes—physical and spiritual.

(2) Because they would not wish to do anything which would lead others to a violation of a less enlightened conscience, remembering that the conscience is the most valuable as well as the most tender and easily injured quality of the human nature.

(3) Because they do wish to maintain a proper religious influence with their neighbors, whose minds are not clearly and fully enlightened on this subject—to the intent that they may exercise the greater influence for good and for the truth as time and opportunity shall offer.

For all these reasons we urge upon the readers of this journal a glad and careful observance of Sunday as a sacred, a holy day, providentially set apart by human law. Let it be entirely separated from business, and so far as possible from all labor not actually necessary; let it be employed in the upbuilding of themselves, and their families, and the household of faith, and as many as the truth shall draw into their sphere of influence,—in moral and spiritual directions.

In the concluding verse of the lesson Nehemiah asks the Lord's blessing upon himself, in view of the work which he had done in the name of the Lord. He was fighting valiantly for God's cause, and thereby making many enemies; and hence while not flinching from his duty it was not unreasonable, but very proper that he should think of the Lord's faithfulness toward all faithful to him. Had Nehemiah lived in our day, with its Gospel high calling and privileges, we doubt not he would have been one of the "saints," and then, assuredly, he would have known definitely and clearly of the exceeding great and precious promises given to the Gospel church. But he lived before the "high calling" began, before the exceeding great and precious promises were made. He knew not what he would receive of the Lord for his faithfulness, but we may know, because instructed of the holy Spirit through the Apostle's writings. We may be assured that if Nehemiah continued faithful to the end of his career he would be amongst the worthies of the past mentioned by the Apostle in Hebrews 11—those who wrought righteousness, and were valiant on the side of God and his law. We are assured that these were acceptable with God and will ultimately be made perfect—in the future, after the church, the elect body of Christ has been completed, been made perfect, and glorified in the heavenly kingdom.—Heb. 11:39, 40.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examinaton of Covenants.

SOME NEGLECTED FACTS IN HUMAN BIOLOGICAL HISTORY

"Students of Human Physiology, Pathology and Dietetics have hitherto persistently ignored certain facts in man's history which have a controlling influence on present conditions. To ignore these historical biological facts is as irrational as it would be to attempt to study the present civil institutions of our country and ignore our past history.

"In regard to man's early biological history we have records of the highest credibility. These records are corroborated by all the facts within the reach of present observation. That present *theories* and *speculations* are contrary to them has no weight with a truly scientific mind, which cares for facts alone.

"These records do not inform us what was the method used in the creation of man. They thus leave the field open for interesting speculation as to whether it was by an evolutionary process or otherwise. We do learn that the first progenitors of the human race were perfect human beings, a man and a woman of the highest organization, both physical and mental, lacking in nothing except character, something which could only be developed by experience and the exercise of their faculties. We are also informed that the woman was developed from the man by the method of reproduction known as gemmation or budding; this, however, being an exceptional case, all subsequent reproduction in the human race being by the sexual method.

"This perfect human pair were placed in a perfect environment, called the garden of Eden, or Paradise. This was a small portion of the earth's surface specially prepared for the abode of man, who was specially favored above the rest of the animal kingdom, having been endowed with an organization so much superior to that of any other animal that he possessed the powers of reason, conscience, imagination, generalization and free will to a high degree, thus making him an earthly image of spirit beings.

"So exalted an animal was worthy of a more prolonged existence than the lower animals, consequently he was endowed with the privilege of continued life on earth, being so constituted that as each cell of his structure became worn out and effete it was removed and a new cell put in its place, thus keeping his tissues always young and free from senile decay.

"The design of the Creator being that the human race should be 'sons of God' and not merely 'works of his hand' like the lower animals, the announcement was made to Adam that the law of limited existence and death which he saw controlling the lower animals should not prevail against him or his offspring, but that he would be permitted to live on everlastingly in his perfect environment, provided he developed a character which would love and pursue righteousness and eschew evil; otherwise the gift of lasting life would be taken from him and he would be brought under the law of limited existence and death, everlasting life being a curse to an evil being and not a blessing.

"As we have seen, man, being a perfect being, endowed with the power of rejuvenating his tissues so that he could always remain young, was placed in a perfect environment, called Paradise. Here the climatic conditions were perfect, the sanitary conditions were perfect, and, last but not least, he was supplied with a perfect diet.

"As a simple and suitable commencement of the disciplinary training necessary to develop his character and test his obedience, he was placed under a single prohibition. He was given the 'herb bearing seed' for food and allowed to eat of the fruit of every tree in Paradise with one exception. 'Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat;' and he was warned that if he disobeyed this command he would surely die. Perhaps if man had not been influenced towards the wrong course he would have stood this simple first test successfully, but there was present a spirit being of a high order whom ambition and selfishness had led into rebellion. By a line of specious reasoning he succeeded in seducing Eve, 'the weaker vessel,' into a violation of the prohibition. Adam knew that the penalty for this was death; that his beloved and only congenial companion must cease to exist. Feeling that he would rather die than live without her, he also took of the forbidden fruit in order that he might share her penalty, preferring the nothingness of death to life without her who was his other self, 'bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh.' We are expressly informed that 'Adam was not deceived.' What he did he did with his eyes open. In effect he committed suicide for love.

"The laws of God are unchangeable, and the penalty of death once threatened for this disobedience must be executed. Adam and Eve were put to death, within the limits of one of God's 'thousand year days,' as He had said, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof dying thou shalt die.' God had made man on a plan which permitted continued existence in a suitable environment, and man would have continued to live on, even in sin and rebellion, if he could have remained in Paradise. In order to put the sentence of death into execution it was necessary to drive man out of Paradise into the 'cursed' or unfinished part of the earth 'lest he put forth his hand and eat of the tree of life and live forever.' In the unfinished earth he was exposed to climatic vicissitudes, to accidents and catastrophes, to the attacks of disease germs, to wearing and unwholesome forms of labor. Above all, he was deprived of his natural food.

"Since the day when Adam and Eve were driven from Eden, 'the world being all before them where to choose,' and the cherubim, armed with the revolving sword of flame, took their station at the gate, no human being, so far as we know, has ever tasted a mouthful of man's natural food. Thus Adam and all his race have died, although originally adapted to everlasting life on earth: Adam being put to death as the penalty of his sin, and all his posterity because the germs of the whole race being in Adam's body when he commenced to die, by the natural law of heredity they could only receive what Adam had to give them, which was death and not life.

"These, then, are the controlling facts of man's biological history, a life history which is not paralleled by that of any other animal, namely: the possession of an organism built so as to be capable of running on forever if surrounded by a special environment and supplied with a special food, but separated from his special environment and deprived of his special food by a judicial decree: and the medical profession will fail to solve the problems of pathology and dietetics as long as they ignore these facts. With man every condition is pathological, every environment is unnatural, every article of his diet is abnormal. That the race did not become extinct long ago can only be explained by the history given above.

"The mental condition of man depends upon the physical. There can be no mind without a body. Therefore, man's mind is unsound as the inevitable result of his physical derangement. This is why man, although endowed with reason, everywhere acts in an irrational manner. Some men are insane, but all men are of unsound mind. There have been only two human beings who possessed perfectly sound minds. One was Adam, but his mental and physical health continued for only a brief period, perhaps not more than one year. The other was Jesus, the Christ. Although not of Adam's race, he was a perfect human being; perfect mentally as well as physically. Imperfect men who attempt to conform their ideas and their conduct to his perfect standard are said by Paul to have the 'spirit of a sound mind.' It is the highest attainment of depraved humanity to have the *spirit* or disposition of a sound mind. Puck was fully justified by the facts when he exclaimed, 'What fools these mortals be!' Our weakened and unsound minds can make but little progress towards the truth on medical subjects or any other until we obtain 'the spirit of a sound mind' and endeavor to see man's condition in its true light.

"I do not like to leave this subject without adding that the fall of man was foreseen and provided for in the plan of God, and he has not changed in the least his purposes to have on earth a Paradise populated by perfect men. At the time appointed that purpose will be accomplished. The race of Adam will share in it, for although the death sentence has been executed upon them and they have been consigned to the grave, they have been *ransomed from the grave* and will live again. All in Adam die, but all in Christ will be made alive in the future.

"I can speak with positiveness on these points, thanks to the light thrown on these hitherto dark questions by that wonderful book, *The Plan of the Ages*. It is a key to that sublime treasury of facts, the Bible, enabling us to reduce its facts to a system, 'having the completeness of a science, the precision of algebra.' The author's discovery of *The Plan of the Ages* has done for Bible phenomena what the discovery of the heliocentric character of the solar system did for astronomy. In another generation this will have displaced all other theology and philosophy as completely as the Copernican astronomy has displaced the Ptolemaic."

DAVID P. JACKSON, M. D.

In *Toledo Medical and Surgical Reporter*.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Brother Weber was with us Saturday and brought an account of the grand feast you all had at St. Louis. I am in communication with the Trunk Line Association regarding a Philadelphia Convention.

We are getting great blessings from VOL. V., and rejoicing in the light thrown on so many Scriptures. May the dear Lord continue to use you in dispensing such food to us all, is my constant prayer. When you said, at the Boston Convention, that you thought in the next few years a great many would come into the truth after seeing the pronounced unscriptural views of the nominal ministry I was somewhat surprised at first, as I had thought the wheat was pretty well sifted from the denominations, but your reasons were very convincing, and since then I have had many opportunities to note its harmony with the Word and the signs of the times. Corroborative evidence is furnished, I think, in the splendid newspaper accounts of some of the Boston and St. Louis meetings. The account of your discourse in Monday's St. Louis *Republican* was without a flaw so far as I can recall, and such articles must certainly be intended by the Lord to cause some to search further for the light.

The adversary is also active. The friends in Philadelphia received postals, notifying us that E. C. Mott would speak here. I am so thankful, however, that his erroneous teaching is so well known to the brethren here that it seems most improbable that he could move them from their steadfastness if they heard him. He has for some time been teaching that none are justified but those that are spiritually begotten*—basing it upon an erroneous interpretation of 1 John 5:1, and wresting all other Scriptures to suit his theory. It is a terrible thing to be so influenced by a desire to bring out something *new* that we reject the Old Theology in order to glorify self. I pray for grace and humility that I may not be led away by pride.

As treasurer for the Philadelphia Church I have been instructed by the brethren to send to the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY an order for $25, which is herein enclosed.

With Christian love to yourself and the dear friends in the TOWER office, I remain,

Yours in the service of the Truth,

BENJAMIN H. BARTON.

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* See issue March 1 1910, p. 93, question four. (Prov. 4:18.)—EDS.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

COLD COMFORT FOR EVOLUTIONISTS AND HIGHER CRITICS

Prof. A. H. Sayce, one of the greatest living archæological explorers and professors of Assyriology in Oxford University, England, after thirty years spent in deciphering the ancient hieroglyphics of eastern lands, recently declared:—

"*Higher Criticism is wrong. The higher critics of the Bible are engaged in hair-splitting trivialities and are pursuing false methods. Our researches among the monuments of Babylon, Assyria and Egypt have opened up a new world undreamed of a few years ago. They show that the history of mankind goes back to a very remote past; and that civilization was then quite as high as that of imperial Rome or the civilization of Europe at the time of the Renaissance, if not higher in some respects.*

"They have also shown how much there is still to be discovered. After all, what we have found is only the beginning of what we shall find. It is no longer possible to say, as in the early days of oriental research, that such and such a thing could not have been. The population of the early East was highly cultured and highly literary. Both in Egypt and in Babylon a large portion of the people seem to have occupied their time in reading and writing.

"The monuments that have been found in Egypt and

Babylonia have revealed this fact in part. These are literally covered with writing. Even the smallest articles of daily use have been found covered with inscriptions. The revelations are also party due to the discoveries that the old cities of the East had very large libraries of books. And some discoveries made a few years ago at Tel-el-Amarna, in Egypt—where a large number of letters on clay tablets were found—proved that in the fifteenth century before the Christian era the whole educated population of the East from the Euphrates to the Nile were engaged in writing letters to one another. This correspondence was going on actively in a language and form of writing which belonged only to the Babylonians. Those, therefore, who wrote in this language must have studied and learned it as we do French. Hence there must have been schools in which the language and script of Babylonia were studied all over western Asia.

"Not long since a discovery was made in the extreme south of Egypt showing that papyrus books were written in the very early days of Egyptian history. As regards the Babylonian libraries, they were equally ancient and very numerous. Every great library had its clay books. Some time ago at a place called Tello, in South Chaldea, a French excavator discovered a library which was formed three or four centuries before the birth of Abraham, and which he concludes had contained 33,000 separate clay tablets or books on all kinds of subjects. He found them arranged in shelves, piled one upon another. They had probably been overwhelmed by the fall of the building in which they were placed. Many of these clay tablets are now in Constantinople. About 10,000 were stolen by the Arabs. The tablets are mostly written in Accadian, a language which is still imperfectly known."

* * * *

Amongst the *papyri* found recently in Egypt and mentioned in our *View* for Nov. 15th were others quite interesting. One was—An Ode of Welcome to Usertesen III., written probably on the occasion of a royal visit. It has six stanzas of ten lines each and is pronounced by scientists "the oldest known poem in the world." They forget the Bible again, for the Book of Job is of about the same age and conceded to be a masterly poetic production.

Veterinary surgery is treated in a good sized volume, and we are told "the cures are very practical and similar to those used in the present day." But legal documents and private papers are amongst the most interesting, evidencing surely that if (as evolutionists claim) the first man was but one remove from a monkey, he got civilized very quickly, and that so far as the Egyptians are concerned, very little *evoluting* has been done for the past 3700 years. We quote a few extracts from these interesting documents from the *London Daily News* of Sept. 29th, '99,—supplied to it by Mr. F. L. Griffith,—as follows:—

"The wills and conveyances are certainly the earliest examples of legal documents known, and afford ample proof of the antiquity of the laws of ancient Egypt. The first is a curious transfer of the apparently hereditary office of "regulator of priestly orders" from father to son.

"'I am giving up my regulatorship of priestly orders to my son Antef, called Jusenb, an old man's staff (assistant); even as I grow old let him be promoted at once. As to the title to property I made for his mother it is annulled.'

"Like all Egyptian documents, it concludes with 'name list of those in whose presence this title to property was made,' and the date is the 19th day of Khoiak, in the 39th year of Amen-em-hat III., or about B. C. 2588.* The next papyrus is even of greater interest. It measures twenty-two inches by twelve and a half, and has been folded up and sealed with a scarab seal, and is inscribed with two wills. The first is a deed of gift by a man named Ankh-ren, servant of the superintendent of works, to his brother, of all his property in 'town and marsh land, his servants,' etc. It is stated a list of the property is deposited in the office of the 'second registrar.' The second will is that of the brother, named Uah, who bequeaths all to his wife, Teta. Considering its great age, it is really a very remarkable document. The writer says:

"'I am making a title to the property to my wife—of all things given to me by my brother, the devoted servant of the superintendent of works, Ankh-ren, as to each article. She shall give it to any she desires of the children that she has borne me. I am giving her the four Eastern (Syrian) slaves that my brother gave me. She shall give them to whomsoever she will of her children. As to my tomb, let me be buried in it with my wife. Moreover as to the apartments my brother built for me, my wife shall dwell therein without allowing her to be put forth by any person. The deputy Gebu shall act as guardian for my son.'

"The word used for guardian is curious, 'child instructor.' To the deed are appended the names of several official witnesses. Among the officials we find the name of 'the scribe of the hearing,' in whom we may see the official shorthand writer who wrote out the draft proceedings.

"Very curious are the private letters, a number of which were found. These letters, probably the oldest in the world, are in various handwritings, in the hieratic character, and resemble in style the Early English letters. The writing is across the longest width, the papyrus is then folded three times from the side, and sealed or tied, and the address written on the outside, for example: 'The master to whom be Life. Health Sakanu to whom be L. P. H., from Arisu, Year 2, 4th Month of Harvest, 12th day. Brought by Henat.' Like all Oriental letters, these ancient epistles are redolent with platitudes and flowery language, the pious phrase, 'Life, Prosperity and Health,' being constantly repeated. The less the importance of the letter the more flowery the language. Most of the letters are from officials, and relate to the public works being carried on. The following is a good example:

"'The servant of the wakf Arisu saith to the superintendent of the interior, Sa-ka-anu, to whom be life, health, and prosperity. This is a communication to the Master L. P. H., saying that I arrived in the city of Het-Gehes on the 4th Month of Harvest (July) on the early morning of the 5th day. I found that the Master had gone South. The foreman Ampy told me, and I gave him three laborers. Thereupon I sent to the foreman Henai, in a ship that I found at Het-Gahes. I caused him to bring thee a freight."

"The freight consisted of barley and durra, etc. Near the end of the letter is an interesting passage showing how the Egyptian officials worked together:

"'Behold I have sent particulars of thy business to the Steward Hetu, for thou must be with him as one man (friends).'

"There is also a letter from a lady which relates chiefly to the weaving carried on in the temple.

"The letters are not always so polite, and a fine specimen of strong language is afforded by the following:—

"'May thy speech be in all ill favor by Sebek (crocodile god), and whoever will send thee to perdition—favored be his Ka (spirit). Thus hath the dean of the temple, He-Kat-Pepa, done for thee, continually for ever and ever, eternally. Ill be thy hoaring and a plague (on thee).'

"The reports and account tablets are wearisome in bulk, but abound in details of the greatest value to the historian and archæologist. The whole system of the corvee is set forth in detail. The men were called from certain villages and towns, hence the gangs contain several members of the same family, to work for two months. The gangs numbered usually ten, and each had a master, a ganger, and a timekeeper or scribe. They were lodged in sections in the town and fed from a common store. Some idea ot the number of men and the work of the commissariat is afforded by the return for one day's baking of eighteen hundred and ninety loaves. An interesting account is that of the dancers employed in the temple in the great festivals. Many of them were Syrians and Nubians. The list of festivals is very curious, and among them are several which exist to the present day. Thus, the 'Festival of the Night of Receiving the River,' is the well-known festival of the cutting of the dam, celebrated to this day in Cairo on the second or third week in August.

"As we turn these ancient fragments over—these accounts and revenue returns—it is hard to believe that they are the records of some forty-five centuries ago,* they might be those of the Egypt of today. The return of the native reiyses and katibs (scribes) for the daily and monthly work on the barrage at Assouan, hardly differ in a single detail from those made for the reclimbing works in the Fayoum in Bezboim. The publication of these papyri only affords another proof of how real is the resurrection of the buried past and how vivid and full of life is the picture we can reconstruct."

A MINISTER'S PRESENTIMENTS AND REASONS

Rev. H. R. Perseval, Episcopalian, of Pennsylvania, over his own signature has recently expressed his views of the present situation and the future outlook of the Christian religion in civilized lands. He sees a tendency toward the denial of all positive *faith* and a substitution of unbelief coupled with forms and liturgies: in other words, he foresees an agnostic ceremonialism; and so far as we understand him, he is in full sympathy with such a *faithless* "church." We agree that the tendency is as he outlines it; but we are not in sympathy with the tendency and deny that it will be the church of Christ or in any sense justified in the use of the name Christian. We hold that it will be merely the binding of the "tares" in bundles ready for the "fire" (trouble) of this day of vengeance;—that the true church, the "wheat," will first all be separated from the "tares," as now commanded by the Lord.—Rev. 18:4; Isa. 48:20-22; 52:11; Jer. 51:6-10, 45; 2 Cor. 6:16-18.

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* Over 600 years in error (too long), as shown by the later findings and calculations referred to in our last issue.

* More properly 3776 years ago, in harmony with the Bible Chronology and in harmony with the *papyri* dates discovered by Dr. Borchardt, set forth in our last issue, page 245.

The reverend gentleman gives some cogent reasons for his views, from which we make brief extracts as follows:—

"Even old-fashioned orthodox Protestantism is in America on the wane, and while the law of William Penn's own Pennsylvania still by statute fines those who speak against or insult the Holy Scriptures of God, many Protestant ministers in the hundreds of pulpits of Philadelphia find no more interesting and exciting theme for their Sunday preachments than the showing the Word of God to be the erring and often immoral and ridiculous word of man!

"It is no exaggeration to say that Protestantism is rapidly disintegrating, and is losing its hold as a teaching power.

"An American bishop, whose diocese is in the wilds of New England and contains but twenty-seven clergymen all told, has recently written a letter to a church newspaper in which he makes the highly interesting assertion that the clergy are not bound even to believe the statements they make in the prayers of the church service, which they offer out of the prayer-book to the God of truth! The bishop would seem to be a fair match, in this respect at least (although not in others), to the rationalistic German professor, Adolf Harnack, who made a similar statement with regard to the Lutheran ministers of the state church, who were obliged to accept the Apostles' Creed which they did not believe!

"It is not too much to say, then, that Protestantism as a system of *positive religious belief* is dying out, and that its professors are for the most part able to continue in its ministry only through some device of casuistry [equivocation, lying], which in any other matter would be considered by themselves as it is in their case by almost every one except themselves, dishonest and dishonorable. It is manifest that this state of things can not go on, and that the only final result of 'progress' in this direction, so far as faith is concerned, must be unbelief, and, so far as organization is concerned, decay and dissolution."

AN ASTOUNDING PROPOSITION

''The Disappointment of Jesus Christ''

At a meeting of the "Canadian Society for Christian Union" held in Toronto, Canada, Oct. 3d, was a speaker, whose subject should have evoked astonishment, but evidently did not. The nominal Christian is in a sort of hypnotic stupor which accepts unquestioningly and unreasoningly whatever is presented to him by those duly *authorized* by any popular sect to bear the title of Reverend. The press reports say:—

"Rev. A. Crapsey, of New York, had prepared a lengthy paper on the subject, '*The Disappointment of Jesus Christ.*' As it was too exhaustive for such a meeting, he gave the audience the essence of his idea extempore. There was, he held, one great petition in the Saviour's prayer just before he suffered death that was not answered yet. He prayed that his people might be one, as he was one with the Father. He came to be a great unifier, and his plan was the most successful of any in the history of the world, yet his own people had disappointed him. They were continually at war with one another over trivial matters. The speaker held that one of the great causes of disunion was an improper theory of officialism, whereby the outward organization was considered the church."

We would be deeply interested in reading the original *exhaustive* treatment of this subject that we might know,—

(1) How it came that the Lord who had the holy Spirit without measure (stint) at the time he offered the prayer referred to (John 17), did not know what to expect as the outcome of his work and hence met with the declared *disappointment.*

(2) If disappointed in one particular may he not be disappointed in *all?* Hence, may not his prophecy of Matthew 24th chapter and all others of his precious promises be similarly *mistakes—disappointments?*

(3) If our Lord and his words are thus "errant" would not the argument of the "higher critics" be correct when they claim that the Book is an unreliable guide and that instead of it we should take the wisdom of earth's wise men (the higher critics) as far better?

(4) It is not unreasonable to suppose from his "orthodox" associations that the Rev. Crapsey is a *trinitarian;* and if so a believer that our Lord Jesus was his own Father in heaven at the same time that he was his own Son on earth.* This being the reverend gentleman's position the logic of his argument is that Jehovah has been *disappointed* and hence did not know the end from the beginning—as he supposed and said he did. (Isa. 46:10) And if Jehovah is thus "all at sea" and greatly *disappointed* at results, is it not time that we his creatures should become excited and abandon our *rest* in Christ and our *hopes* and our *faith*, and begin to try our own skill instead of trusting all to the Lord?

(5) To cap the climax of this argument we should only need to be assured that the reverend gentleman is a Calvinist (a Presbyterian, or a Congregationalist, or a Baptist) and that he is a firm believer in "the divine decrees," in divine predestination,—that *God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass.* In other words, that God foreordained matters as we see them but did not know, or forgot that he had so foreordained, and was *disappointed* in consequence.

What a wretchedly nauseating pabulum is this, that is being served to young and old Christians instead of the "sincere milk of the word" and its "strong meat" so abundantly supplied in the Scriptures. Is it any wonder that the rising generation in Christian lands is full of scepticism? They see the reasoning people leaving the Bible under the lead of higher criticism, and from the friends of the Bible they get such arrant nonsense as the above. The wonder is that all who do not see the *truth* do not quickly become skeptics. They are saved apparently by their stupor in things spiritual.

The Other Side of the Proposition

What is the reverend gentleman's difficulty? The closing sentence quoted above shows that despite his gross darkness he has some light,—some light that many of his associates do not have. That last sentence gives us good hope for the man, for we see just where he floundered and why. He floundered in his logic by reason of his attempt to hold and harmonize a prominent teaching of churchianity with the Scripture's teachings. He must sift and separate the teachings of the Scriptures from all others, and then he will find the logical harmony and consistency which he does not now find.

Had he followed along Scriptural lines the logical reasoning of his last sentence quoted above that the *outward organization is not the real church,* he would have seen that it was not for the union of the *outward organization* that our Lord prayed. He would have seen then that Christ is *not* disappointed that the *outward organizations* are not united. If the real Church is composed of *believers* and not of unbelievers, "higher critics" or otherwise: and if, as the Scriptures declare, it is composed of only such believers as are *consecrated* —the *holy,* "the saints" (Heb. 12:23; 2 Thes. 2:13; Rev. 20:6), was not the gentleman looking in a wrong quarter to find those who are at *one* with the Father and the Son and with each other? We think so.

And no doubt he was misled into all this error by that other doctrine of churchianity that is in conflict with the teachings of the Bible,—the doctrine of eternal torment of all except the church. Every man of generous heart, believing this false doctrine, will be disposed to "count into the church" as many as possible, not wishing to count them into eternal torture. Many are thus blinded and misled and unintentionally arrayed against God and his Word.

What these well-meaning but deluded people need is, to see the Scriptural doctrine of *Election* stript of the unscriptural doctrine of hopeless reprobation of the non-elect to eternal torture. They need to learn that God foreknew and foreordained an elect church which he has been calling and selecting from among mankind during this age *for a purpose* (Acts 15:14; Rom. 8:28)—the glorious purpose of making them his agents for the blessing of all mankind. They need to see that this elect church is the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:8, 16, 29), and that it will shortly *inherit* the promises made to Abraham: "In thy seed shall *all the families* of the earth be blest."

They need to see, too, what God has *predestinated;* and then they will see the absurdity of "counting in" the millions of nominal churchianity; and all the more they will see the need for their own neighbors and friends and families, of the promised blessed Millennial reign of Christ and his *elect* church, his bride. God's *predestination* is stated by inspiration by the Apostle, thus: "Those whom he foreknew, he also *predestinated to be copies of his Son.*"—Rom. 8:29, *Diaglott.*

"He shall see of the travail of his soul and be *satisfied*"—not disappointed.—Isa. 53:11.

PAPACY'S DEMANDS IN SPAIN

Well do the Scriptures symbolically represent Papacy as a leopard beast (or *mottled* government—Rev. 13:2). In one place it is liberal, almost *white* in its professions or appearances; in another quarter it is *black*, corrupt, degrading, brutal; and in still other places it has various *neutral* and tawny shades of correspondence to the natural depravity of the people it rules with its rod of eternal torment and its staff of purgatory.

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* See *The At-one-ment Between God and Man,* Chap. 5.

In Spain, which has been for centuries one of its dark spots—as dark as the general civilization of the people will permit,—the "leopard" has been accustomed to have its way, and is now incensed that freedom of worship, or even of thought, should be dreamed of. And now hints are thrown out that an insurrection would be supported against the present government, *if* the "Liberals" are granted any privileges. Of course, all the blame is attached to the "*Liberals*" (which there means any and all who demand the right to think and act for themselves in religious matters), and it is claimed that they should *let things alone*—not create a disturbance by demanding and seeking their rights. A Paris newspaper (*Journal des Debats*) analyses Papacy's demands thus:—

"According to the views expressed at Burgos, the Spanish church, to quote the words of a French king, simply says: '*L'etat c'est moi!*' The grave crisis of Spain, we are told, is due to her 'excessive Liberals,' and, further, that 'the chief error of Liberalism is that it substitutes individual discernment for the authority of the church.' The church, therefore, makes the following cardinal demands: Complete independence of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which means that none of its members, under any consideration whatever, shall be judged by secular courts; re-establishment of all clerical privileges; abolition of the legality of marriages not sanctioned by the church; non-interference of the secular authorities with any legacies or grants obtained by the church; prohibition of religious association to non-Catholics. Thus the church makes demands which are altogether incompatible with modern life. The spirit of these demands is all the more easy to discern when we read that 'the increasing impudence and audacity of Protestantism, which raises its temples and opens its schools in the presence of Catholic sanctuaries and schools, in the capital as well as in other places of Spain, is a direct violation of the constitution.' "

In a word, the pope and his coadjutors seem to be seeking to put pressure on all the nations of Europe to compel an interference on his behalf to secure for him some restoration of temporal power at the opening of the new century.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

BORROWING AND LENDING

Question.—I have neighbors who bother me continually by wishing to borrow of me. I wish to be neighborly but do not like to be pestered by people with whom I have scarcely anything in common. If they were "brethren in Christ," I would think nothing of it, but be glad to oblige them. What is my duty under the circumstances?

Answer.—Our advice is that you bear with them in this matter—for the truth's sake, for the Lord's sake, not directly, but indirectly. In this way seek to make friends with earthly things. You will find little enough that you and your neighbors can exchange along spiritual lines, and in order that what you have to offer of spiritual things may be the more acceptable to them, improve every opportunity to be kind, generous, in respect to the lending of earthly goods—not, of course, carrying matters to an extreme, so as to injure your own interests. Thus the Lord's people may be lenders, but not borrowers, as the typical fleshly Israelites were instructed also. (Luke 6:35; Deut. 15:6-15) By pursuing a kind and generous course, you will to that extent favorably impress your worldly neighbors, and that at a trifling cost. If subsequently they misunderstand your religious views, they will at least concede you to be a kind and generous neighbor.

It would seem that many of the Lord's dear people fail to see that with our clearer light we should become more kind in word and in action and in thought, and much more generous every way, than our neighbors—peace-able and peacemakers. The majority of people seem naturally to be mischief makers, and do not quickly see that this is contrary to the spirit of the Lord—the spirit of love. The possession of the quarrelsome, selfish spirit gives evidence that the possessor has not been taught of God, or has not properly learned of him who is meek and lowly, kind and gentle of heart.

MAN'S FREE AGENCY

Question.—Has man been a free moral agent since the fall?

Answer.—There are two ways of looking at this subject, and the answers accordingly would be opposites.

(1) If by "free moral agent" is meant *freedom of will* in respect to moral questions, we would answer, Yes. Undoubtedly man is free to *will* as he may please on moral questions, although he may not be able to carry out this will in all the affairs of life by reason of the weaknesses of his flesh or by reason of circumstances and conditions of others with whom he is in contact. Thus the Apostle Paul says, "To *will* is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." —Rom. 7:18.

(2) If by "free moral agent" is meant one who is not influenced or restricted by his environment, the answer should unquestionably be, No; because we are all born in a certain measure of slavery to ignorance, superstition and weakness, the results of the fall. Whoever is *thus bounden* may indeed seem to have full liberty to do right as easily as to do wrong, but in reality he has no such liberty, by reason of his own depravity and that of others, especially "the Prince of this world," who blinds the minds of them that believe not.

If all men had absolute *freedom* from the curse and from the weaknesses which it entails, the present would be the time of the world's trial; but because such conditions do not prevail, therefore God has appointed a "day" (the coming Millennial age) in the which he will judge the world by that "man" whom he hath afore ordained—the Christ. (Acts 17:31) When that appointed Day shall come, the ignorance now enslaving mankind will be dissipated before the Sun of Righteousness, the unfavorable surroundings will be largely corrected by the great Prince of "the world [age] to come," our Lord Jesus; and such blemishes as may be connected with the imperfection of the flesh of those on judgment will be offset according to the gracious provision of the New Covenant, under which their trial will take place.

With the church, whose trial or judgment takes place during this Gospel age, the case is somewhat similar. These are specially justified by faith under the *New Covenant; their unintentional blemishes and weaknesses all being offset with the great sin-offering, and their knowledge being granted by special illumination of the holy spirit through the Scriptures. Only such as are thus *made free by the Son* are free indeed,—"free moral agents" in this sense and use of the expression.

CONCERNING METEORIC SHOWERS

Question.—What about the falling of stars predicted in the newspapers by astronomers for Nov. 15-17? It is said that these meteoric showers occur every thirty-three years. How does this fit with the exposition set forth in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV., where the Meteoric shower of 1833 is referred to as a *sign?*

Answer.—It fits well! The fact that astronomers have located the floating star dust which produced the phenomena of 1833, and the fact that they know now that it approaches close to the earth every thirty-three years prove nothing. The original fact remains that in 1833 there was a starry shower such as was never heard of before and such as has never been seen since, though twice predicted.

Astronomers announced in 1866 that the shower of 1833 would be repeated and that such showers had probably occurred often, but had never before attracted attention and record. But Nov. 14th, 1866, saw only comparatively few shooting stars—a few more than can be seen at other times.

Now that the second prediction, Nov. 15-17, '99, has passed without any remarkable display, it rather strengthens our position and corroborates the thought that the meteoric shower of Nov. 13th, 1833, was a special one intended as a *sign* and understood at the time as such and that the like never occurred before as it has not occurred since.

The last failure was particularly disappointing to astronomers for they had predicted wonders and had made extensive preparations. The Paris observatory had a balloon by which an ascent was made high above the city's lights and mists so as to obtain good results; but it could report only "about one hundred" meteors. At the Allegheny, Pa., Observatory elaborate preparations were made for months in advance and the largest photographic camera ever constructed in the world was in place to secure repeated photographic negatives of the heavens during the entire night. How different was the original shower intended for, and by many understood, as a *sign.*

Read the testimony of MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV., pages 588-600.

IS THE STUDY OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA NECESSARY?

Question.—I have recently seen a book on psychic phenomena, styled ———. Do you not think it would be well to obtain these for TOWER readers at wholesale rates?

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* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

Answer.—We do not so think. We may put before our brethren of the Lord's flock only "clean provender." We can only recommend to them reading along the lines advised by the Apostle, saying: Whatsoever things are *true, just, lovely* and of *good report*—think on these things and stir up each other's minds with these.—Phil. 4:8; 2 Pet. 3:1.

We have every confidence that the devil has plenty of power to produce any variety of psychic phenomena if the Lord permit him; and we have the Scriptural assurance that the Lord will permit him to exercise these powers in a special manner at the present time, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect, and to bring strong delusions upon many in the nominal church, that they should believe a lie, because they do not have pleasure in the truth. (2 Thes. 2:10-12) Please see booklet, *What Say the Scriptures About Spiritualism?*

We do not think, dear Brother, that the children of light need special instructions along the lines of psychic phenomena, and a thousand other books which have been and will be published, calculated to confuse many. The strongest protection God's people can have is the one which he has provided them —the armor of his Word, his plan. Whoever sees the "plan of the ages," as laid down in the Watch Tower publications, clearly, distinctly, will be safeguarded, not only against one, but against all the devices of the great Adversary in this evil day: but it will require that they give careful attention and prayer in order that the study may be satisfactory in its results—in order that it may sink into conviction in their hearts, and establish them so strongly in confidence in the Bible and its inspired statements that all contradictory theories and so-called scientific proofs to the contrary will be unable to move them.

PREHUMAN—MEANS WHAT?

Question.—In the fifth volume of Dawn and also in various issues of the Watch Tower you mention the prehuman existence of Christ. Some have taken exception to this statement, holding that you mean that our Lord was human before his existence upon the earth. Please give us a word on this subject at your convenience.

Answer.—The critic has erred respecting the meaning of the word *prehuman. Pre* means before, hence pre-human signifies before human. The thought is—that condition in which our Lord was *before* he became a man. At that time he was a spirit being. The critic has taken exactly the opposite to the true meaning of the word prehuman.

CONCERNING PREDESTINATION

Question.—Is not individual, personal election to salvation taught in Rev. 13:8 and 17:8?

Answer.—We think not. The first of these texts is much the simpler and, it will be noticed, does not say when the names would be written in the Lamb's Book of Life. It does, however, mention that in the divine plan the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world, and that this Book of Life record is one of the consequences of our Lord's death.

The second text is more obscure and reads as though it had been intended to be a repetition of the former statement, but inadvertently a portion had been omitted, *viz.*, the words, "of the Lamb slain." We do not surely know that these words were omitted, but merely that if they were there, this passage would be in harmony with the preceding one and in harmony with all of the testimony of Scripture, without allowances or inferences.

Taking this latter verse as it stands, and supposing it to be complete, we should be obliged to understand it to mean that the book or scroll covenanting life to an elect number was prepared from the foundation of the world, and that the names in it have been written as the individuals have made consecration of themselves, coming under the terms of the divine call. In this view of the matter the book or scroll would represent the original divine purpose—God's intention to have a church, of which our Lord Jesus would be the Head. Such interpretation would be in perfect harmony with the various figures of speech which represent the writing of the names of the believers in the Lamb's Book of Life, and in harmony also with the other records which speak of blotting out the names of such as prove unfaithful to their consecration.—Rev. 3:5.

"GOD LOVETH A CHEERFUL GIVER"—2 Cor. 9:7

Dec. 10.—Mal. 1:6-11; 3:8-12.

Malachi uttered the words of his prophecy during the period of Nehemiah's absence from Jerusalem at the court of Persia, and the return of Nehemiah may at the time have seemed like a fulfilment of Malachi's prophecy,—"The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple," etc. No doubt the testimony of the Lord given through Malachi prepared the people for their quick response to Nehemiah's energetic appeals and commands already noticed.

The International Sunday School Committee has very appropriately chosen Malachi's testimony as a basis for lessons on the grace of giving. While on the one hand we are wholly out of sympathy with the usually everlasting "dunning" carried on in religious circles—the passing of the collection box on every possible occasion, in season and out of season, and appeals for money for every conceivable object—nevertheless, on the other hand we fully realize that the grace of giving is indissolubly attached to all the other graces of God's spirit. Hence it is impossible for the Lord's people to grow in the other graces inculcated in his Word without growing also in the grace of benevolence. Indeed, while thoroughly disapproving the begging spirit as abominable, we are ready to concede that in all probability it has wrought some good—where doctrinal instructions in righteousness and truth were lacking and the ill-fed souls of the Lord's people were likely to die of spiritual starvation, the appeals for money have no doubt often awakened, in the hearts of many, such responsive sentiments as compensated to some extent for their ignorance of God and his Word: no matter how selfish the motives, no matter how ignoble the method adopted, if it touched the heart of the giver with a desire to *offer* something in loving appreciation and worship to his Creator, the effect was surely a blessing to the giver—*the sacrificer.*

Vs. 6 lays down as a fixed principle that a proper son will honor his father, and a proper servant honor his master, and then these principles are applied as between God and Israel. If they claimed God as their Father they should render to him the love of children; if they claimed to be his servants they should render to him servants' reverence—and such love and reverence should be the greater toward God in proportion as God is great above all others.

Phrenologists locate the organs of benevolence, reverence and spirituality in a row in the center of the top of the head. They are thus given places of prominence and nearness to God above all others: and it is certainly true that those who have these organs most largely developed are permitted, under the grace of the New Covenant, to come *nearest* to God in their hearts, in their sentiments, in all their experiences in life. But our day is not the most favorable for the development of these organs. Ours is a money-making and money-loving day, and the tendency is to concentrate thought and effort along the baser lines of acquisitiveness, combativeness, and in general the selfish propensities.

Moreover, the great increase of knowledge which the Lord has permitted in connection with the present day of preparation for his Millennial kingdom tends to egotism rather than to favor veneration. Children have opportunities for education today which their parents did not enjoy, and are inclined to a feeling of self-confidence and self-satisfaction, and feelings of disrespect toward their parents instead of reverence. And this dwarfing of the organ of reverence, in its relationship to human creatures, implies also its dwarfing in respect to God; and hence we see today, as never before, disrespect of parents and disobedience to parents, and proportionately disrespect to God, irreverence in holy things. Realizing the sources of these evils we are bound to sympathize with the rising generation in its difficulties in these respects.

As Christians taught of God through his Word and by its spirit, we are to realize for ourselves, our families, and the entire household of faith, the necessity for striving against these tendencies of our times—the necessity for curtailing our selfish, avaricious tendencies and egotism, and the necessity, on the contrary, of cultivating the higher and nobler graces of benevolence, veneration and spirituality. This the Apostle designates transformation, saying, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."—Rom. 12:2.

The prophet presupposed that those whom he addressed did not realize the true situation, and so in speaking to others to-day we should likewise presuppose that the majority do not realize how completely the spirit of selfishness dominates their hearts. "Ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?" The answer is, not that they publicly and directly used profane and disrespectful language, but that they had *failed to properly honor God* by failing to manifest a proper reverence and devotion toward him and his holy things. They had become careless respecting the things offered unto the Lord—these were not the *best* they had but, if not the worst, were at least inferior. Thus the Lord's table had lost its proper dignity, had become "contemptible," common.

Apparently they had grown irreverent to the extent that, instead of bringing unblemished sacrifices to the Lord, they brought the sick, the lame, the blind: they continued to have "a form of godliness," of worship, of reverence, but they had lost the spirit or power of it. So it is with some in spiritual Israel; they have consecrated themselves to the Lord, and in a formal manner at least desire to comply therewith; but as they have lost the *spirit* of devotion, the whole matter has become offensive in the divine sight. The spiritual Israelite offers unto the Lord the fruit of his lips in prayer and praise, but if these are offered in a merely perfunctory manner as a "duty" and not from the heart, they are blind, sick and lame offerings, which the Lord despises. He offers unto the Lord service or money, but if these be given grudgingly, not heartily and with a loving appreciation which wishes they might be increased a thousandfold, then the offering is blind and lame and sick, and not pleasing in the Lord's sight.

The Prophet inquires whether, if they were going to an earthly governor and, after the custom of that time, would entreat his favor with a gift, they would expect the favor if they took a mean gift, the sick, the lame, the blind of the flock as a present? Surely not. Then, turning the illustration, he suggests, And now I pray you that, in beseeching God for his mercies, you consider what kind of a present you have brought to him, and whether or not you have any right to expect his favor.

The tenth verse in our Common Version would give the thought that all had become so selfish that they would refuse to do anything in connection with the Lord's service unless it yielded pay of some kind: but Leeser's translation and the Revised Version give a different thought here, *viz.:* "Oh! that there were someone among you that would lock up the door of the sanctuary, that you might not light up my altar for nought! I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept in favor an offering from your hand." The thought is, that from the Lord's standpoint it were just as well to abandon all such formalistic worship devoid of reverence and love and heart-worship and this is true to-day in respect to us spiritual Israelites and our "better sacrifices," devotions and offerings.

Vs. 11 in the Common Version declares that the Lord's name shall be great throughout the earth, but it will be noticed that the words "shall be" are italicised, which signifies that they are not in the original text. Some verb must be supplied to make sense, and the Revised Version supplies "*is*" instead of "*shall be.*" This makes it read that God's name *is* great amongst the heathen—was great at the time of the writing of this prophecy.

Altho Israel was the only nation in the whole world with which God had up to that time made a covenant or agreement as respected an offer of eternal life; and altho Israel alone had been favored of God with any revelation respecting his character, his plan; and altho Israel alone had received the law of the Lord; and altho Israel had in these respects "much advantage every way" over all the other nations of the world;—nevertheless, we have evidences that the other nations, even those in idolatory, had a reverence for Jehovah, "the God of Israel." We have frequent instances of this in Scripture narratives. For instance, the Philistines revered Jehovah, the God of Israel, when they returned the ark of Jehovah to Israel, after having taken it in battle. (1 Sam. 4:7, 8 and chapter 6) Nebuchadnezzar reverenced Jehovah, the God of Israel, as the great revealer of secrets through Daniel, and that there was no other god like unto him. Darius, who honored Daniel, and who was entrapped by his courtiers into the making of a law which cast Daniel into the den of lions, declared, nevertheless, his reverence for Jehovah the God of Daniel. (Dan. 4:37; 6:26, 27) The fame of Israel's God had reached the Medes and Persians also; and Cyrus, in reverence to God, had given liberty to the captives of Israel to return from Babylonian captivity. And there are not wanting evidences that the surrounding nations realized even more clearly than did Israel that many of the judgments which befell Israel were divine chastisements for their unfaithfulness to Jehovah.—See Ezra 1:2; Num. 24.

Our lesson skips over certain other exhortations by the prophet, and comes to chapter 3:8, where he makes the inquiry, "Will a man rob God?" The matter is put in a startling form. Who would think of robbing his God? The thought connected with the word "God" is that of mighty one, powerful one, adorable one, and to the enlightened mind of the Christian additionally, the gracious, beneficent one. We realize a responsibility to God, obligation to bring him gifts and sacrifices and services, but who would refuse all this and on the contrary would rob God? Who would be so profane, so irreverent? Surely none would do so intelligently and wilfully; and so the natural Israelite is represented as doubting the matter and saying, "Wherein have we robbed God?" It is an important matter to see ourselves in a true light—to get a proper view of our conduct as precedent to any reform.

Israel was bemoaning its impoverished condition, its lack of divine favor and blessing, and the Lord's testimony through the Prophet was designed to show them that their leanness and poverty were the result of losing God's favor, and that they had lost divine favor by reason of their irreverence and failure to show hearty appreciation and to render true worship. Applying the same lesson to spiritual Israelites who find themselves lean of soul and starving spiritually, we find that the difficulty has been either (1) that they have been worshiping in a wrong direction, or (2), if worshiping in the right direction, they have failed to present unto the Lord their very best.

Under the first of these errors many are worshiping and sacrificing to human institutions and not to God—they are offering their devotions and sacrifices perhaps to build up "churchianity" in some of its forms—Presbyterianism, Methodism, Lutheranism, Adventism, etc. This is worshiping idols and sacrificing to idols and not to God. How can spiritual blessings be expected from God, when the reverence and service are rendered to men and to human institutions?

Under the second error, others who are not thus deluded by human institutions, but who recognize the true God, and who know of their responsibilities toward him, are lean of soul because they have not sufficient love and reverence for the Lord whom they do know. They serve him much more meanly and sacrifice to him in a much more niggardly manner than do the devotees at the shrines of human isms. Knowing the true God, they have the larger responsibilities and should be the more careful to present to him the best offerings possible of their time, influence, means, talents. If they give to the Lord but the fag ends of time, but the offals of influence, but a dribble of their talents, such sacrifices cannot be acceptable in his sight, nor could any reasonable person expect them to be so.

"Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Being one people, many of their interests were common, and their general poverty and leanness of soul was but a recompense for their course. And so it is and has all along been with the Lord's spiritual people, the one church, the holy nation, the peculiar people, the sanctified in Christ Jesus. But now that we have reached the "harvest" time we find that a separating work is in progress—not merely a separating of "wheat" from "tares" and of suitable fish from unsuitable fish, as represented in the parables (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-49), but also another separation amongst the Lord's true people, amongst the consecrated ones, as represented in the parable of the wise and the foolish virgins—all virgins, yet not all worthy to go in to the marriage and to constitute the bride, Christ's joint heir.—Matt. 25:1-13.

The present separation from amongst the consecrated will not only "gather out of the Kingdom those that do iniquity," and that have neither part nor lot in the matter, the "tares," but it will also gather out "those that offend"—those who fail to come up to the requirements of their covenant in fullness of consecration to the Lord, those who must therefore pass through the great tribulation and be brought through severe tests by trials and disciplines.

Verses 10-12 give the gist of the entire lesson. When the Lord reproves, it is not for the purpose of discouraging his people, but for their reformation. When he chides, it is not to dishearten but to stimulate and to revive: and as here with natural Israel be exhorted to reformation and to thus prove his love and his bounty and his willingness to bless them, so we may apply a similar exhortation to a similar class in spiritual Israel. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . . and prove me now herewith, . . . if I will not open to you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it"—an overflow blessing.

We exhort all spiritual Israelites to thus prove the Lord, to awaken to a fresh realization of his goodness and bounty and of their own obligation to spend and be spent in his service, according to their covenant of self-sacrifice,—walking in the footsteps of Jesus. To such it will mean a revival of spiritual health, energy, vigor, joy. Looking unto Jesus, their eyes will see him the more clearly, and see also the heavenly crown in reservation for them, and all the exceeding great and precious things which God hath in reservation for them that *love* him, and whose love is manifested to be of the genuine kind, which loves to sacrifice to him and to his cause the very best of all that they possess.

With the Jews there were two tithes obligatory. (A tithe signifies a tenth.) One tithe or one tenth of all their increase of flocks, herds, grain, etc., went for taxes, for the support of their government, and was rendered to the governor. The other tithe or tenth of their increase was a tax for religious purposes; it was rendered to the priests. Under the present Gospel age "high call" God has left spiritual Israel without any specific instructions of this kind. The governments of this world generally take good care to look out for the tax part, while the obligation for religious and spiritual things represented by the holy tithe of the Jews is now left at the option of the spiritual Israelite without even so much as a command respecting it or a stipulation as to the amount.

The tithe obligation was commanded to fleshly Israel, Moses and the house of servants, of which he was the head,—Israel after the flesh; but in dealing with the house of sons, of which Christ Jesus is the Head, a Son "over his own house" of sons (Heb. 3:5, 6), the Lord has placed no restriction. Why? Because in this household of *sons* he recognizes only those who have been *begotten again by his holy spirit:* the thought is that whoever has become a partaker of the spirit of the Lord, whoever has the mind of Christ, has a mind not merely to give a tenth of all his possessions and income to the Lord, but to consecrate it *all*—without the reservation of a single item—mind and body, influence and talents, time and means.

But while the foregoing proposition of *entire consecration* will not be questioned by any who belong to the house of sons, nevertheless, the fact that they have the treasure of the new nature in earthen vessels frequently causes some to act very inconsistently—very much out of harmony with the real spirit of their consecration. The new mind is beset and continually fought by the mind of the flesh; as the Apostle declares, there is a warfare here continually, for the two minds are contrary. The new mind says,

"All for Jesus! All for Jesus!
All my being's ransomed powers;
All my thoughts and words and doings;
All my days and all my hours."

But the mind of the flesh combats this and fights against such a full consecration, urging that it would be an extreme, that it is contrary to the general course of the world and its wisest men and women—urging that we must not thus make of ourselves "peculiar people," but must in general do as the world does, using all of time and talent, influence and means, selfishly—if not personally, then at least for our families.

Here is the great battlefield on which so many surrender before the evil influences, the forces of the world, the flesh and the devil—the place where so many fail to come off conquerors, victors, through obedience to the Word of the Lord and the spirit of their consecration to follow in his footsteps.

A few, but not very many, may need caution lest they should carry the matter of consecration to an extreme. An occasional one out of a thousand might perhaps act too literally upon the instruction that whosoever would be the Lord's disciple must forsake all to follow him,—might understand this too literally to mean an abandonment of houses, lands, families, etc. There can be no doubt, however, respecting the real import of the Scripture teachings along these lines: the Lord's followers are to forsake houses, lands, parents, children, etc., in the sense of not permitting any of these things to henceforth take his chief affection or to absorb his interest, his love, his devotion in the supreme sense. This supreme devotion by right and by covenant belongs to the Lord, and must be preserved inviolate. Family, home, the beauties of nature, should all be appreciated, but in a secondary sense as compared to the Lord. What would please the Lord must be supreme.

It we were dealing with an unreasonable and irascible Master, such a covenant and such an obligation might mean unreasonable requirements of us, and might inflict injustice upon others, but we are dealing with one whose requirement is a "reasonable service." Altho we have covenanted our *all* to him—time, money, influence, name, earthly hopes and pleasures, family and friends, "even unto death," we find that the Lord, after accepting our full consecration, makes us personally "stewards" of these things which we sacrifice to him and his cause. And as his stewards he permits and commissions us to use our consecrated *all* reasonably and moderately and according to our best judgment of what would honor his name and forward his cause. He permits us to use *some* of our consecrated means for our own sustenance and the sustenance and care of our families, merely enjoining moderation in all things. He permits us to use, therefore, *a portion* of our time, energy and talent in providing for these necessities and, if properly and reasonably used, he does not reckon this a selfish use, but merely a necessary expenditure.

Indeed, he leaves matters entirely in our hands, saying to us, so to speak: You have consecrated your *all* to me, and I have now returned it *all* to you to use in my name and to my glory and to the forwarding of my will in the earth as you shall understand my will from my Word. Go, occupy, use; I will inspect your work later and will judge of your *love* and your *devotion* by the carefulness with which you shall seek to use your hours, your moments, your dollars, your dimes, etc. If you have much love and devotion to me, it will manifest itself, or if you have little that also will be manifested, and my reward shall be accordingly. Only those who love me supremely and who rejoice to follow my Word and example shall be joint-heirs in my kingdom—for only they will have the reverential and benevolent and spiritual dispositions of heart essential to the great work of the kingdom which will be instituted as soon as the elect little flock has been completed and glorified.

RIGHT AND WRONG CONDITIONS AND THEIR RESULTS

DEC. 17.—MAL. 3:13 TO 4:6.

"Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."—Gal. 6:7.

How forcefully divine truths were expressed by the Prophet Malachi! While no doubt his words were more or less applicable at the time and to the people addressed, it is very evident that his, like the other prophecies, was specially intended for the Gospel church—more than for those who heard his words—as the Apostle Peter explains.—1 Pet. 1:10-12.

We apply this lesson then to fleshly Israel in the time of the Prophet, and note its complete fulfilment in respect to the "wheat" and "chaff" of that age in its harvest time—the wheat gathered to the garner of the Gospel church as spiritual Israel, and the chaff element burned in the fiery destruction which overthrew their national polity. But more particularly we apply it to the Gospel church and to the harvest time at the end of this Gospel age, when the "wheat" will be glorified in the heavenly kingdom and the "tares" will be destroyed in the fiery trials of the day of vengeance, the great time of trouble with which this age will be wound up, preparatory to the inauguration of the Millennial kingdom's triumph.

The lesson divides itself into four portions, vss. 13-15 expressing the attitude and sentiments of nominal Christendom; vs. 16 telling of the attitude of the true saints; vss. 17-4:3, the Lord's declaration respecting the two classes (the nominal Christians, or tares, and the true saints, the wheat), and vss. 4-6 being counsels for the interim for whoever has ears to hear.

Nominal Christendom is represented (13-15) as restive, out of harmony with the divine arrangement: the inquiry is, What is the use? How will it profit us? What advantage will we have? This view is from the purely selfish standpoint, which hears the divine requirements as so much of penal servitude—not having the heart interest in the Lord, his truth and his service. In the past it has walked mournfully, that is to say, with an outward show of reverence, contrition, observing Lenten seasons, etc., etc., it brought lame, sick and blind gifts and sacrifices to the Lord's altar, as duty, but not being prompted by the spirit of love, the sacrifices were meager and inferior to those offered to themselves and to their families. The lesson represents that this condition, having continued for quite a while, toward the end of the age, is finally measurably dropped—and this we see about us today. Many who once made a more or less hypocritical confession of sins and penitence and of an outwardly careful walk are inclined to say, What is the use? What is the profit? We might just as well have a good time. As the Apostle foretold, one of the signs of our times is that men are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, while still having a form of godliness they deny its power.—2 Tim. 3:4-5.

As the Jews were inclined to look about them and note the prosperity of the other nations not favored with divine promises, as they were, so many professors of today incline to look at the general world conditions, and to say to themselves, Are not the proud the happiest? Are not the workers of iniquity the most firmly established in the world? Do not even some outwardly profane opposers of the truth get along well? As a result we see a decrease of reverence for God and and for holy things, and an increase of doubt and skepticism as respects there being any advantage to be gained by a godly life—doubts respecting any future rewards, or at least any that would compensate self-denials for the present time.

Then (vs. 17) the Prophet points us to the few, the "little flock," exceptions to the nominal whole, who are taking the proper view of matters. The general attitude of the nominal system in rejecting the way of holiness and consecration will only tend to draw nearer to the Lord and to each other these who at heart reverence and love the Lord. So long as the nominal mass professedly walked in the same way of outward observance of divine ordinances and with an outward manifestation of reverence, contrition and devotion, these having the spirit of the Lord that thinketh no evil, felt a fellowship and companionship in the nominal church; but in the harvest time under divine providence circumstances tend to make manifest the true from the false, and to separate them. Those who have not the matter at heart as they more and more neglect the outward forms will naturally hate the others who, having the matter at heart, are as faithful as ever—because their faithfulness is a standing rebuke and evidence of the unfaithfulness of the other. And the faithful few, coming to realize that all were not Israel who were of Israel, will be drawn nearer to each other as they realize that after all the number of the faithful is extremely small.

This leads them to speak often one to another. Each finds his own need of help, counsel and encouragement, and realizes that the others need the same: and this draws them together. The further the nominal church gets away from the Lord and the truth and even from outward signs of reverence, the greater blessing it proves to be to this class, because it separates them from fellowships which all along have been unfavorable, hindrances to their spiritual development. Many of these today are meeting with *us* in little groups in various parts of the world for the study of the divine plan of the ages, and very many solitary ones meet with us (through the same medium—Zion's Watch Tower publications) to break the heavenly bread and to commune concerning the Lord and his great purposes respecting us—our discipline as members of the body of Christ and our preparation to be his joint heirs in the promised kingdom which shall bless all the families of the earth.

"And the Lord hearkened and heard it." Thus he would represent to us his interest in our efforts to understand his plan, and to offer him in loving sacrifices the very best of everything that by his grace we possess. Oh, that as we meet (personally or through the printed page) we could always realize our heavenly Father's interest in us and his willingness to bless our efforts in the study of his word and in the development of character! Such a realization would probably make all such meetings increasingly profitable. Those who do not recognize the Lord's presence in the gathering of his people are apt to exercise an injurious rather than helpful influence upon others, and are less likely to get any profit for themselves. Let us more and more remember as we meet in the name of our Lord his promise, "Where two or three are met in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:19, 20) Those who realize the Lord's presence amongst his people when they meet will be very careful of the words of their mouths, their actions and the very thoughts of their hearts: pride, vainglory, slander, and all evil things ("works of the flesh and of the devil") will be carefully shunned, if his presence is clearly realized by the eye of faith.

The Lord presents to us great truths under figures which the least learned can comprehend; for instance, instead of telling us that he has knowledge of and will never forget those who are his, and their diligent efforts to know and to serve him, he pictures the lesson, telling us that he has a "book of life" and "a book of remembrance." Through these figures we get the thought that the Lord would have us get, viz., that he takes full knowledge of his true people. And he tells us that this class not only reverence him, but also "think upon his *name*"—his character, his goodness, his infinity, his plan, his love—thinking upon these things they come to know him more and more intimately and to realize his grand perfection, and thus more in his company and well acquainted with his character they become more and more like him.

The Lord encourages these with the assurance that their love and devotion shall have its reward in the future—that a grand change is coming, and that then every sigh and every tear and every sacrifice, for righteousness' sake and for love of the Lord, his cause and his brethren, shall be fully rewarded in a manner that is beyond our present comprehension. they serve not for selfish reasons, but from devotion, from fidelity, and consequently from love, and hence they shall find that the light afflictions of the present, which are but for a moment, will work out for them a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory—looking not at the things now seen, but at the things now unseen, the eternal things.—2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

Without attempting to detail what are the riches of grace in reservation for them that love God, two figures are used, which are quite expressive to the eye and ear of faith—God's jewels, God's faithful sons. These two thoughts suggest a full explanation of present experiences: the proper father will instruct, correct and discipline his son, tho he may pass by the greater faults and blemishes of others who are not his children. Then, as respects jewels, we all know the necessity for cutting, trimming and polishing them to the intent that their real qualities may be developed. Thus we see ourselves in the Father's school of discipline and preparation to be his heirs—joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom—we see the necessity of the trials and perplexities and persecutions of this present time that we may be polished and prepared for the glory-time to come.*

We may apply this gathering of jewels in one sense to the Jewish nation, fleshly Israel, and say that the Lord gathered the faithful ones from that nation in the harvest time of their age, beginning A. D. 29. But the figure would not be complete there; its completeness is shown in connection with spiritual Israel and the polishing of these diamonds during this Gospel age. From this standpoint the time for making up the jewels is the present "harvest" time. The faithful from the Lord's day until now will have part in the first resurrection, and all of the jewel class now living, when polished and found worthy, will be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," to be like and with the Lord—the moment of their death being the moment of their change—they having no need to sleep in unconsciousness, for behold, the "harvest," the gathering time, has come. They will be gathered into the kingdom, as represented in our Lord's parable. (Matt. 13:30-43) They will be "spared" from passing through the great time of trouble such as was not since there was an nation, as our Lord has said, "Watch ye, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape" all those *things coming upon the world.*

Then there shall be a turning point (return), a change in the divine administration, tho not a change in the divine plan; for the plan of God formed from the beginning did not contemplate the perpetuation of the present condition of things, in which whosoever doeth righteousness suffers and in which the unrighteous prosper. It contemplated and arranged for the great *re-turn* of the rule of righteousness now about to take place, which will transfer the dominion of earth from Satan, its present supervisor, and from the kingdoms of this world, its present dominating powers, to the dominion of Christ and his church in glory and in power,—the Millennial kingdom, in which he that doeth righteousness shall be blessed, and he that doeth iniquity shall be punished, and if the correction be not heeded, shall eventually be cut off from amongst the people in the second death.—Acts 3:22, 23.

The day that brings the glorification to the faithful "jewel" or "wheat" class brings a different experience to the "tare" class. To them it will be a hot time—a time of *fiery* trouble that will completely consume their hypocrisies and pretended devotions to the Lord, which were merely in form without the heart and without power, and unacceptable to him. In that trouble-time their pride, their ambition, their world-love and their spirit of selfishness, will meet a retribution that will be terrible in the extreme—such a time of trouble as the world has never yet witnessed. The Lord's fierce anger will burn against their hypocrisies and shams; and will utterly consume the same—but not, we understand, consume the individuals. They will cease to be "tares," but not cease to be human beings; they will cease to make professions of consecration, as the Lord's true church, when at heart they have neither part nor lot in the matter and are not in sympathy either with the Lord or his spirit, his righteousness.

This burning day is referred to by Zephaniah also (3:8, 9): and through him the Lord declares, "I will pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger, for all the earth [the present social order] shall be *devoured with the fire of my jealousy.*" That this does not mean the literal earth nor the people of it, is clearly evident from the next statement of the prophet, viz., "Then will I turn unto the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

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* See *Old Theology Tract, No. 44.*

While the "fire" of this day will burn the "stubble" and "tares" quickly, nevertheless the same fire of the Lord's anger against hypocrisy and pride and every evil thing will continue to burn throughout the entire Millennial age, wherever such things shall be manifested—even down to the end of the Millennial age, when some in the final testing will be found unworthy of life eternal. (Rev. 20:9) Thus will evil eventually be destroyed, root and branch.

Following the fiery time or day of trouble will come the new era, in which the Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth, dispelling the darkness of the present time—healing the wounds of sin and death and bringing in joy, peace, love and blessing. Then the righteous shall rejoice in their liberty and shall realize that the restraints of this present time have been blessings in disguise, for thereby they have been made spiritually fat—"stall-fed" during the winter of the prevalence of sin, they shall go forth to liberty in the springtime of the new age.

Vs. 3 indicates the completeness of the victory of righteousness over sin, of the Lord's faithful over the workers of iniquity: a strong figure of speech is in the words, "Ye shall tread down the wicked"—as ashes.

Then (vs. 4) the Prophet addresses the people of his day, "Remember ye the law of Moses," but the expression is equally applicable to the Spiritual Israelite who recognizes Christ as the antitype of Moses and the New Covenant as the antitype of the Law Covenant, and the new Law of Love as the antitype of the Decalogue.

The faithful in fleshly Israel were not to expect the gathering of the jewel class immediately, but would know that before that time the Lord would send a great antitypical Elijah whose mission it would be to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers. Should he succeed in doing this the great burning day would not be necessary; but should he fail, then the burning day, the time of trouble, would come, and the Lord would smite the earth with a foretold awful trouble.

The turning of the hearts of parents to children and children to parents would seem to mean the establishment in the earth of a spirit of reciprocal love. And it would further mean, the turning of the minds of the aged so that they would become as little children, humble, teachable; and had they become thus childlike they would have been ready to turn their hearts to the teachings and example of the early fathers, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the holy prophets and they would have been made ready for divine favor and blessing and to be spared from the foretold curse or trouble.

John the Baptist fulfilled this prediction so far as Fleshly Israel was concerned, endeavoring to turn their hearts so that they would be ready to receive Jesus in the flesh; but John the Baptist failed to turn them to repentance, and they crucified the Lord, and hence the curse or time of trouble came upon the nation, destroying it A. D. 69-70.

But as the prophecy relates still more particularly to spiritual Israel than to natural Israel, so it relates still more particularly to the antitypical Elijah sent to spiritual Israel than to the antitype sent to natural Israel. For the evidences that the little flock throughout this age has been and still is the Elijah to the nominal system, exhorting it and seeking to bring it into harmony with God, and that it has failed so to do, as foretold in the Scriptures, and that hence the great time of trouble impends, we must refer our readers to MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. 2, Chap. 8.

RESISTING WORLDLY INFLUENCES

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I wish to acknowledge receipt of VOL. V., M. DAWN. I appreciate very much the favor of receiving the volume so early. It rejoices my heart to see how much brotherly kindness is manifested among some of the Lord's people here. Bro. S., after reading only the table of contents, loaned his copy of VOL. V. to Bro. N. and Sr. M. who do not have so many privileges and opportunities in many ways as Bro. S. has. I learned from Sr. M. yesterday that she had intended letting me read it first, should her volume come before mine. I was ignorant for three days of the fact that only Bro. S. and I had received the volumes; and when I learned this, I hurriedly read mine and sent it to another brother anxious to see it.

Altho I did not give the book a very careful reading, I am able to say that I feel the Lord has wonderfully used you in the work of setting before the household of faith so clear, logical and Scripturally satisfactory a presentation of the glorious corner-stone of our faith. How vastly superior the Bible explanation of man's fall and God's plan of redemption through our Saviour, Jesus Christ, is to all the teachings of science falsely so-called! It seems that we alone of all earth's millions are able to sing the Song of Moses and the Lamb: "Just and true are all thy ways!" Sometimes I am almost overpowered by the desire to literally leave all and "spread the truth from pole to pole." It is so hard to be patient and wait; but I think of him who has waited more than six thousand years and is waiting still in infinite patience; and who am I—to faint!

I wish your prayers especially, dear Brother, that I may be able to resist gently all the influences of my worldly surroundings, so antagonistic to the "new nature." I will call to mind the Apostle's encouragement, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you." I have no difficulty in resisting the influence, but I find it hard to do it gently, without giving offence. I guess it must be my old nature which is very nervous and quick. I am sure I have not the faintest sympathy at heart with worldly things, but I do not wish to be too severe against those who mean kindly tho they try to draw me from the "narrow way."

What do you think about the saints using opiates for pain, especially in a last illness? I have thought of it in connection with our Redeemer's refusal of the vinegar and myrrh. With much Christian love and prayers for your steadfastness, Yours, in the love of our Mediator and King,

MRS. R. S. S.———, *California.*

[REPLY.—We are glad, dear Sister, to note that your worldly surroundings do not ensnare your heart, but that on the contrary you fully maintain your love for the Lord and his way, the "narrow way." We sympathize with your desires to resist worldly influences in a *gentle spirit*, and trust that you may have much blessing in this endeavor, and may be enabled through it to cultivate the various graces of the spirit. You will be strengthened by the Lord's declaration—that in his sight a meek and quiet spirit is an ornament of great value.—1 Pet. 3:4.

Respecting our final illness and opiates: I had not thought of our dear Master's example in refusing opiates. Personally I would incline to leave the matter in the hands of friends and trust to the Lord's providence respecting what they would do and prescribe at such a time,—praying that the Lord's will might be fully done even unto death. —EDITOR.]

WALKING IN THE NARROW WAY

"Dear Lord, the way seems very *dark*,
I cannot see."
"Yes, child, I know, but I will be thy light;
Come, follow me!"

"Dear Lord, so *lonely* is this way,
Where are my friends?"
"My child, dost thou forget how far from me
Their pathway tends?"

"Dear Master, I am growing *weak*,
I scarce can stand."
"O foolish child, trust not in thine own strength,
Come, take my hand;

"For I have trod this way before,
So dark to thee;
I know each step, its weariness and pain;
Wilt trust in ME?"

"Yea, Lord, though *friendless, lonely, dark*,
This way may be,
I will be strong! Beloved Guide, lead on,
I follow thee."

G. W. SEIBERT.

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HIGHER CRITICISM ENTHRONED—THE BIBLE DEBASED

So pronounced is the acceptance of evolution and higher criticism in the Episcopal Church that the Rev. Benj. F. De Costa, D. D., has felt that he can best serve God and the cause of truth by separating himself from the denomination. As heretofore set forth in this journal, it is only a question of time until all men and women of character and true Christian principle will be forced to take similar steps out of all denominations,—from the pews as well as from the pulpits. We are in the "harvest" time of this age, and divine providence is permitting conditions which will demonstrate who are "wheat" and who are "tares." Such a separation must take place before the great symbolic burning day for "tares" can come, and before the "wheat" can be glorified as God's Kingdom in power.

"Babylon is fallen, is fallen; come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18:2-4) But there is a wide difference between leaving "Babylon" and leaving the Lord's church or kingdom. All along it has been true that "the Lord knoweth them that are his:" he knew every consecrated one even tho surrounded by the unconsecrated ten or twenty times more numerous. Now the Lord will demonstrate what he already knows by separating the wheat from the tares. However, from the divine standpoint none have ever been recognized as the kingdom class except the faithful little flock—the fully consecrated "wheat." And this is shown by our Lord's word when again, referring to the *separation work* of this harvest period, he declares that "he will gather *out of his kingdom* all things that offend and them which do iniquity."—Matt. 13:41.

Evidently, then, it is one thing to gather out of Babylon his people, and quite another thing to gather out of his kingdom the offenders: yet both expressions cover the same events. The "wheat" have always been the heirs of the kingdom—the "tares" have never been such, tho both have grown side by side throughout this Gospel age. In the *past* the "tares" have at least nominally professed to be "wheat"—professed faith in our Lord's Word and in his *redemptive* work. But *now*, under divine providence, they are being led of their error to repudiate the "wheat" altogether—as "non-critical, old fogies."

They have abandoned both the *Book* and the *Blood*—not in word, but actually, logically. It is to all a test of *standing*, of holding to the anchorage of faith or of being blown by the winds of worldly wisdom, called "higher criticism," far, far away from our Saviour and his inspired Word.

Really, then, the "tares" *leave* the "wheat," by utterly abandoning the faith once delivered to the saints. Thus God gathers them out of or away from his kingdom class. But, since the latter are a minority, they must leave the meeting-houses to the majority, who thus carry them with them "out of his kingdom," to be places of musical and literary entertainment instead of places for worship and for hearing the Word of the Lord and for renewal of vows.

The minority must leave the *organizations* of Babylon also—in order to be faithful to their Lord and his Word and to "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." This at first seems a trial—until we learn the difference between human organizations and the divine organization, and that the former never were instituted nor authorized by our Lord or his apostles; and that none of them ever were connected with any such human organizations; and that to leave the human organizations is merely to leave a "tare" institution of the long ago and has no bearing whatever on the *real organization* of which we still remain members, with our names written in heaven—in the Lamb's Book of Life.—Heb. 12:23; Rev. 13:8.

DOCTOR DE COSTA'S LETTER TO BISHOP POTTER

Doctor De Costa, in withdrawing from a church where he found the friends of the Saviour and the Bible in a hopeless minority, wrote a letter to the Bishop of his diocese, setting forth some of his reasons: and very properly he made public the contents of the letter;—otherwise his reason for his action might have been misunderstood by some of his friends and misrepresented by some not his friends. And a similar privilege and duty presents itself to *all* who withdraw from any division of Babylon.*

We give liberal extracts from Dr. De Costa's letter, believing that it will be of general interest to God's people, and well knowing that not only the religious, but also the secular press will be loth to give it much notice. The truth, let us remember, never has been popular with the world, and the "tare" influence, direct and indirect, is generally sufficient to either exclude such like matter or to ridicule it as "superstitious and cranky." The extracts follow:—

"New York, Oct. 7th, 1899.

The Rt. Rev. HENRY CODMAN POTTER, D. D., LL. D.,

Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Diocese of New York:—

"DEAR SIR:—I hereby respectfully resign the office of Presbyter.

"It is proper for me to give some reason for this course, which, at the end of long years of service, is adopted deliberately and in the fear of God. I must now, however, confine myself to a few points. In what I have to say at this time I desire to speak with entire plainness, as well as with kindness and respect; while, to avoid any possible misapprehension, I would add that I do not resign on account of any personal grievance.

"I cannot reconcile my convictions with the present condition of the Episcopal Church, which, contrary to its own principles, has been drawn into the adoption of a policy of toleration toward a school of theology and Biblical criticism which in my judgment is hostile to revealed truth.

"Further permit me to say respectfully that I do not find that you have been 'ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away from the church all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word;' while much less have you seemed inclined 'both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to do the same.'

"On the contrary, I think the testimony proves that you have discouraged and baffled men inclined to take such action. I do not, however, undertake to impugn your motives or charge upon you the 'lamentable ignorance' and deliberate 'malice' which some time since in the public press you attributed to men by no means your inferiors either in learning or charity. I desire, nevertheless, to indicate that, as I view the subject, whatever may have been your own views, you have acted with and defended those who have struck at the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the plenarily inspired and infallible Word of God.

Doubt Spreading Rapidly

"The progress of doubt during the last few years is most notable. If Newman had lived in our day, he would hardly have been able to write that beautiful eulogy of the Bible in which he says of the Englishman that 'It is the representative of his best moments,' and that 'all that there has been about him of soft, and gentle, and pure, and penitent, and good, speaks to him forever out of his English Bible. It is his sacred thing which doubt has never seen and controversy never soiled.' Even in Episcopal seminaries the inerrancy of Holy Scripture is boldly and systematically denied.

"You, right reverend sir, have entered the field at a crucial hour, plainly declaring that the system of denial or negation embodied in the 'higher criticism' forms an allowable method of interpretation, and that the acceptance of the methods and its conclusions does not disqualify candidates for the ministry. You have therefore deliberately received into the denomination, and you have approved as proper teachers for the people, men who declare that the Scriptures are errant and do not form an infallible guide, but abound in myths, fables, scientific and historical errors.

"The long catalogue of errors credited by so-called 'higher criticism' to Holy Scripture may or may not in your estimation appear as trifles. That, however, has nothing to do with the present issue, but the system that you vouch for as within the liberty of clergymen leaves, in my judgment, no sufficient authority for the Christian religion. We are plainly told that 'The prevalent dogmatic theories of the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible have been undermined in the entire range of Biblical study, and it is a question in many minds whether they can ever be so reconstructed as to give satisfaction to Christian scholars.'

"The worst is that the church approves your course. Future candidates may openly deride the story of Pentecost as the world has understood it from the time of the apostles.

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* We have prepared what we term *Withdrawal Letters* for the use of our friends. They are printed in typewriter type, and in kind but clear and forceful language explain some of the reasons moving to the withdrawal. You merely need to sign, date and mail these to the pastor and all members of the sect you have been *bound* to, and at once you are free. We supply these *free*, accompanied by missionary envelopes and tracts— enough to supply every member of the congregation one. Order a *sample one* first and see if it will suit you—then send for required quantity. These "Withdrawal Letters" should be sent out as soon as possible after you decide on regaining the *liberty* wherewith Christ hath made free his people. Every day or month or year that passes before sending them is a distinct disadvantage to *you* and to the *truth*: both are sure to be misrepresented by an informal withdrawal. You joined not the minister, but the congregation,—not secretly, but publicly; and your withdrawal should be after the same manner.

"The former belief in the Bible is no longer required. Candidates of the school to which I refer will indeed continue to sign papers, agreeing to accept the Scriptures as the Word of God, but such subscriptions practically will prove little better than perjury.

"The phrase 'Word of God' is now a phrase only; its meaning has been juggled away.

"'Higher Criticism' has struck every diocese in the land, and from all the States in the Union there is coming a wild, ungovernable flood of opinion and sentiment that renders your position still more significant. You do not stand alone. You are upborne by the power of unconsecrated wealth. Your Convention, which has just closed its session, is with you, having overwhelmingly vindicated your *laisses faire* Standing Committee by indorsing its dark act. Your examiners give unqualified support. Thus far the case is diocesan; but venerable and saintly men like the Bishop of Minnesota, men of superior judgment and influence, applaud the 'wisdom and good sense' displayed in this phase of your administration, while the criminal silence of other bishops speaks louder than words.

"The press, being creedless, is, for the most part, with you, and hails you as the exponent of incoming 'liberal thought.' A leading editorial, in a prominent daily, describing present society as one that 'has outlived the faith of dogma,' claims that your position is 'invincible.' Humanly speaking, it is indeed secure. The masses of Episcopalians are with you.

"I can understand why the Bishop of Western Texas is obliged to admit:—'We know that the young men are not in the churches and the laboring classes are entirely alienated.' The president of your Standing Committee has just reported to Convention that the youth of the denomination 'deny any obligation to go to church. They go if they please, but if not, it makes no difference.'

"Indeed, what have they to go for? To listen to the reading of what preachers pronounce myths and fables. Substantially, the battle for the Bible has been fought. The case is lost, and now you can present no inducements for either youth or age to go to church. By a town meeting process the Bible has been declared 'literature.'

"This new relation of your denomination to the Bible changes the relation of the denomination to other religious bodies, and never again can Episcopalians approach the Presbyterians calling to union on the basis of a common Bible.

"Unbelief is in the air. Indeed, I must here call attention to the fact, as yet little noticed, that the worst of the prevailing scepticism does not appear in print, nor even in public addresses. In private not a few of both clergy and laity openly repudiate the authority of Bible and creed, using no concealment.

"One very prominent rector, who stands high in the ranks of your supporters, speaks of the New Testament as a bundle of *left over* documents. Another has declared that the first three chapters of St. Matthew form simply a beautiful legend; while another ridicules even the Apostles' Creed. Important positions are held by men of this class, who remain in the pulpit to win present bread or accomplish ulterior ends.

The Only Way

"Evils have been pointed out privately to the bishops, and the pessimistic reply of one, 'Things will never be any better in your day or mine,' may be accepted as the expression of nearly all. Letters in my possession from some of your associates in office form instructive reading. For myself, recognizing the situation as I do, there is but one course; and, therefore, whatever other men, whom personally I esteem, may do, and however they may regard their obligations, mine seem clear.

"While no action on your part could lead me to go out, I recognize a condition that no one man, or any possible combination of men, can now successfully meet. The Episcopalian scheme, based on private judgment, is not only far overshadowed by doubt that will characterize the incoming twentieth century, but it is possessed by the unbelieving spirit. The storm is already here, but the Protestant Episcopal body has no anchors. The future is clear. Your people are hastening to accomplish *their evolution*. Few will be misled by the pompous diction of that bishop who in his last charge foretells great victories. Fewer still, allow me to say with all kindness, will be persuaded by your own phraseology, where you speak of 'the Book' as 'incomparable and precious,' since it is commonly believed that many churchmen would not now disdain such language if applied to the works of Shakespeare and Homer.

"One can very well anticipate the reply of men who, with *assumed indignation, deny that they refuse the Bible as the Word of God*, but discerning persons know the value of phrases out of which the erstwhile faith, robustness and honesty have departed.

A Remarkable Discovery

"You charge that 'a modern fetichism which has dishonored the Bible by claiming to be its elect guardian has shut it up these many years within the iron walls of a dreary literalism, robbing it thus alike of interest and of power.' You have furnished a remarkable discovery. All along the people have regarded the Bible as a free book. It has stood, the pride and glory of the nations, accredited with the uplifting of society and the advance of civilization and modern thought. No language has been found too superb in describing its work of emancipation and purification.

"Now, however, you assure us that we have been mistaken, that all the while the Bible has been shut up within iron walls, robbed of interest and power. Do you, right reverend sir, suppose that the people of the land, who have organized Bible societies and carried them on at a large cost for many years, are sufficiently ignorant of the history and influence of the Bible to accept tamely this charge? Your language is astonishing! I deeply deplore the necessity which exists for saying this, yet you are winning laurels among infidels far and wide.

"The particular kind of usefulness that your criticism may aspire to is indicated by the language of one of your own friends, the Bishop of Washington, who declares that, 'under the influence of the "higher criticism" thousands have lost their faith in the Old Testament as the inspired Word of God;' while 'the faith of multitudes is so shaken that even Sunday school children speak of the Scriptures with an irreverent freedom that would have amazed the preceding generation.'

"One may, therefore, safely dismiss your statement where you speak of what 'a higher scholarship has done for us in our generation *for the advancement of godliness and good learning* throughout the Christian world.' It is, on the contrary, driving people away from the religion of Christ.

"Furthermore, it might be remembered with profit that Christianity was never designed to entertain any comparative religions, and the system you applaud can only degrade the Episcopal denomination to a plan where the maintenance of the simplest elements of Christianity will prove impossible. As for your own diocese, the central and most important, when its actual state is known, it will be seen that it is rapidly approaching the condition of the bloodless heart. Spiritually your strongest corporation is failing. The appearance of prosperity, as the statistics prove, is unreal. As things are tending, far sighted friends say that if the Cathedral is ever finished it will prove the sarcophagus of Episcopalianism, the coffin of its creed. It is to be devoutly hoped that the policy with which you are identified may yet be paralyzed.

"For myself, I cannot bow to the guidance of the 'distinguished critics' whom you have set forth as teachers and examples for the faculties in Episcopal seminaries, masters in Israel—who now, side by side with the professional infidel, stand forth to lecture on the 'Mistakes of Moses.' My sense of right would not support me in any such course. I retire from the field, convinced that I am no longer called to struggle with an overwhelming and rapidly increasing force. I cannot accept the revolution or drift with the tide. Your school is indeed benevolent, and quite willing to tolerate catholic faith, bestowing upon it from time to time nothing more severe than ignoble terms. But for myself I ask no favors. I will not remain where doubt commands a premium, and the belief in an infallible Bible enjoys simply the immunity granted to a fallible Koran." —From *The New York Herald.*

DR. DE COSTA'S PARADOXICAL POSITION

At first it would appear paradoxical, if not absurd, that the gentleman who poses as a defender of the Bible in the language quoted foregoing, should conclude that the same honesty which led him to protest against the Protestant Episcopal communion as deserters of the Bible, led him into the Roman Catholic church as the communion of the Bible's friends with whom alone he could find fellowship. Yet this is the Doctor's position: and in harmony with it he was received into the Roman Catholic church on Sunday, Dec. 4. He has since published his reasons for the step, from which we extract as follows:—

"I do not, however, propose to offer any apology for entering the Cathlic church. Standing in the midst of modern religious systems, toppling to their fall like columns in the temple of Karnak, no defense need be offered for accepting a firm and unshaken Catholic faith. . . . The Church of Rome stands before the English speaking people and Protestants everywhere as the unique and solitary defender of the Bible in its integrity and entirety."

Dr. De Costa denies that the authorities of the Catholic church are unfavorable to the circulation, and use of the Bible. saying that it is the duty and privilege of Catholic scholars to study the Bible thoroughly in the original tongues. The gentleman must consider the Latin *the original tongue*, for surely it is it that is chiefly, almost exclusively, studied by Romanist priests,—or rather compiled and arranged extracts from the Latin New Testament and not the book itself.

The Doctor concludes thus:—

"On the Protestant theory there is no visible church, the only body being a mystical body in the air. On this theory Christianity has failed; the empire that triumphed over the Roman empire, has perished. This is simply pessimism resumed. Reformation, religionism, therefore offers no moral or intellectual outlook for coming generations, and leaves the world forced at last to choose between rationalism and the Catholic church. I believe in the Holy Catholic Church and the life everlasting."

Poor Doctor, he must have our sympathy, if we give him credit for candor and love for God's Word; and we believe there are many in his position. He sees inconsistencies on both sides of the question and has jumped from one horn of his dilemma to the other, instead of escaping from both. Thus:—

(1) Dr. De Costa has forced himself to forget that for centuries Papacy has been the implacable foe of the Bible; that she has officially through her popes (claimed to be infallible) cursed the Bible Societies and denounced their work as of the devil; that she has caused Bibles circulated among the people to be gathered and publicly burned—*"auto da fe."*

He cannot be ignorant of the fact—and hence he must merely close his eyes to it, and try to forget—that Papacy's advocacy of the Bible and permission of the people to have it and to read it is but a recent move (within the last ten years), and that only in the United States, and hedged about with certain restrictions governed by the priests and from translations containing Roman Catholic comments as footnotes. The Doctor utterly ignores the fact that Papacy has not really changed—boasts that she never changes,—and hence is no more the friend of the Bible than she was during the "dark ages," but merely appears to advocate the Bible so as to disarm suspicion and to gain the good will of the most enlightened nation in the world. He forces himself to forget that the portions of "Christendom" where the Bible is free and in the vernacular of the people are the most enlightened and the most Protestant—The United States, Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Switzerland: and that the dark places of superstition and cruelty are the places where Papacy has persistently hindered the circulation of the Bible—Spain, Portugal, Italy, Southern Ireland, and as far as possible France and Austro-Hungary, Mexico and the South American countries. Well does Papacy know that the Bible—"the sword of the spirit," the Word of God, is her greatest foe: and she will never be its supporter and defender, except as a pretense, —even as Satan would pose as an angel of light instead of a prince of darkness to accomplish his purposes.

(2) Having blinded himself on the above point the Doctor seeks to account for the Reformation movement as *not* being to secure a free Bible as the true light upon the church's pathway. On the other hand he declares it was a mistaken effort to repudiate the *visible church* and to recognize it only as a *spiritual body.*

Would to God the Doctor told the truth in this statement! Would to God all Protestants (and Romanists, too) recognized the Scriptural teaching that the church of Christ is *not an earthly* organization with names upon sectarian rolls of membership, but instead is a heavenly union and communion "whose names are written in heaven"—"in the Lamb's Book of Life." (Heb. 12:23; Rev. 13:8) But alas! the Doctor is as much mistaken in this as in his other proposition, for Protestants as well as Romanists have *earthly* organizations and honor these as the *true* church, and do not see that they are "Babylonish"—confused mixtures in which "wheat" and "tares" commingle—the "tares" predominating and consequently ruling.

Erring on both these points, Dr. De Costa has gone from bad to worse—from one bad "tare" bundle to another containing still less "wheat." Oh, how many of God's people are confused, bewildered, and ensnared thus and otherwise! Only the meek, the humble, will go earnestly to God and be taught of him and be led out of all human entanglements and bondages into the liberty wherewith the Son of God makes *free* his sheep.

EVOLUTION AMONG THE BAPTISTS

In evidence that the latest and worst form of Infidelity is permeating all denominations, all colleges and seminaries, note the following just clipped from the Rochester, N. Y., *Post-Express:*—

"President A. H. Strong delivered last evening at the Rochester Theological Seminary an address on 'The Growth of Theological Thought During the Last Fifty Years.' Dr. Strong took advanced ground, accepting fully the theory of Evolution and approving the methods and general results of the higher criticism."

The Rochester Baptist Seminary is the principal one of that denomination in the United States and furnishes its most prominent ministers.

THE METHODISTS ALSO DISTRACTED

The Boston Morning Journal of Dec. 8th announced as the leading news of its first page—

"Nine Students Quit Boston University"

It then quotes the statement of one of the students, Schenk by name, as follows:—

"Coming from the West to Boston University School of Theology a year ago, I was shocked to find the most rabid rationalism being taught as Old Testament exegesis, under cover of a leading Methodist school. Coming to Messianic prophecy, only half a truth was taught. Further on Jesus Christ was no authority on Old Testament Scripture. The miraculous conception was set aside and the atoning blood made non-essential."

The worst of the matter is yet to be told, namely, that Prof. Mitchell is heartily endorsed by the other professors of the institution and by nearly all the students of the seminary —the soon-to-be preachers of Methodism; for the President of the institution says that the dissenters are only "eight or nine out of an aggregate of 178 students."

It seems, too, that the seceders appealed to the Board of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal church, but got no redress but on the contrary, as a result the students who protested against the decimation of the Book and the rejection of the precious blood were notified that they must be quiet on the subject. Thereupon they nobly withdrew.

* * * *

So the leaven of error is rapidly permeating every branch of the nominal church, and the tests are coming to each individual Christian to prove him either "wheat" or "tare:" The "wheat," today as of old, will be counted "fools for Christ's sake" by the worldly-wise.—1 Cor. 4:10.

THE YEAR 1900 A PAPAL JUBILEE

Pope Leo XIII. has issued a decree, or "bull," designating the last year of the century a Jubilee year, a holy year, in which all his faithful are called upon to confess their sins, make many pilgrimages and prayers, and thus obtain *forgiveness* and indulgences—release from purgatorial sufferings justly merited and now in store for them. The bull has been translated into English and published broadcast, and we quote a portion of it, as follows:—

"In opening the treasures of indulgences, whereof it is the dispenser, the church invites the whole of Christendom to the hope of pardon. . . .

"Raising our eyes to God, with his help and with the approbation of the cardinals, we order a universal Jubilee, to commence in this sacred city of Rome with the first vespers of Christmas, 1899, and to cease on the same day in 1900.

"During the Jubilee Year we concede full indulgence and pardon of sins to all Christians truly repentant, who confess their sins and partake of communion, and who will visit the basilicas of St. Peter's, St. Paul's, St. John's, or that of Sta. Maria Maggiore, in Rome, at least once a day during twenty days, if having domicile in Rome, or, for pilgrims, during ten days. All ought to pray for the exaltation of the church, *for the extirpation of heresies*, for the concord of Catholic princes, and for the salvation of Christian peoples.

"Those who through sickness or other legitimate causes cannot visit the Roman basilicas, if they confess and communicate, may also benefit in the indulgence.

"To Rome we invite you, with love, sons of the church throughout the world."

* * * *

This pronunciamento of papal power in heaven and hell, on earth and in purgatory, is extremely mild and unassuming when compared to those of Leo's predecessors.* The statement is milder to suit the changed conditions of papal influence and general enlightenment; but the same *thought*, the same *error* underlies—that the power to forgive sins has been lodged by the Almighty in the hands of the pope and his conferees. If it were true, what an awful responsibility it would place upon these men! What if they had forgotten or neglected to appoint this Jubilee? And then, again,—if such confessions, prayers, pilgrimages, etc., can effect such blessings and releases from sufferings, why are not Jubilee years more frequent—every year? Think for a moment of the loss, the terrible loss, sustained by the pope's faithful who have died, and will die, before the time he and the cardinals have set!

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* See Millennial Dawn, Vol. ii, Chap. 9.

We notice with pleasure that, while "the extirpation of heresies" is mentioned, the injunction is to *pray* for this, and not as in olden times to labor for it by *extirpating heretics as vermin*. Let us continually thank God for the breaking up of the solidarity of Antichrist by the Great Reformation of the sixteenth century. The more it breaks up, and the smaller the fragments, the better for the truth and the true children of God,—the *true church* "whose names are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23) Not the true "wheat," but the imitation, the "tares," need to be bound in bundles, by sectarian creeds and obligations of human device and imposition. And although it is clearly pointed out in the Scriptures that a *federative union* of the various sects of Christendom will soon occur; and though we know that this will mean a great increase of opposition, hatred and persecution of all who will not "join" nor be "bound" in the bundles, but who stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, still we may sing,—

"I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me!"

—knowing that ere long all the "wheat" will be garnered and shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father with their Lord;—to bless all the families of the earth.—Matt. 13:30, 43.

Now, not to disparage the pope's efforts (which we will presume to be sincere and honestly intended to be a means of grace to his people), but by way of showing forth the error underlying the whole theory on which the pope's efforts are based, we will make a pronouncement: one which every true child of God as an "ambassador" and member of the "royal priesthood" is privileged to make daily, or so often as opportunity offers, namely,—

IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE GREAT SHEPHERD (BISHOP) OF THE SHEEP, PONTIFEX MAXIMUS, VICAR OF GOD AND PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

—I declare that whosoever cometh unto the Father by him is acceptable; because by him whosoever believeth in him as his Saviour and Shepherd is *justified freely* from all things,—from which the Law could never justify or deliver him:

—I therefore declare unto all who thus renounce sin and lay hold of the Deliverer with the arms of their faith, that without waiting for Christmas day, 1899, or any other date, and without pilgrimages to Rome or Allegheny or elsewhere, and without visiting cathedrals or other holy places, or having the prayers of popes, cardinals, bishops, underpriests or laymen, and even without prayers of their own, they may have this grace—even as it is written, "Being justified by *faith* [not prayers nor works], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ [not through other mediators]."—Rom. 5:1.

—Moreover, by the authority of the same Great Potentate we declare unto you the efficacy of his Calvary-sacrifice not only thus to cleanse from sins that are past, but also to keep you reckonedly cleansed and pure in God's sight, so long as you abide by faith in Christ. For his blood cleanseth us from all sin—continually covering our unwilful imperfections; as it is written,—"My strength is made perfect in weakness," and "my grace is sufficient for thee."

* * * *

Verily, the god of this world (Satan) has not only blinded the heathen (2 Cor. 4:4), but he is quite considerably blinding two thirds of Christendom represented in the Roman and Greek Catholic communions, as evidenced by such proclamations as that of the pope and by the continual practice of their priests.

Nor do we find the Protestant element of Christendom fully enlightened and clear on this point of there being no necessity for the intervention or mediation of men or prayers between the sinner and his Saviour. The great majority of Protestants consider prayers and intercessions essential—as evidenced by the various "revival" methods—mourners' benches, kneeling at the altar, rising for prayers, inquiry rooms, etc.—all so contrary to the simplicity of the Scriptural arrangement, which is,—Preach the message of God's grace in Christ, and whosoever believingly accepts it *is thereby justified and at peace with God:* and his prayers that should follow such *belief* and acceptance would be thanksgivings for divine favors received and pledges of his own future faithfulness to the Light, the Truth, the Way.

"I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me [Jesus] shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life."—John 8:12.

Very evidently the reason for so much darkness is that, under Satan's misleading, those who see the true light to some extent get to following popes, councils, presbyteries, conferences and confessions of *men*, instead of following the Lord, who is the True Light. We should esteem very highly for their work's sake all who have been or may be used of the Lord as finger posts to point us to the Light, the Way, the Truth, but no more—we are not to follow them, except as we discern clearly from the Word that they are closely following Christ. He is to be our Pattern and our only Light.

* * * *

Meantime in an endeavor to "make a fair show in the flesh" it is the proposition of the pope and his coadjutors to open during that Jubilee year one of the greatest cathedrals in the world in the greatest metropolis of the world—Westminster Cathedral, London. It is said to have already cost over ten millions of dollars: and that millions more are being collected in various parts of the world where "heretics," whom they condemn to hell torments unceasing, are by taxes, etc., feeding the Romanist poor in the almshouses of Christendom. Thanks be to God for the light and better day coming for the poor, deceived, "groaning creation" and for the blessed opportunities of eternal life which that Millennial day will bring to them.

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY

REPORT FOR THE YEAR, DEC. 1st, '98, to DEC. 1st, '99

Very properly all who are truly the Lord's people feel a deep interest not only in the Truth itself but also in all pertaining to it and its propagation;—not only in their own vicinities but also in its world-wide field and mission. And what is thus generally true seems to be intensified in all such after they have become acquainted with the "harvest" message —the light of the last days of this age,—the light of the *parousia;*—the bright shining of the present one—the *epiphania—parousia.*

We are conscious therefore that many eyes will look for and carefully scan this report of the work accomplished in the year just ended,—especially all who have had a share in it, great or small, "every man according to his several ability" (Matt. 25:15), whether as a contributor to the funds which propel the work or an assistant in the labor of circulating the truth, or both. All such we know will be rejoiced in heart, refreshed for fresh endeavors for the new year as they read what we have to present. Rejoice, for it is *your* work, *our* work, the *Lord's* work. And as we realize how comparatively few there are whose eyes of understanding are opened that they can see the light, and when we remember too, that (as our Lord foretold) among them there are not many great or wise or rich in this world's riches and wisdom, we must say that the showing is "marvelous in our sight."

(1) To begin with, we always reckon the truest progress of the cause to be indicated by the WATCH TOWER's subscription list; for however interest may be awakened, by tracts, booklets and DAWNS, it is rarely fixed and riveted except through the regular visits of our semi-monthly pastoral. You will be pleased then to know that the WATCH TOWER list grew considerably during last year: and that the evidences point to a still larger increase during the year now beginning. And as each reader is interested in and praying for such results, each will proportionately lend a hand to the answering of his own prayers, by doing what he can to increase the circulation. Are there not friends to whom you have loaned and given tracts and books and whose interest is partially awakened? Why not go to such with a sample copy of the TOWER and ask them to look it over and consider the advisability of having its visits regularly?

We offer no *"premiums"* to those who thus labor for this journal. Oh no; our friends need no such inducements, for they render this service with gladness and willingness of heart —"as unto the Lord" and on behalf of his brethren. But we will gladly furnish you *sample copies* free. And furthermore to assist you we will arrange a "special offer" thus: Anyone who is *already* a WATCH TOWER reader may send in *new* subscriptions for the year (one dollar each) and to each we will send one volume of the DAWN series *free*—whichever volume may be designated in your order; but all such orders should be designated *"Special offer"* that we may understand that they are in compliance herewith.

Furthermore: some of the brethren have intimated that they would like to send the WATCH TOWER for a while to their friends, with a view to awaking their interest in its teachings and have asked whether or not we will receive six months subscriptions under such circumstances. Assuredly we will and we will do more than that: we will share with you in the service by sending *four* six months trial subscriptions for ONE DOLLAR, *eight* for TWO DOLLARS, *twenty* for FIVE DOLLARS, *forty* for TEN DOLLARS. But we will accept only *new* subscriptions and none for longer than six months on these terms. Not that we are unwilling to treat old friends as well as new ones, but that our regular terms (page 2) are amply reasonable—those who cannot afford to pay one dollar a year for the WATCH TOWER cannot afford to pay anything, and such are as welcome to it as to the air they breathe, if they will apply for it on terms stated.

(2) THE COLPORTEUR WORK has prospered during the past year as will be noticed by the Secretary's report following. The number of DAWNS put into the hands of the people exceeded the number circulated the previous year by fifty per cent; and the number of booklets over one hundred per cent.

This increase is due in great measure to the financial prosperity which permits people to purchase books, and thus has permitted colporteurs who had been driven from the service by the "hard times" to re-enter this fruitful quarter of the "harvest" field: besides the Lord has raised up new laborers willing, yea anxious, to spend and be spent in serving to others the meat in due season which has so blessed and strengthened their own hearts. It doubtless is true that though money is more plentiful by reason of the "good times," the time to read the literature is curtailed thereby: nevertheless, the truth-hungry will find time for it; and if it costs some self-denial the blessing will be the greater. Others will find plenty of time in the not distant future when another financial collapse will carry labor to the lowest plane it has occupied for fifty years. Remember continually in your prayers the dear brethren and sisters of the Colporteur service.

(3) THE PILGRIM SERVICE. During the year this branch of the service has been increased and its field widened—hundreds of meetings being held from Canada to Georgia and Texas and from Massachusetts to California and Oregon. Many letters testify to good accomplished through this department of the work. We are planning for its still more effective operation during the coming year, as the Lord seems to be opening up ways and means. To him let our praise and thanks ascend: let us remember in our prayers the dear brethren serving as "Pilgrims."

(4) THE TRACT DISTRIBUTION. This department has shared in the general prosperity, as you will see by the report of the Secretary following. It is the largest showing we have ever been able to present. It speaks volumes for the loving zeal of the Lord's people in the distribution of these tracts as well as in the providing of the funds for their publication. We publish no names: it is not necessary, for we are unitedly laboring for the Lord's approval and final "Well done!"

(5) THE VOLUNTEER SERVICE. A year ago we called for volunteers to undertake the distribution of the booklet, *The Bible vs. the Evolution Theory*, to church attendants in every city and town on Sundays at respectful distance from church edifices. Responses were prompt—many true soldiers of the cross accepted the offer as the God-given opportunity, for which they had often prayed—opportunities to *do* and to *serve*, and opportunities, if need be, to suffer joyfully for the truth's sake. These, it is needless to say, besides the blessing they carried to others, received a great blessing in their own hearts, and are the stronger, and the closer to the Lord in consequence. Let us not judge some who discontinued as soon as they found some of the cross and its reproaches attached to this warfare for the truth—this endeavor to preach the gospel to those dear brethren who are shut off from other means of hearing the good tidings of great joy: let us even think very charitably of those who not only did not go out to the battle themselves, but who sought to discourage others from enlistment. Let us remember the noble Apostle Peter who sought to hinder our Lord from his sacrifice and thus became his "adversary," but who subsequently became one of his most faithful and zealous soldiers; and let us hope and pray that each true soldier of the cross may become bold to serve the truth according to the convictions of *his own conscience*, and brave and willing in some manner to endure the cross, that in due time we all may rejoice together as crown wearers in our Captain's kingdom.

(6) THE CORRESPONDENCE feature of the harvest has grown gradually to vast proportions; and we believe it is used of the Lord to the blessing of his flock. During the year just ended we received 31,956 letters and postal cards and sent out 23,676, or a total in and out of over a thousand per week during the year,—some brief, others lengthy. What a wonderful privilege to be thus in close touch with the household of faith, the "brethren" and other truth-seekers! We esteem it a great privilege to lend a helping hand to all in this way and welcome all your letters. But remembering the numbers, please condense your queries and separate them from orders in your letters. And do not be offended, if we refer you briefly to some back TOWER or to some page of the DAWN series for reply.

(7) THE FINANCIAL end of the work,—has prospered amazingly, too,—for us "not many rich." The Treasurer's report shows nearly fifteen thousand dollars handed in by the Lord's people for use in his service—without one penny of it being *begged* or even *asked*. The most we ever do is to inform the friends of the cause that there is a *Fund* to which such as desire may contribute little or much as their holy spirits prompt them and their circumstances will permit. We do not even blow a trumpet for them nor herald their names—the matter is left between each soul and its Lord and each is encouraged to use his *own* best judgment in serving the Lord's cause and to look to him for the rewards of faithfulness and self-denial.

True, fifteen thousand dollars is not much money—it is less than the salary of some ministers of the gospel in the nominal church, not to mention many in worldly positions who receive salaries or have incomes of as much or more. It is as nothing compared to the vast sums donated by the various denominations, by gift and bequest, to home and foreign missionary work, to their Bible Societies and Tract Societies. Yet this little under the Lord's blessing is accomplishing much in the keeping up of meetings through Pilgrims and in circulating nearly sixty-five millions of pages of literature throughout the length and breadth of the civilized world. It reminds us of the widow's cruse of oil and remnant of meal.—1 Kings 17:9-16.

(8) THE FOREIGN WORK is constantly growing. Brother Weber is still the representative of the French work, laboring in Switzerland. Brother Winter looks out for the interests of the Truth in Denmark, while Brothers Lundborg and Nelson do the same in Sweden. Sister Giesecke is the Society's representative in Germany. The latter has just sent in report which shows 246 letters received and 263 letters sent out, and a free circulation of reading matter representing 258,664 tract pages. The work in Great Britain we do not reckon as foreign, because of close connection and one tongue, but it is prospering, too, and our stock of books and tracts in Brother Hart's care is larger than ever, made necessary by increased demands.

All of these "brethren" need our love and sympathy and prayers. Let us remember all the interests of Zion when we approach the throne of the heavenly grace. And finally, dear brethren, pray for us of the home office, who occupy not only a place of interest in your hearts, but a place of prominence for the great Adversary's attacks. Pray that we may have more and more of the Master's blessed spirit—the spirit of wisdom and of might, the spirit of patience and of meekness, the spirit of zeal and of a sound mind, the spirit of love and devotion to the Lord, his truth and his "brethren." And as you thus pray, you will be drawn nearer to us and to the Lord and to the same spirit which worketh all in all. Very truly,

Your brother and servant in the Anointed,

C. T. RUSSELL, *President*.

TREASURER'S ACCOUNT, DEC. 1st, '98, TO DEC. 1st, '99

Receipts:	
Cash, "Good Hopes"	$11,303.32
Cash from other sources	3,467.20
Amount	$14,770.52
Expenditures:	
Pilgrim Account	$2,612.01
Publishing tracts and postage, etc., on same	11,286.97
Amount	$13,898.98
Cash balance for 1900	871.54
	$14,770.52

SECRETARY'S ACCOUNT, DEC. 1st, '98, TO DEC. 1st, '99

Copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN circulated during the year	95.354
Copies of various booklets circulated during the year	43.361
Copies of ZION'S WATCH TOWER supplied *gratis* to the Lord's poor and sent as samples	156,536

Copies of tracts and booklets sent out during the year 2,566,073

This, represented as usual when referring to tracts, aggregated tract pages 64,650,204

E. C. Henninges, *Sec'y & Treas.*

"THE TRUE LIGHT WHICH LIGHTETH EVERY MAN"

——DEC. 24.—ISA. 9:2-7.——

"Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."—Luke 2:11.

Christmas-tide always brings some lesson associated with our Savior and the great salvation, the gift of God, provided through him. This year the chosen lesson is most excellent and beautiful. Appropriately, the first verse of the chapter is omitted: in *Leeser's Translation* it constitutes the last verse of chapter 8.

Our lesson had no local and immediate application at the time of its delivery: it is strictly prophetical, as are indeed the preceding fifteen verses. We cannot even apply the lesson to the people and time of the first advent: its scope is far beyond the Jewish nation, and can only be applied to the worldwide blessings which follow the second coming of Christ and the establishment of his glorious kingdom in power and great glory. Nevertheless, there is just a bare connection with the past in the expression, "Unto us a child is born"—thus indicating the humble beginning and earliest manifestation of the great light, the Sun of Righteousness, which has not yet arisen, but whose day-star is now shining in the hearts of the faithful.—2 Pet. 1:19.

The two divisions of the first verse of the lesson in poetic form merely repeat the same thought with variations. The people that walk in darkness who are to see the great light are practically all mankind, for "gross darkness covers the people"—the exception, the very small minority, the church, as our Lord declared, is "not of the world." (John 17:16) This broad thought is emphasized by the next statement, for the whole world surely is "the land of the shadow of death:" "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together" under the sentence of curse of death which, with its accompaniments of pain and sorrow, casts a deep shadow in every heart and in every household.

Surely, the whole world needs this great light—the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord—the very light which the Apostle declares the world cannot now discern, because the eyes of their understanding are darkened by the misrepresentations and deceptions perpetrated by the god of this world, the prince of darkness.—2 Cor. 4:4: Rev. 20:3.

The fact that this is expressed in the past tense does not signify that this light has already shined, even as the statement, "Unto us a child *is* born," did not signify the birth of Christ at a time prior to Isaiah's prophecy. It is merely a usual form of prophetic statement: the standpoint is taken away off in the future, and from that future standpoint the thing to be accomplished is stated as though already done.

Here, then, we have a prophetic assurance of the great light of the knowledge of God coming to all mankind: and this, be it noted, is in fullest agreement with the testimony of John 1:9, that Christ "is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The fact that every man born into the world has not yet been enlightened by this great light, so far from disparaging the statement, gives us assurance that the time is coming when to him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, and all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, and knowing him have full responsibility or trial for everlasting life or everlasting death.

Verses 3-5 intimate the process by which the great change shall come, and the world be prepared for the shining of the great light—the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his beams. Scholars are divided in their opinions respecting a proper translation of the first sentence of the third verse. The majority seem to favor the translation given by the *Revised Version*, "Thou hast increased the nation, thou hast increased her joy." *Leeser's Translation* renders it, "Thou hast multiplied the nation, made great her joy." In harmony with the context we must interpret this nation to be *the world of mankind* under the new administration of the Millennial Kingdom; for the kingdoms of this world will then become the kingdoms of our Lord, God's Anointed, and many nations shall go and say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."—Rev. 11:15; Isa. 2:3.

Thus, instead of the Lord's empire being a typical one over a little nation of Israelites, as in the day of Isaiah's prophecy, it will be the antitypical one in which Immanuel shall be king over all the earth, and his name great to the ends of the earth.

It is the joy of this great people that is described: it will not merely be a quiet joy of satisfaction, but an hilarious joy, as of men who are in the midst of plenty, in a harvest season; and as men rejoicing when dividing the fruits of victory. But what will be the cause of the rejoicing? The answer is given. Because from off their shoulder the great burden has been removed: the burden of sin and its curse will have been removed, and the rod of the oppressor, Satan, will be broken, and he himself then will be a captive, no longer permitted to oppress and deceive and blind mankind.—Rev. 20:2.

An illustration of the process of the deliverance is given: "As in the days of Midian." The suggestion obviously is that as Israel was delivered in the day of Midian by Gideon and his little band, armed with trumpets and pitchers with lights in them,—by the blowing of the trumpets, the breaking of the pitchers and the shining out of the lights—discomfiting the Midianites, so that they slew one another with a great slaughter, so likewise will be the deliverance by which the Lord will bring in the new dispensation. (Judges 7:19-25) Our Lord Jesus is the antitypical Gideon, and his "little flock," the church of this Gospel age, the "elect," are the antitype of Gideon's little army. And it will be through the intervention of these (on the other side of the vail) that the hosts of sin and the present enginery of evil will be utterly discomfited and work its self-destruction through anarchy, etc., in the great time of trouble rapidly drawing near.

This great time of trouble is briefly yet graphically described in the fifth verse as being more severe, more intense, than all preceding troubles, for it is declared that all such victories are expected to be with tumult and bloody garments, but this shall be with a more furious destruction, best likened to a consuming of fuel in the fire. And it will be noticed that the fury of the final conflict of this age, which shall transfer the rule to our Prince Immanuel, is everywhere likened to a *fire*—throughout the prophecies and in our Lord's parables—evidently because of the intensity of the trouble and its destructiveness.

Then comes (vss. 6 and 7) the explanation from the Lord's side of how all these things are of his provision and supervision—beginning with the birth of our Lord as the babe born in Bethlehem; next presenting him as God's Son, *given* on our behalf,—his sacrifice beginning at Jordan and culminating at Calvary. "Wherefore," as the Apostle says, because of his obedience unto death, "him hath God highly exalted and given him a name above every [other] name,"—honor, dominion and power above all others, next to his own.

The change of dispensation will be ushered in because the Father's "times of restitution of all things" (Acts. 3:19-21) will have come,—the time for Christ to receive the honor, glory and dominion promised him, with which he shall fulfil all the gracious things predicted by God through the prophets: hence the declaration is that then "the government shall be upon his shoulder"—the mantle of authority shall rest upon him. And when he shall thus assume the control of earth's affairs, his character of love and justice, his wisdom, and the all-power in heaven and in earth given unto him, insure all the faithful that his reign will be a time of blessing, of peace and of joy to all who love righteousness and truth; and equally a time of burning destruction against all who shall sin wilfully after having been brought to a knowledge of the truth.—Heb. 12:26.

His names, his titles, representing the gracious things of which he is the representative, are brought to our attention: to all the world of mankind he will then be (and the church, his body, with him) "Wonderful"—Great—beyond the power of human comprehension, as he is indeed the express image of the Father's person. He will be the "Counselor," whose instructions in righteousness will be satisfactory and respected by all the world of mankind seeking a return to divine favor and full restitution. And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hear that Teacher, that Counselor, shall be cut off from among the people. (Acts 3:23) He shall be called "Mighty God," or Mighty Mighty One, for indeed in him shall rest all the power and authority of the All-mighty One, Jehovah. He shall be called the "Father Everlasting," because in truth he shall be a Father unto the race, a *Life-Giver* to all who will accept life under the terms of the New Covenant, sealed with his own precious blood. Adam, the original father of humanity, through his sin and under its sentence, failed to give lasting life to his race, and death destroyed all his offspring; but the restitution life which our Lord will give, to as many as will receive it upon his terms, will be an everlasting life, and hence he, as the giver of this life to all, will be an Everlasting Father. He shall be called the "Prince of Peace," for, although his empire will be established by a smiting of the nations with a rod of iron, and breaking them in pieces as a potter's vessel, in the greatest time of trouble the world has ever known, nevertheless, every blow will be struck in the interest of peace, and so his entire reign will further the ends of righteousness and peace, even though to the very end thereof there shall from time to time be destructions of the wicked.—Isa. 65:20; Rev. 20:9, 14, 15.

Leeser's Translation reads thus:—"The Prince of Peace for promoting the increase of the government and for peace without end upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to establish it and to support it through justice and righteousness from henceforth and unto eternity: the zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this."

In this last verse of the lesson the Millennial kingdom is associated with the typical kingdom of David. We are to remember, however, the statement that David sat upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord—he and his kingdom were typical. The name, David, signifies "beloved," and our Lord Jesus himself was proclaimed as the real David—"This is *my Beloved* Son, in whom I am well pleased." God hath appointed him heir of all things, and he is David's Lord, as David himself testified.—Heb. 1:2; Matt. 22:41-45.

We fear that there are many Christians who have lost faith, not only in the prophetic promises, but in our Lord's and the apostles' exposition of them, and that such frequently pray merely with a lip service, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." But so much the more as we discern such blindness on every hand, such lack of faith, let us, the eyes of whose understandings have been opened by the Lord's mercy, be the more faithful, the more circumspect, and the more confident, remembering, in the words of this lesson, that an abundant fulfilment is assured, for "The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform all this."

REVIEW OF 1899—DEC. 31

Golden Text.—*"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."*—Psa. 103:2.

The end of one year and the beginning of another is a most favorable occasion for circumspection and retrospection.

We trust that as each reader reviews the year just closing he will be able to repeat our Golden Text appreciatively,—with the spirit and with the understanding also. One of the least expensive offerings we can present to the Lord our God, and yet one which he will appreciate very highly, is thanksgiving—for mercies past and present. The ungrateful are disdained among men, and we may well suppose are far from pleasing in the sight of the Almighty. While every creature throughout the world might find some cause for thankfulness and gratitude and praise, how much more should we who have received so abundantly of the riches of divine grace in the knowledge of his truth—the plan of the ages. We may well apply to ourselves on this occasion the words of our dear Redeemer, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear; for verily I say unto you, that many prophets and many righteous persons have desired to see the things which ye see and have not seen them, and to hear the things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

We said that thanksgivings were cheap offerings; but whoever presents to the Lord real thanksgiving with lips of praise will follow his lip service with something more substantial; and this is intimated in our Golden Text by the words, "O my soul!"—the appeal is not merely to the lips, but to the entire being. And so we find it with ourselves and others today: whoever is truly thankful to the Lord and offers him praise, remembering his benefits, will seek to render substantial thanks also in deeds that will be acceptable and pleasing to the Lord.

While prayers, adorations and praises are the most direct offerings of "incense" to the Lord, nevertheless he has so arranged matters that we cannot offer these sincerely and acceptably except as we have his spirit: and if we have his spirit, we will at the same time that we offer this incense on the Golden Altar be offering also upon the brazen altar in the "Court" good works—"doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith."—Gal. 6:10.

The close of the year is an excellent time also for the making of new resolutions for the year to come, and on the present occasion there is an added force from the fact that the year before us will be the last one of the century. Let us, beloved brethren, make plenty of good resolves respecting what we shall be willing to be, to do, to suffer, in fellowship with our Lord; that we may by his grace make of it the best year thus far of our lives—the year of largest hopes, of largest endeavors, and by the Lord's grace of largest successes in self-sacrifice, in overcoming the world and its spirit, in vanquishing self and the desires of the flesh, in resisting the Adversary, and in glorifying our Lord and blessing his people.

THE TIME IS SHORT

Up, up, my soul, the long-spent time redeeming:
Sow thou the seeds of better deed and thought;
Light other lamps, while yet the light is beaming;
The time, the time is short.

The time is short. Then be thy heart a brother's
To every heart that needs thy help in aught.
How much they need the sympathy of others!
The time, the time is short.

KIND WORDS FOR MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V

The New Bedford (Mass.) *Standard* says:

"Charles T. Russell, editor of Zion's Watch Tower, and author of several volumes of theological writings, five of which are included in his Millennial Dawn series, has issued a new volume of Bible study, *The At-one-ment Between God and Man.* Mr. Russell clings close to the Bible, as he interprets it, and endeavors to offset the theory of the evolutionists that, as no fall occurred, no redemption and atonement are necessary, by teaching the cross of Christ."

The Jacksonville (Fla.) *Times Union-Citizen* says:

"In this neat volume of five hundred pages we have a most reverent treatment of profound subjects, respecting which many Christians have wondered and prayed, in a clear and lucid style which even a child may understand. The author's loyalty to the Bible is pronounced and inspiring, and we do not wonder that some have denominated his books *Bible Keys.* In the volume under review the author examines his subjects from both the human and the divine standpoints—the necessity for atonement on man's part, and why it is demanded on God's part, and then what are its grand possibilities for all the race of Adam—'Whosoever will.' The writer's scope embraces the doctrine of the divine trinity."

The Worcester (Mass.) *Evening Post* says:

"Among the most notable of the recent works on religious subjects is a publication from the press of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Allegheny, Pa., *The At-one-ment Between God and Man.* The book is one that treats of theological subjects in an entirely new and decidedly attractive manner. It advances no new dogmas nor seeks to combat old ones in any but a spirit of truth seeking. It makes plain in a particularly clear and helpful light many things that have heretofore puzzled students of the Bible and Biblical lore. It teaches the universal fatherhood of God and teems with the expression of his loving kindness for the creatures he has made. At the same time it is a text book of theological science and dissects its truths and principles in a logical and reasonable, yet reverent manner.

"No single chapter of any recent book is more notable than the section of this work which deals with the ever-confusing mystery of the divine trinity. It must be said that a more convincing explanation of this axiomatic doctrine of theology has never yet presented itself, yet it is strictly along the lines of orthodox thought. The general effect of the book on the average reader who seeks for light on the subjects that to him have dark meaning, is most gratifying. It quickens faith and makes strong hopes that are dear to every serious and thinking mind. The tone of the book is reverent and wholesome, and it seems destined to bring happiness to many a doubt-laden heart."

The Grand Rapids (Mich.) Herald says:—

"Pastor Russell's new book, *The At-one-ment Between God and Man*, is of the sort that awakens Christians to do some thinking along theological lines. It is one of those epoch-making books' destined to influence thought not merely for the hour of their perusal, but for life—and for centuries. The book will make its author foes as well as friends, for there are people ready to fight for their dogmas, however unscriptural and unreasonable. However, many thinking Christian people, who hold to the Bible as the inspired Word of God and who have all their lives been troubled in their endeavors to harmonize it with their consciences and with facts, will surely welcome this volume as *'a helping hand,'* and praise God for the light it sheds on many subjects hitherto dark to all except theologians, and possibly to many of them also. One thing is certain, and that is that every lover of the Bible must admire the author's loyalty to the Scriptures and his reverential style of dealing with church dogmas, which he rejects as being contrary to the divine Word, character and plan."

The New Haven (Conn.) Courier Journal says:—

"The reverential spirit of the work, its earnestness, its clearness of statement, impress the reader. It is a strong, forcible and logical setting forth of the doctrine of atonement for sin through Christ, the Mediator, and of the orthodox Christian belief in general regarding the great foundation of the Christian faith and scope of salvation. It is a work that appeals to all on a subject of such paramount importance."

The Pittsburg Times says:—

"The title explains the object of the book. The author, as is usual with him, fortifies his opinions and assertions by a close adherence to the Scriptures. He writes with great enthusiasm and with an apparent sense of strong conviction, and the book will be of considerable aid to those who find occasion to study the points treated."

The Syracuse (N. Y.) Herald says:—

"Mr. Russell is an able as well as an exceedingly voluminous writer on religious questions. The present bulky volume is the fifth of a series of books under the general title of MILLENNIAL DAWN. It discusses the fall of man, the penalty or curse upon him, his redemption and the terms of his *'At-one-ment.'* It undertakes to explain the perplexing doctrine of the trinity and to render it simple and reasonable. The author is loyal to the Scriptures, but not always to church dogmas, which he deals with according to their agreement with the divine Word. All Bible-students will find matter for thought in Mr. Russell's writings."

The Indianapolis (Ind.) Sentinel says:—

"This book is sublimely comprehensive, and unquestionably its treatment will be pronounced a masterly one by many Bible students. 'The fear of the Lord' is the only fear in evidence in this volume; but although 'traditions of men' are treated fearlessly, they are kindly handled, and even partisan sticklers for exploded errors must concede the author's Christian spirit and courtesy, while all must admit his honesty, and his fidelity to the Scriptures. If human creeds suffer, it is in the interest of the Bible, which the author accepts as his only creed, in the interest also of love and justice and Christian common sense—all important considerations as against nonsense of the 'dark ages,' often mislabled 'orthodoxy.'

"After reading this book and comparing its numerous Bible citations, intelligent Christians will often say to themselves: Where have I been? What have I been thinking of? What poor use have I made of my Bible and my reason for years that I did not see the beauty, harmony and reasonableness of the divine Word! But the author lays no claim to superior ability or inspiration, merely claiming that God has a 'due time' for everything, and that now is God's due time for shedding light upon his Word in the interest of all his faithful people, and his aspiration is to be a humble servant of the Lord's flock, dispensing to them the 'meat in due season.' "

The St. Louis Christian Advocate says:—

"Concerning this volume, a recent reviewer has said: 'Pastor Russell's new book, *The At-one-ment Between God and Man*, is remarkable in fact, if not in its title. It is sure to make a stir among the dry bones of fossilized orthodoxy, as well as amongst the higher critics. Not that it is agnostic—for it is decidedly Biblical; nor that it is bitter and drastic and cutting toward those theories of the dark ages which have barnacled the good ship Zion—for it handles them gently, courteously, though thoroughly. Its strength lies in the gentle persistence with which the writer uses his Biblical dynamics.' "

The New York Merchants' Review says:—

"A NOTABLE WORK.—A hell of fire and brimstone has no place in the belief of some intelligent Christians, man's folly and wickedness providing hell enough on earth, according to their views of the matter, but Pastor Charles T. Russell, in *The At-one-ment Between God and Man*, of the MILLENNIAL DAWN series, presents many arguments to show that hell, *sheol* or *hades*, has no existence at all as a place of punishment, the word in its different forms meaning simply the sleep which the human race passes into, to be awakened from at Christ's second coming.

"His arguments are based upon copious texts from Scripture, as also is his attempt to prove that the orthodox view of the holy trinity has no foundation in the Bible. The Scriptures, and nothing but the Scriptures, are the guide of the author in his search for the truth in the various problems examined by him in his interesting book, and naturally he opposes 'Evolution.' "

The St. Albans (Vt.) Daily Messenger says:—

"This volume, like all others from this writer, differs from other theological writings in several particulars. (1) It is simple in style, easily understood by any Christian—making abstruse subjects plain to even the wayfaring man if he be of the class addressed by the author—the justified in Christ. (2) It entirely ignores all creeds and theories of men and appeals solely to the Scriptures and treats their testimony as inspired, authoritative, decisive—citing as well as quoting them freely. (3) It is logical as well as Scriptural, and whoever reads without prejudice is sure to be convinced. (4) Those who read and accept the presentations of this volume will not only *know what* they believe, but *why* they believe it; and will 'be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in them'—which cannot be said even of clergymen respecting the dogmas of the several denominations."

OUR ELIMS—TO MY BELOVED PASTOR

Our way winds upward on the rocky steep,
  And narrow is the path our feet must tread;
We still press on through shade or noontide heat—
  Pilgrims to Canaan through a desert led,
The way is rough, and weary grow our feet,
Yet faint we not—the goal is fair and sweet.

Yet, as we onward urge our weary way,
  Sometimes a sigh escapes, a tear will fall;
Our load grows heavy, and the glaring day
  And heat and wayside dust our hearts appall.
Yet our Leader loves us well and notes our sigh,
His help is sure, His presence ever nigh.

We lift our eyes, and lo! a shelving rock
  And sparkling spring and waving palms are near;
With glad and quickened feet and eager joy,
  We haste to this fair *Elim-grove* of cheer.
We loose our sandals by the brooklet sweet
And in its waters bathe our weary feet.

And as we take again our onward way,
  We pluck fair blossoms, delicate and rare,
We breathe their perfume sweet throughout the day,
  The rugged path has grown most strangely fair;
And thus our Father in His tender love,
Doth bless us and His loving-kindness prove.

And thus, dear friend, as you go on your way,
  Walking this path our loving Master trod,
With patient, trusting heart from day to day,
  Keeping the road that leads to "Home" and God,
May these blest "Elims" often cheer your heart,
That you may ever choose the "better part!"

May blossoms, too, along your path be found,
  Blossoms of love, and true and kindly deed,
Most fair and sweet—fragrant with tender thoughts,
  And loving gratitude—your earthly meed.
And may I hope, dear friend, *my gift* may be
One of these wayside blossoms sweet to thee?

ALICE G. JAMES,—*Illinois.*

ZION'S WATCH TOWER and Herald of Christ's Presence

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

FALLEN FROM GRACE VERSUS COLLAPSED

More evident does it become, daily, that our Lord's declaration, "Babylon is fallen!" does not signify the outward collapse of "Churchianity;" but that nominal "Christendom" has fallen from divine favor;—just as the fall of national Judaism from divine favor, at the rejection and crucifixion of Messiah at his first *presence,* meant not the collapse at the moment of that religio-political system. The collapse of Judaism came after it had been *fallen* from divine favor for 37 years, *viz.,* in A. D. 69-70; and during that interim God's true people, "Israelites indeed," were called out by the voice of the Gospel Dispensation. And just so now, the collapse of *nominal* Christianity, "Christendom" or "Babylon," is not to be expected until A. D. 1914, though fallen from favor since 1878. The collapse will be sudden and awful when it does come: and while only the few realize the *fallen-from-grace* condition of Babylon in the present, none will be ignorant of her collapse when it comes. But to know then will be too late so far as the little flock of overcomers is concerned;—they are all called now, during the interim, "Come out of her, *my people,* that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues"—punishment.—Rev. 18:2-4.

The collapse of Babylon is graphically described by the Revelator as like the casting of a great millstone into the sea, saying, "Thus [suddenly], with violence shall that great city, Babylon, be thrown down and be found no more at all." Her sudden destruction is described as a great conflagration, and the declaration is made that it is because "the hour of her judgment [krisis]" will have come, that she will thus suffer overthrow or "plagues." "Therefore shall her plagues come in *one day* [prophetic time is a day for a year], death and mourning and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." Whoever are worthy the name, "my people," will hear and obey the Lord's voice and come out of Babylon and "receive not of her plagues;" because their obedience in fleeing out as soon as they see Babylon's real condition will prove that they were never in real accord with her sins. Those who *remain* after seeing Babylon and her blasphemous doctrines in the light now shining are reckoned as endorsing the blasphemies and deserving the "plagues" most thoroughly—as much or more than the "tare" class of Babylonians, because they have greater light.

Many err in not fleeing promptly when first they realize the true condition of affairs. Some say,—I will use my office or influence in Babylon, and then obey the Lord after I have gathered some of the "wheat." They forget that obedience is better than all else in divine estimation—better even than sacrifice. Are they wiser than God that they may even for a month advantageously or safely ignore his Word? Later on they find that even the "tare" class consider them as having for a time at least "dissembled" and misrepresented their own faith as well as misrepresented the faith of the denomination which they had agreed to uphold. Their *influence* which at first might have been powerful for the truth becomes vitiated by reason of their neglect to obey God's voice—by their attempt to guide themselves and to lean to their own understanding.

Others say, I am free from Babylon in spirit, God knows! Although my name is still on the denominational rolls, I take no interest in her affairs—my sympathies are all with the truth, and I rarely attend other meetings. But is this right—to be half out and half in Babylon? Is this the obedience required of an "overcomer" and pleasing and acceptable to God? Surely not. He publicly entered into a *covenant* with the denomination when he joined it, and he should faithfully live up to all the conditions of that covenant until he *as publicly* renounces or cancels his membership.

Others say, I merely retain my membership in the church and sing in the choir, etc., for the sake of peace in my family: otherwise I would speedily withdraw. But is this "*overcoming*," or being overcome? The latter, surely: it is a *balancing* of regard for God and his Word, with regard for husband or wife or children or friends and their wishes. Thus the Lord tests us, whether we love houses, lands, reputation, friends, husband, wife or children, *more than him!* We should be prompt to obey and thus to show that to us God's will is superior to every other consideration.

Additionally, we once said to a dear brother who made such a remark as the above: Brother, excuse the illustration, but it may help you to see your position on this question in its true light if I tell you of a matter which, it seems to me, aptly illustrates your position in a way you have not thus far thought of it. It is this: In Chicago, at one of the great butchering establishments (perhaps at all) they have a trained bullock whose duty it is to decoy the cattle that are ready for slaughter. The bewildered cattle are naturally fearful of harm and would be difficult to drive to the butchering spot, but with the decoy bull they are easily led. He gallops up to the herd tossing his head and tail as a friendly greeting and then, wheeling around, he becomes their leader and gallops off along the narrow passage where they can go only single file. He knows well his business, and when near the killing place he steps aside into a little space provided for him alone, while the herd push one another along to their slaughter. Now, dear brother (we remarked), you and others in the nominal churches, who know better and who merely sing, or preach, or hold some petty "office," or merely help to count another *one* on the reports of Babylon's prosperity or to give another dollar to her millions, are like the decoy bull—using your knowledge and influence to the injury and bondage of others who, seeking the right way of true liberty and life, are looking to you for counsel and being misled by your example. The brother in question at once thankfully acknowledged the force of the illustration, and requested that some of the free "Withdrawal Letters" and tracts to accompany them be sent him for his use in getting free and setting a worthy example to others.

THE FEDERATION OF BABYLON

"Christendom" was *united* in the dark ages, and the results were terrible, every way. The more truth and reformation came in, the more did "Christendom" split up. Had the reform continued, and had the light of truth shined still more clearly, the result would have been that split after split would have occurred, until each individual Christian would have stood *free,* and all denominationalism would have perished. This would be the ideal condition; for all the *unions* of the past and present are unscriptural and tend to impede the Christian's progress. They are *mechanical* unions, and not *heart* unions: they are the work of Satan, and not God's workmanship: they tend to prevent *heart*-union and foster errors, which otherwise would quickly die. Not until enlightened by the spirit of God's word are any prepared to exercise the liberty wherewith Christ makes free indeed, and to come out from all false Christian unions or sectarian communions, into that broad place which recognizes one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one church, *whose names are written in heaven.* And only such are prepared for proper union on the same basis as that of the church of Apostolic times.

When, therefore, we from time to time in these columns allude to the growing evidences of a *federative union* among all the great denominations of Christendom, and when we point out that the Scriptures indicate such a union, let no one suppose that either we or the Scriptures *approve* of such a union, or consider that its influence will be favorable to either the truth or the "saints." Quite to the contrary, the influence will be baneful: whatever is encouraging or helpful to Babylon is proportionately injurious to the true church. The various sects of Christendom realize that many of the doctrinal errors, which have heretofore bound their votaries helplessly and mechanically, will no longer hold as firmly as before, and they are supplanting these with new bonds of later device: *viz.*, love of respectability and pride in denominational name and prosperity—a party spirit. And instead of the discredited doctrines (which can no longer be unfurled as standards, but which must be carried along tightly closed) they are raising the standard of moral and political reform, the banner of a new crusade.

No one can say that their crusade is an evil of itself; and only the few who are *spiritually minded* (the *true* church) in and out of their sects can so much as see that moral and political reform is a worldly work and not the commission of the church which is anointed to preach, not such reforms, but *the cross of Christ and complete regeneration of heart.*

Those who are looking for a *union* in Christendom in which denominational names and denominational lines will be obliterated, are looking for what they will never see until the great collapse comes, and the entire "Christendom" system, social, religious, political and financial goes down in the great anarchous trouble with which the present age will close. The *union* which will be cemented will be largely one of common sentiment and co-operation in moral and political reforms. And this federative union, as already pointed out, began in 1846 in the organization of the Evangelical Alliance. We are looking yearly for its final knot to be tied in some manner that will include with other Protestant denominations the Episcopal church, and a *working agreement* with Papacy.

Thus the "*Image* of the Beast" (Rev. 13) will receive life —vigor, energy—be made active. And that activity which will seem to promise great things for Babylon, and which will actively suppress liberty and be exerted powerfully against the spread of the truths now published by us, will be but the lifting up of the great millstone preparatory to its being violently and quickly destroyed, for it will soon be evident that such a new union of church and state (wholly different from that of the past) will be a union of the classes against the masses; and it will be the rising of the masses in revolution that will, as God's agency, hurl the Babylon system to utter destruction.

THE TIME OF OPPORTUNITY IS SHORT

The more clearly we *see* present conditions and foresee those approaching, the more it should stimulate our zeal to be and to do while we have the opportunity—for a dark night approaches, wherein no man can work. Whoever desires to lay up treasures in heaven, by voluntarily sacrificing time, money, influence and other earthly considerations for the service of the Lord by service of the "brethren," should bestir himself, lest the harvest pass, and the summer of opportunity end, and he find that he has failed to offer his *sacrifice* which he presented to God theoretically when he was baptized into Christ's death. And whoever, having become nominally a member of the "royal priesthood," does not *offer any sacrifice* during this Gospel day of sacrifice forfeits his place as a member of that priesthood—his name will surely be blotted out and the crown, apportioned to him on the strength of his covenant to sacrifice, will be set over to another who will appreciate and use the *privilege* of self-denial, self-sacrifice, suffering with Christ.

THE PROSPECTS FOR 1900

It is our opinion that the year just beginning will be a very prosperous year for the truth. This is not merely "a wish, father to the thought," nor is it because the "Good Hopes" already sent in seem to give promise of funds for a wider spread of the truth; for, as an offset, we have noticed that our paper (the chief item of cost in our publication) will cost us nearly double what it did last year—in other words, a dollar will do only about sixty cents worth as compared to last year. No; but we have felt for several months past that Churchianity has reached and is at a crisis, where a cleavage is sure to take place,—which will separate from her some true saints who hitherto have been perplexed respecting the Lord's will, but who will not gradually become convinced that "Babylon" is no longer his mouthpiece, but already spewed out of his mouth (Rev. 3:16), and that her evolutionary teachings are not of him but in radical opposition to his Word and plan.

We have confidence that God's time is ripe for present truth to be more widely made known among his people as a part of the Gospel which is either a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. We have confidence, too, that all the money and all the colaborers necessary will be forthcoming, and we are arranging plans accordingly. Those who co-operate will share the service and the blessings attendant; those who do not use their privileges will but mar their own blessings, but shall not hinder the work that is due to be done. "The Lord will provide!" Indeed, we expect that each year now will note rapid spread of the truth *until* "the door is shut;"—until the work is interfered with forcibly by outside influences. Then we shall understand that our work is done —that the "elect" have all been sealed, and that nought remains but to "stand" and assist others to stand. Indeed, this, as we all know, is a most important part of the present; for, while others are being reached with the truth, those already blessed are being assaulted by the adversary, so that all may be tested and only the faithful be *able to stand.*—See Eph. 6:10-18.

TO HIM THAT HATH USED SHALL MORE BE GIVEN

The "Volunteer" spirit is growing. Those who have served thus have been blessed and are more anxious for the conquest than they were for the first. They look abroad and see thousands blinded by the god of this world enlisting to kill and be killed, and they read the reports of the killed, wounded and prisoners, and the hardships endured, and the taxes to be borne; and then they say: How small is the service, how slight the hardship and suffering and self-denial our gracious King is willing to accept as "reasonable service" from us who have consecrated to him our *all*—even unto death—and to whom he has already given such rich rewards as well as promised us a share in his Millennial kingdom. We are resolved that neither cares of this life, nor pride, nor self-ease shall hinder us from engaging in this battle against darkness and the influences of the prince of darkness. On the contrary, we will be yet more vigilant, yet more enthusiastic in planting the truth, the standard of our King, where it can be seen by many now ignorantly fighting against him and it.

Let none think of the "Volunteers" as illiterate "hand-bill-distributers." Quite to the contrary, these "*ministers of the truth*" who are reaching larger numbers and exerting a greater influence than if they occupied the chief pulpits of the land, are far above the average of those whom they serve—both in secular and in Biblical intelligence. One is a stove-manufacturer and dealer; several are storekeepers, one owning and successfully managing five stores; some are college graduates, architects and civil engineers; some are clerks holding remunerative positions of trust—one of the latter, besides doing diligent "Volunteer" work, economized rigidly his living expenses and accumulated five hundred dollars during last year, which he sent to our Society to assist in publishing more "good-tidings-ammunition." Several are the chosen leaders of meetings in their various localities; several are stenographers (male and female); at least two are artists, one of these of distinction as a protrait painter; others are house wives; others are mechanics, who, after a week of toil, find recreation and heart-refreshment by spending part of each Sunday as messengers (angels) of the Lord to carry to their "brethren" yet in Babylon the true Gospel message,—"good-tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people" through "him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood."

Plenty of worldly business can command such servants because of the pay offered; but no other religious work has ever called for and gotten volunteers of this class, nor for a work of this kind, whose only pay in the present time is the divine blessing "a hundred fold more in this present time with persecution,—and in the world to come eternal life"—"glory, honor and immortality." No other Gospel was ever worthy of so intelligent a class of servants; but as respects this Gospel its most honorable servants feel that all that they have and are, are offerings far too insignificant to testify to God their new-found appreciation of his glorious character and plan. They feel impelled to pay their vows unto the

Lord, to keep their covenant of self-sacrifice even unto death, because they have the *genuine* faith in the Lord's promises, which *works by love* and purifies the heart from pride and selfishness.

A FRESH CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

In the world's warfare defeat leads to fresh calls for soldiers: with us success calls for more "Volunteers" and more success and more blessing, "riches of grace" (with possibly more persecution and slander) and by and by "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." There is more, much more work to be done, and we are desirous that many more of the Lord's consecrated people should share the heart-cheer and character-strengthening which this service affords.

Here is the very opportunity for which you have prayed—an opportunity for serving the *truth*, and the *Lord* and the "*brethren*." You wished and prayed for the needful *talents* to present these good tidings, and you hoped and prayed for *opportunities* and for *means*: and now, behold! the Lord has provided you all these in this "Volunteer" work. Notice that it is a "*reasonable service*" as no other is; because—

(1) It is not an *unreasonable* misrepresentation of God's character and plan and methods with drum and tambourine, and singing of hymns to concert-hall tunes, misnamed divine worship and service.

(2) It is not the *unreasonable* misrepresentation of the divine character and plan as preached in one-half the 200,000 pulpits of "Christendom" which blasphemes God's character and misrepresents his plan by declaring that only the *saints* of the present time will ever be saved—far less than one out of every thousand of the world's population;* and that the great mass, both of the living and the dead, will spend an eternity in torment indescribable.

(3) It is not the *unreasonable* misrepresentation of God's character and plan presented in the other half of the pulpits of "Christendom"—which, ashamed of their "hell fire and damnation creeds," hypocritically acknowledge them, while actually they deny them and preach "*another gospel*" of Evolution and Higher Criticism, which makes void the Word and plan of God, and repudiates the cross of Christ and all necessity for his atoning sacrifice.

(4) It is a "*reasonable service*" because it appeals only to reason and Scripture, as no other gospel message on earth or known among men appeals to these, and to no other authorities and standards. And it does, this, too, in a most *reasonable manner*: not taking vows in order to get into pulpits and into college-professorships, and under good salaries, to capture the sects ("creeping into houses and leading captive silly women"), but by kindly proffering without money and without price the priceless jewel of *consistent truth* which from our own experience we know will bless every true recipient. Nor has the Lord given us cause for shame respecting the *form* in which our messages are delivered—they are neat, creditable to the most refined who engage in the service. And in turn "the adornment of a *meek* and *quiet* spirit" which the Lord's faithful take to this humble service (laying down their lives for the brethren) is one of the strongest sermons or epistles of Christ-likeness that can be presented to those we may hope to interest, and it already has spoken loudly to those who at first were too prejudiced to read.

(5) Could there be a more blessed or a more reasonable service than this? Nay, verily! We can fancy, indeed, that the heavenly angels look down upon our privileges and opportunities and fondly desire that in divine providence it might have been their privilege to join with us in this most reasonable, most honorable and most blessed service.

THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN FOR 1900

Confident of the reënlistment of the veterans of 1899, we have prepared for them a new campaign which we believe they will heartily enjoy. We will get ready for Spring campaign hundreds of thousands of pamphlets which we believe you will enjoy using. We will call for Volunteers and reënlistments about March, so please be ready.

Meantime most of the "volunteers" have plenty of work for the suitable weather between now and spring: and the spirit of the Lord—the spirit of love for the Lord, love for the truth and love for the "brethren"—is constantly constraining fresh volunteers for places not yet served with the booklet, "*Bible vs. Evolution*," and we are printing and will continue to print, plenty of these to supply the demand.

The new booklets will be supplied only for the fields where the other distribution has been made. This *free* offer for this special work will not affect the regular selling price of the booklets;—they are not *free* for any other kind of service, tho all are supplied at very low rates. We hope that we may have many and prompt responses to this call for Gideon's Band, armed with the Jubilee trumpet to give the joyful sound, and with lights in their vessels,—ready and willing to break the vessels, to let the light shine out while they cause the joyful sound of the real good tidings to sound throughout the land.—See Judges Chap. VII.

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* One in a thousand of the world's population would be 1,600,000. That many saints would be a *power* for good.

A POSTOFFICE THIEF IS STILL ROBBING OUR MAIL!

We specially request that no *money* be sent by mail. Altho this is mentioned in every issue quite a number fail to heed it. They thus not only lose the money sent but cause themselves and us trouble and postage writing about their losses. Furthermore they trouble others who properly send Postal Orders, Drafts or Express Orders; for the mail-thief frequently by mistake takes these (which he cannot use and must destroy lest they betray him). Hence the many who do right in this matter are put to trouble even tho they suffer no financial loss. If all would observe the proper rule, the thief would be spared temptation, and he would soon cease to rifle letters addressed to us—finding no *money* therein.

One dear Brother sent a donation in *money*, which went astray. He wrote subsequently that his thought was—This is the Lord's *money* and for the Lord's *cause* and he will protect it. He erred in this, failing to realize that his course was a tempting of Providence: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Nor should we tempt our weak fallen fellow-creatures.

"THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH"

Jan. 7.—Luke 2:1-16.

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. 1:21.

Jesus is the topic of the International Sunday School Lesson course for the entire year 1900. It should be a very profitable study, for the more intimately we know our dear Redeemer in the light of the Scriptures the more we shall appreciate him, love him and seek to copy him. No other life than his could bear so continual and close a scrutiny, yet always be full of fresh revelations of moral dignity and character—any other life similarly studied and criticised would reveal its seamy side of weakness, sin and ignobility.

Of the four records, only John's attempts to trace our Lord's genealogy to the heavenly source, and to show us that before he was made flesh he was a spirit being with the Father and a sharer of his glory—*a* god with *the* God. But all of the Evangelists are clear in their statement that he was—"*was made flesh*"—not that he remained a spirit being, and assumed flesh as clothing in which to *appear* to men, but, however explainable, that the life power of the spirit being, the Logos, became the life power of the human being, born of a woman and under the Law, subject to all the conditions and circumstances of the Jews. Matthew traces Joseph's genealogy; for altho the statement is clear that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, nevertheless, being adopted by him as his son, he might, without impropriety, inherit through him. Luke shows the genealogy of Mary, by which our Lord was actually related, according to the flesh, to our race and to the royal family of David through the line of Nathan.*

The time of our Lord's birth was an auspicious one in several respects, and very evidently divine wisdom had exercised itself in respect to the world's affairs by way of preparation for this important event: (1) The spirit of world-conquering that began with Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was favorable to it, in the sense that it brought the various families or nations of mankind into closer contact with each other, broadening their ideas. (2) This policy had resulted in the transplanting of peoples from one land to another, and thus had made them more cosmopolitan in their sentiments. (3) Israel and Judah, thus transplanted in their captivity to Babylon, became so attached to the new conditions that comparatively few of them availed themselves of the offer of Cyrus to return to their own land, only about fifty thousand of all the tribes, out of several millions. The Jews among the

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* See Millennial Dawn, Vol. v, Chap 6.

Gentiles were by no means lost and had by no means abandoned all of their hopes in the Abrahamic Covenant nor all of their faithfulness to the Mosaic Law—altho they were lax in these matters and too full of a love of gain and ease to cultivate the spirit of Israelites indeed. Nevertheless, they had their influence amongst all the nations with whom they dwelt, and were witnesses to the hopes of Israel in the one God and in a coming Messiah, the Son of God, to be the world's Deliverer. (4) The triumph for a time of the Greek Empire had brought to the civilized world a highly developed literature—the Greek language had reached its zenith, and was the literary language of the civilized world. (5) The Roman Empire had conquered the world and was in the height of its power, and as a result there was a time of universal peace, and hence a more favorable time than any before for the announcement of the Gospel and for the safety of its representatives in passing from nation to nation. (6) Israel itself had reached probably its highest development, intellectually, morally and religiously, and additionally we are told in the Scriptures that "All men were in *expectation*" of the Messiah's coming.—Luke 3:15.

It was just at this most appropriate time, as divinely arranged for, that Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, issued his decree respecting the taxing of his worldwide empire. The decree was not merely an assessment of taxes, but was rather a census, or enrollment for taxation. But instead of sending assessors to the people, according to the present custom, the arrangement then was that every male citizen must report himself at the headquarters of his own family line. This was the occasion for the coming of Joseph and his espoused wife, Mary, the mother of Jesus, to Bethlehem, their native city, or family city, for they were both of the house of David (tho through different lines), and Bethlehem was "the city of David." Thus in a providential manner and by a decree over which they had no control whatever, Joseph and Mary were brought to the very city in which most appropriately the great heir of David should be born, as had been foretold by the prophet.—Micah. 5:2.

The noting of these little incidentals by which divine providence prepared for our Saviour's birth and for the sending forth of the Gospel message, are strengthening to the faith of the Lord's people. Realizing God's care in the past over even the little things, gives a foundation for confidence in his wisdom and provision for the features of his plan which are yet future—the fulfilment of all the exceeding great and precious promises which centered in him who was born in Bethlehem. And so also a realization of the divine providence in the larger affairs of the divine plan stimulates faith also in the Lord's providences as respects the personal and more private affairs of his people. Let us more and more realize that, as even the smallest incidents connected with the birth of our Saviour were ordered of the Lord, so also he is both able and willing to order all of the affairs of his spiritual children. Let us reason with the Apostle that, if God loved us while we were yet sinners, so as to make such careful provision for our redemption, much more now that we are no longer rebels, aliens, strangers, foreigners, but have become his sons, fellow-heirs with Christ and all the saints, we may have *confidence* in his love and in his providential care, that according to his promise all things shall work together for good to them that love him—to the called ones according to his purpose.—Rom. 5:8-10; 8:28.

The same decree that brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem brought many others of the numerous family of David, and as the inns or hotels of that time were comparatively limited in numbers and in capacity, it is not surprising that the inn proper was full of guests when Joseph and Mary arrived. Indeed, it was rather the custom for many travelers to carry with them their own lodging outfit, and to provide for their own conveniences in the courtyard connected with the inns. And hence the experiences of Joseph and Mary were by no means exceptional. When therefore the Babe Jesus was born, a manger became his most convenient cradle.

The city of Bethlehem still exists, and probably is not so dissimilar to what it was in that day, for in that land customs seem to have changed but little in centuries. A certain grotto is claimed to be the one which nineteen hundred years ago was the stable of the inn, and a certain stone manger is shown, which it is claimed, was the one in which the Babe Jesus was laid. Over this has been erected a Catholic church, and various ceremonies are continually performed in and about and connected with "the sacred manger." With such ceremonies we can feel little sympathy, believing them to be rather of the nature of idolatries. To us the center of interest is not the holy ground on which our Saviour trod, nor the holy manger in which he lay as a babe, nor his holy mother; yea, tho we reverence his flesh, and are deeply interested in all that pertains thereto, especially in all its experiences, from the time of its consecration to death, at baptism; nevertheless, our still greater interest is in our risen Lord, the new creature perfected, the spiritual One, far above manhood, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named—next to the Father, and exalted to his right hand of power. The Apostle voices this sentiment well, saying, "Tho we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more"—our knowledge of him as the risen and glorified Lord and Saviour thoroughly outshines all of our interest in his earthly life. (2 Cor. 5:16) And yet his earthly life is interesting and profitable to us, as we have seen and shall see.

Had the people assembled at Bethlehem realized who this was that had come to their city—that he was from the heavenly courts, that he was the Logos made flesh, that he had come to "save his people from their sins"—how gladly they would have welcomed him into the inn and have given to his use and comfort its choicest apartments! But they knew him not, and hence lost this great privilege of ministering to him. Similarly, in every city and town where the Lord's people are (his true saints), there are many who would make them welcome and give them the best at their disposal, did they but recognize them as the messengers of Jesus and of the Heavenly Father; but as the Apostle says, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (1 John 3:1) The disciple must not expect to be above his Lord, and hence, even when going upon missions of mercy and benevolence and as ambassadors for God, we should expect that the Lord's providence would furnish for us, not the most palatial conditions, but more probably very humble conditions. And when we find it thus we should rejoice that to some extent at least we have experiences which harmonize with those of our Lord. The Lord's people will obtain a blessing in proportion as they are prepared to receive all opportunities for God's service as divine favors and to appreciate them, no matter how humble the conditions, and it is noteworthy that neither Joseph, nor Mary, nor Jesus, nor the disciples, nor the Evangelist who recorded the incident, offers the slightest complaint or suggestion of dissatisfaction with the arrangement provided by divine providence. In proportion as they would have felt dissatisfied with the arrangements provided, in that proportion the divine plans would not have worked for their good.

The vicinity of Bethlehem is a pastoral country, and today is covered with flocks. It was the custom at that time for the shepherds to remain with their flocks by night as a guard against thieves as well as against wild beasts. It was in this vicinity that David (afterward king), when a shepherd-boy protecting his flocks, slew on one occasion a lion and at another time a bear. The shepherds as a class were not particularly well educated people as respects schools, and yet many of them were thoughtful and thus secured, in their leisure time while watching their flocks, by reflection and by conversation, considerable knowledge, so that they might be termed an intellectual and thinking class of people—their minds being turned more to reflection on large subjects than are the minds of some who are constantly immersed in trade and of mechanics. The shepherd whom God honored in making him king of his typical kingdom, was a great poet, and evidently much of his time while shepherding was given to the muse, and one of his most beautiful poems (Psalm 23) represents Jehovah himself as the Shepherd of his people,—his flock, for which he cares. It was to men of this thoughtful class, and no doubt men familiar with David's Psalms, and with the Messianic hopes therein set forth, that the Lord sent the first message respecting his Son made flesh.

The description of the appearance of an angel, and of the fear which the brightness of his countenance engendered, is both simple and natural. All mankind more or less feels instinctively a fear of the supernatural, a trepidation at the very thought of being in the presence of the holy angels. And this is proper as well as natural, for all realize their own imperfections through the fall, fearing more or less that the results to themselves would be unfavorable if divine justice were laid to the line and to the plummet in respect to their affairs. All seem instinctively to realize their need of mercy at the hands of him with whom we have to do. And so it was with these shepherds, they were affrighted as they beheld the heavenly visitor in their midst; but his message was not one of justice nor in any sense of condemnation, but of divine mercy. He soothed them with the words, "Be not afraid; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." Can we wonder that joy took the place of fear in their hearts as they heard the gracious words? Surely not. And so it is with all who from that day to the present time have heard this true Gospel message, not merely with the outward ears, but truly, with the ears of their understanding—comprehending it.

How false and how sad has been the understanding of this message by many of God's people as it has echoed to them down the ages! How few have heard it gladly, appreciatively! How remarkable that nearly all of the different churches and their thousands of ministers and hundreds of thousands of Sunday School teachers should unite in a *complete contradiction* of this message of the angels—a contradiction which not only wounds their own sentiments and grieves their own hearts, but which robs our dear Saviour's mission of nine-tenths of its majesty, and thoroughly dishonors and maligns the name of our gracious Heavenly Father by its misrepresentation of the salvation which he has provided in Christ Jesus.

Some perhaps may be surprised, and even shocked, at such an arraignment of the message which they and other well-meaning but blinded Christians are delivering in the name of the Gospel—for the word "Gospel" is derived from the words "good tidings." We are quite ready to believe that the vast majority of those who promulgate the *bad tidings* of eternal misery, as being the divine message and sentence to the vast majority of mankind, are wholly unaware of how seriously they misrepresent the divine character and government in the message which they carry to men;—they misstate the Gospel, not of intention, but of blindness, the very blindness mentioned by the Apostle as originating with the great adversary—the blindness by which he blinds the minds of the vast majority, to hinder them from realizing the glorious light of God's goodness revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.—2 Cor. 4:4.

Oh, if we could only get all true Christians to study this tenth verse of our lesson, and to see the depths of its significance, it would quickly revolutionize the teachings of Christendom! But as our Lord declared some of the deep things of the divine plan are hidden from many of the wise and prudent according to the course of this world, and are revealed only to the humble—the babes. Nevertheless, the testimony of God standeth sure, and all whose understandings have been opened and who have been enabled to comprehend some of the lengths and the breadths, and the heights and the depths of God's love, may rejoice that the ignorance of the world in general on this subject and the opposition of the great adversary who is blinding them, cannot continue forever, but must soon give place, when the Lord's due time shall come;—when he who died on Calvary for the world's redemption shall begin his glorious reign by binding that old serpent, the devil, Satan, that he should deceive the nations no more for the thousand years of the Millennial reign. Then all shall see out of obscurity; then all shall discern what at present is the privilege of only the favored few to see, respecting the divine character and plan—that the message of the angel was true, every word of it—that the grand results to flow from the birth of the Saviour in Bethlehem justified the message sent by the great Jehovah,—a good message of great joy which eventually shall be to all people—whose enlightenment and blessing shall have no hindrance, no restriction, and as a result all shall come to a knowledge of the truth and to an opportunity of availing themselves of the grace, mercy and peace provided for *all* in the great salvation secured by the ransom-sacrifice of our Lord Jesus.

The angel further explained his great Gospel message, showing its basis, and declaring that all the good things mentioned should come to pass because the Saviour, Messiah, had been born—the one so long looked for in Israel, the promised seed of Abraham in whom not only Israel should be blessed and exalted to honor, dignity and co-operation, but in whom also "all the families of the earth should be blessed." And let us here remark that the order of presentation used by the heavenly messenger, and evidently divinely ordered, is the proper presentation of this subject which should be adopted by all who seek to be used of the Lord as his ambassadors in the calling of the elect church. First, there is the grand pronouncement of divine favor and blessing, that it is a cause for joy, and that ultimately it shall extend to every creature; secondly, there is the specific explanation of how all this is to be accomplished—through a Saviour, a Deliverer, who, as stated in our Golden Text, in order to deliver his people from the wages of sin, death, into eternal life and blessing, must first of all save them *from* their sins. And we see from other Scriptures that this salvation *from* our sins signifies not only the payment on our behalf of the penalty for Adamic sin, but also, subsequently, man's instruction in righteousness and lifting out of sin; in which uplift each one is required to co-operate to the extent of his will and of his ability.

So all teaching of the grace that is to come to mankind should be coupled with the philosophy of the salvation—the Saviour made flesh and the flesh devoted or sacrificed for our sins, and the Saviour glorified, that in due time after the selection of his church he might, with her, according to the divine plan, establish his kingdom of righteousness for the uplifting of the world of mankind out of ignorance, superstition and general degradation into which the great adversary had gotten them through the fall and through his subsequent blinding and misleading. In this connection it is well to remember that our Lord's name, *Jesus*, signifies *Saviour*, and that all who would be of the elect Church must have the spirit of the Bridegroom (as well as by faith be covered with the garment of his imputed righteousness): and that his spirit is one of *opposition to sin to the extent of self-sacrifice.* We also are to "resist unto blood [death] *striving against sin.*"—Heb. 12:4.

Then the angel gave the shepherds an intimation of the humble conditions under which this great King of earth was born into the world—as a babe, wrapped in swaddling bands and lying in a manger. This was necessary, not only to their identification of Jesus, but necessary also to bring down their thoughts from the great and grand *results* to its humble *beginnings*, lest they should be misled in their expectations. And as it is with every part of the divine plan, so also it should be in respect to all of our proclamations of the same. We are not only to tell of the future glory and greatness and grandeur, but we are to tell also of the present humiliation—not only of our Saviour who humbled himself to take a low estate amongst men, and to die for our sins, but also to point out that the "elect" are called to walk in his footsteps, under similarly humiliating circumstances—to suffer with him, if they would reign with him; to die with him, if they would live with him. And thus also the prophets spoke not only of the glory that should follow, but also of the sufferings of Christ (head and body) which must precede the glory. (1 Pet. 1:11) The lesson to every one who has ears to hear it is, "No cross, no crown." Let us, then, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and rejoice in every step of the humiliation, that he may exalt us in due time to share the glories of his Son our Lord, and to share with him the grand work of blessing all the families of the earth.

It was a fitting climax that, after the one angel had told the surprised shepherds of the good tidings of great joy for all people and was ready to depart, he should be joined by our angelic host, singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This was but a reiteration of the Gospel message already delivered. It declared that the work which should be accomplished by the babe just born, should redound to the highest glory and honor of Jehovah God, his Father. It declared also that through this work to be accomplished by Jesus should come to earth divine good-will and consequently peace—and all that these would imply in the way of blessings of restitution and privilege of attaining everlasting life. But how much in conflict with all this are the erroneous theories which have gained credence in Christendom, which teach that, notwithstanding the ransom which our Lord Jesus gave, and notwithstanding the turning aside of the original sentence upon our race as the result of the propitiation for our sins accepted by the Father, the vast majority of the human family will nevertheless, to all eternity, be in rebellion against God, and in torture will continually blaspheme his name;—and that without ever having had a full, reasonable opportunity to know the Saviour or to accept his salvation. How strange that any should think that such a plan would be glory to God in the highest!

How strange that any should *refuse to see* the very plain statement of the Scripture that God has provided through Christ that every member of the human family shall have a full opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the truth, and then of relinquishing sin and of accepting new life of righteousness under the New Covenant—and that then whoever still refuses and will not submit himself to this righteous arrangement shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people—in the second death,—that none will be suffered to live in sin and opposition to God to blemish any part of God's dominions, but that all the incorrigible shall be as tho they had not been. In no other way can we possibly imagine that the time will ever come when there will be full peace among men. "There is no peace for the wicked, saith my God."

The only solution which God offers respecting the establishment of peace is in connection with the establishment of his kingdom, for which our dear Redeemer taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." That will mean peace in its fullest and most absolute sense. The Scriptural proposition does not include the violation of any man's will, but merely the offering through Christ of an opportunity for his everlasting blessing and peace, or his cutting off in the second death if he fails to appreciate the divine offer.

The shepherds having heard of God's grace manifested their interest by visiting and paying their homage to the Saviour: and so each one who has heard of the grace of God with an appreciative heart can do nothing less than *seek* the Lord and do him reverence and serve his cause by proclaiming the gracious message with which he has been favored. Let us each do so, and thus more and more increase in our hearts the joys of the Lord and our appreciation of his grand gospel.—Galatians 3:8, 16, 29.

Respecting the date of Jesus' birth, we hold that it was about Sept. 25th to Oct. 1st B. C. 1, and that the annunciation (Luke 1:28) was nine months earlier, namely Dec. 25th B. C. 2. The evidences *re* this position are given in detail in MILLENNIAL DAWWN, VOL. II., pages 54-62.

"JESUS INCREASED IN WISDOM AND STATURE"

JAN. 14.—LUKE 2:41-52.

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and Man."

Much peculiar speculation has been indulged in respecting the childhood, boyhood and young manhood of our Lord Jesus, with which we have no sympathy whatever. The Bible student should confine himself to the Bible record, and not give loose rein to imagination and speculation more likely to be untrue than correct. Had the Lord foreseen necessity for information respecting this period of our Saviour's career he undoubtedly would have provided for it in the inspired record. This does not imply that there was nothing noteworthy or commendable in our Lord's earlier life, but rather that by comparatively ignoring this the Lord would point us more particularly to the three and a half years of public ministry following his baptism, in Jordan, and by the holy Spirit. In a word, the Lord thus points out that it was not the *man* Jesus whose words and acts were valuable to us and lessons for our emulation, but the words and acts of *Christ* Jesus, the *Anointed* Jesus—Jesus after he had been anointed with the holy Spirit without measure. Nevertheless keeping strictly within the lines of the little that is written in the Scriptures we may draw some valuable and helpful lessons from the boyhood and young manhood of our Master.

Nothing is known respecting the first twelve years of our Lord's life, except that under divine direction his mother and foster-father took him down into Egypt, out of the reach of Herod, where they remained with him for a few months until after Herod's death, returning then to their home city, Nazareth in Galilee. It will be remembered that the occasion of the flight into Egypt was Herod's fear that a king should arise in the family of David, in harmony with the Jewish traditions, and that thus Herod's own family would be ousted from the kingly position. Herod was not of the family of David, nor a Jew at all—he was of the family of Esau, Jacob's brother. The story of the wise men coming from the East seeking a new-born king of the Jews will be remembered, and now Herod, learning of their mission, urged that when they had found the infant they sought they should inform him, Herod feigning that he also desired to do homage to the new king. But the wise men, under divine direction, ignored Herod's request. Subsequently, learning some of the particulars respecting the birth at Bethlehem, Herod caused the death of the male-children of that city of two years old and under—thus endeavoring to insure the death of the newborn king. It is not at all probable that the number of babes slaughtered under this decree was great; as the population of Bethlehem was small the number of male children of such an age would necessarily be few.

The Golden Text informs us that Jesus grew like any other boy—that his development was gradual, both as respects physical and intellectual stature. We are not, therefore, to think of Jesus in boyhood's days as a sage a teacher, a healer, etc., as we find him subsequent to his anointing with the holy Spirit. Nevertheless, we may properly suppose that the *perfect* boy would in many respects be keener and brighter than the average boy who inherits sundry imperfections from the fall.*

The testimony respecting Mary and Joseph leaves no doubt that they were pious people, and this is confirmed by the first verse of this lesson, which informs us that it was their custom to go every year to the Feast of the Passover: this requirement of the Law was observed by the most devout Jews only. It is as unnecessary as it is improper for us to go beyond the Scriptural declarations on this subject, and to assume, as some do, that Mary herself was miraculously conceived and born free from sin. Indeed, if we had no record testifying to Mary's piety the fact that she was honored by the Lord above all other women, in that she was chosen to be the mother of Jesus according to the flesh, would prove her nobility of character and purity of heart;—for it is not even supposable that the Lord would so specially honor, bless and use any other than a noble character. Whom the Lord uses we may safely esteem honorable.

Although the Jewish Law does not so stipulate, tradition informs us that it was the custom to consider every boy who had fulfilled his twelfth year as "a Son of the Law," and to a certain extent from that age amenable to the requirements of the Law: and the narrative of our lesson seems to confirm this tradition, telling us that when Jesus was twelve years of age (in his thirteenth year) he accompanied the family to the Passover Feast at Jerusalem. Is there not a lesson here for all godly parents, suggesting that the training of the infancy period should be of such a character as to prepare the child for the consideration of sober and religious matters at the very threshold of boyhood? We think there is. And we think it a serious mistake made by some well-intentioned parents when they conclude that their children of twelve years have sufficient mind to have grasped the elementary principles of a secular education and to be prepared for higher studies of a secular character, but unfit for higher religious studies. The children who are ready at that age for higher secular studies have already been carefully instructed along elementary lines; and if any are unprepared for higher studies in religious matters it is at least possible that their elementary religious training may have been neglected by their divinely appointed instructors—their parents. No Christian parent can avoid this his natural responsibility toward his children—in moral and religious training as well as in the secular and physical.

The Feast of the Passover continued seven days, but it was the custom for many of the pilgrims from distant parts to remain over only two days, until after the principal ceremonies. It is probable that Joseph and Mary, in company with their kinsfolk, started on the return journey on the third day of the feast. It was customary for the women of a caravan to move on ahead, the men coming after, and a boy of Jesus' age might be with either of the parents and not be missed until nightfall; and so it seems to have been in this case. As one day had been spent in the journey, so another day was spent returning, and a third day in searching throughout the city; finally they found Jesus in the Temple, sitting with the teachers of the Law, the "Doctors." This was not so unusual as might at first appear; for at that time information was gained less from books and more from oral teaching, and the Doctors of the Law were supposed to be ready to instruct all who desired information, especially during the holy Passover week. Many young men availed themselves of such opportunities, and the custom seems to have been for the Doctors to sit on a special semi-circle of seats, while before them were low benches for the older students: the younger boys sat on the ground, literally "at their feet." Thus Paul, as a youth, was a pupil to Gamaliel, or, as the record reads, "sat at the feet of Gamaliel," to learn of him. Gamaliel was one of the chief Doctors of the Law in his day.

We are not to understand that the boy Jesus was bold, and that he went before the learned men of his day to denounce them as ignorant and as incapable teachers, and to show himself off, as some precocious but ill-trained youth of today might attempt to do. On the contrary, we are to suppose the boy Jesus to have a well-balanced mind, which probably recognized the fact that he had lived but few years in the world and had comparatively small experience in life, and that he by no means knew all, but recognized many questions upon which he would like to have further information, and that he asked his questions honestly, with a desire and hope of obtaining satisfactory answers from the teachers who "sat in Moses' seat."

The nature of the questions is not stated, but the time and surroundings would seem to indicate that they were of a religious character, and that the mind of Jesus was already grappling with the great questions which properly belonged to him as a member of the Jewish race to which God had made certain great and precious promises as the Seed of Abraham;—promises of divine blessing under Messiah, of exaltation to be the chief nation of the world, and of the subsequent privilege of blessing all nations and of being the mediaries through whom all mankind might be brought to the knowledge of God and to his service. From what we know of the operations of our own minds at the age mentioned, we may presume that Jesus was brimful of questions respecting the hopes of Israel, and no doubt from his mother he had received some intimation at least that divine providence had indicated that he himself was to bear some important part in connection with the fulfilment of the Scriptures; and he was seeking to know the part marked out for him by the Heavenly Father in the testimony of the Law and the Prophets.

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* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V, Chap. 4.

Although he did not have a Bible in his home, that he could consult respecting the divine testimony, he did have the common privilege of the youth of his day of attending meetings in the one little synagogue of Nazareth, which was but a small country town. There, from Sabbath to Sabbath, he heard the law read and to some extent commented upon, sometimes also the psalms and prophecies. With these sources of information the eager mind of the boy had grappled, and now, on the occasion of his first visit to the great city of Jerusalem, nothing attracted him so much as the Temple and its symbolical services, and happening upon a court or chamber in which the great questions of the Law and the Prophets were being discussed by the ablest teachers of the time, Jesus became so deeply interested and enthused in the Bible study that seemingly he forgot all earthly things, so intent was he in studying about the Heavenly Father's business—the plan of God, in which he himself was to be so principal an actor.

Naturally his questions would be deeper and more logical than those of other boys of his age, and naturally the Doctors of the Law would be deeply interested in him because of this in conjunction with the modesty which we may be sure accompanied it. And as during these feasts great hospitality was exercised, especially toward strangers from a distance, Jesus was probably entertained by one and another of these newfound friends.

The narrative records that, when found by Joseph and Mary, Jesus was both *hearing* the Doctors and *asking* them questions. There is a valuable lesson here for all young persons respecting their conduct toward their elders and instructors. How different the thought we get from this statement than we would have gotten had it read that they found Jesus *instructing* the Doctors, or attempting to teach them. We do not doubt for a moment that the Doctors were as much instructed by Jesus as he was by them, possibly more so on some points at least; nor do we doubt that if they were truly great men they would be humble-minded enough to receive instructions from any one—even from a child; and it is even intimated in the context that they asked Jesus certain questions, "and were astonished at his understanding and his *answers*." In both cases the proceeding was that of deference to the other, as implied in the asking of the questions: Jesus having deferred to the Doctors and asked them questions which manifested his depth of mind and clearness of understanding and logical reasoning, led them in turn to ask questions of him.

This question plan we commend to all of the dear friends of the truth as a wise and proper one, no less to us of today than to the boy Jesus and to the Doctors of the Law. We have seen instances in which some of the Lord's dear people have greatly injured their influence in the truth by display of too large a degree of self-confidence, *self-assurance*, in speaking of the divine plan to others—especially to the learned. Meekness is a jewel wherever found, and is especially desirable as an adjunct and sling for the truth. Let the truth be shot forth with all the force *it* can carry, but always with meekness and humility; and the question form of suggesting truth will often be found the most forceful.

Naturally Joseph and Mary were astonished to find their little son in the company of and receiving consideration from the greatest teachers of their day, and probably nothing was said to Jesus publicly respecting their disappointment and their subsequent search for him: probably when alone Mary upbraided him for his neglect to be with the caravan: yet she did this in a very kind and moderate manner, which seemed to indicate that it was a very unusual occurrence, which in turn speaks to us of parental obedience on the part of Jesus.

Mary's expression, "Behold, *thy father* and I have sought thee sorrowing," has been questioned by some as being a confession that Joseph was the *father* of Jesus, but we answer, Not so; it would be unreasonable to suppose (1) that Luke would particularly trace the genealogy of Jesus through Mary, and ignore Joseph, and subsequently imply that Joseph was the father of Jesus; (2) Joseph having accepted Mary, accepted also her son, Jesus, and became his foster-father, and under just such circumstances today the child would be taught to consider such an one a parent, and to call him "father." (3) It is not at all probable that the story of the immaculate conception of Jesus was ever made known to any but the closest members of the family, and it is highly improbable that the subject had ever been discussed with the boy Jesus, only twelve years of age,—nor would it have been proper to do so. Mary's language, therefore, is entirely consistent with all the facts set forth in the Gospel narrative.

Quite possibly the mind of the boy Jesus, while investigating the subject of his own responsibilities toward the Heavenly Father and his plan, had wondered whether or not his mission might not in some degree begin with his thirteenth year, since at that time he was recognized as a "son of the law." Quite possibly some of his questions before the Doctors of the Law were along this line, and quite probably he had finally about reached the conclusion that the types of the priestly office indicated clearly that his mission would not begin until he was thirty years of age. His reply to Mary's chiding was along this line: Did you not expect me to be about my Father's business? Did you not know that I had reached the age when I am a "son of the Law," and that therefore certain responsibilities have come upon me in respect to the Heavenly Father and his Word and his plan? And then, as though remembering the conclusion that he had just reached in discussing the subject with the Doctors, he broke off the conversation, yielded himself to their wishes, and accompanied them to Nazareth, making (so far as recorded) no further suggestion of any other than the ordinary course of life until he had attained the age of thirty years. This is expressed in the words, "And he was *subject* unto them." Joseph and Mary realized clearly that the boy was more than ordinary, very extraordinary indeed, yet they did not fully comprehend the situation nor fully grasp the import of his words. Nevertheless, Mary treasured this, with the other peculiar testimonies respecting him in her heart, and doubtless it was from her lips that Luke received the information contained in our lesson.

Tradition declares that Joseph died while Jesus was yet young, and that the latter took up the carpenter's trade and became the support of the family. This finds some support in the Scriptural testimony where Jesus himself is called a carpenter, and his mother and brethren are mentioned, but Joseph is ignored. (Mark 6:3) Furthermore, no reference is made to Joseph in connection with our Lord's ministry, though his mother and his brethren are several times mentioned. It is quite probable, then, that the long period of eighteen years of our Lord's life, from the time of the incident of this lesson to the time of his baptism, was spent in the performance of the ordinary duties of life. What a thought this gives us with respect to our Lord's development of *patience*—patiently waiting until the Father's time should come and he should begin his ministry; patiently studying meantime, as best he could, to know more and more of the Father's will and plan; patiently waiting for the baptism of the holy spirit, which would enable him to fully comprehend the situation and his own personal relationship to it. What a lesson there is here for all his followers, and everyone of us may well realize the truth of the words, "Ye have need of patience," and again, "Let patience have her perfect work." What a lesson there is for us also in the thought that we are not to attempt to hasten the divine plan, but to wait patiently for its unfolding—not to attempt to begin any work for the Lord unless we are sure that his time has come, and that he has called us to do it; then, like our Lord, to be instant in season and out of season, when convenient and when inconvenient, under favorable and unfavorable conditions; to do with our might what our hand has found to do. And we gather the further thought that the most humble forms of labor are honorable when they are ours in harmony with God's providence.

Happily for us, we are not born under the Law nor under the limitations which hinder us from receiving the call and responding to it before thirty years of age. On the contrary, under the *New Covenant of *grace* it is our privilege to present our bodies living sacrifices to the Lord's service at as early an age as our knowledge of divine things and our enlightened judgments will permit. We, instead of waiting to grow to the fulness of stature mental and physical, are permitted to begin at once, as members of the Royal Priesthood, and to be growing at the same time we are serving. But let us not forget the necessity for growth,—adding to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness love.—See 2 Peter 1:5-8.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

"In malice be ye *children*, but in understanding be ye *men*."—1 Cor. 14:20.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother Russell:—In regard to the work here in Boston the report is good. The Volunteer work is blessing all who engage in it and goes on grandly. Scarcely a Sunday but that we distribute the tracts at some church where the preacher's theme is Evolution. Two Sundays ago the Pastor of Tremont Temple preached a sermon advocating the doctrine of Evolution. This is the largest Protestant church in New England (congregation of 3000 and over), and the Pastor is the gentleman who notified police headquarters last June to have a stop put to further distribution of our tract. But he did not succeed. We are finding more work than was at first anticipated and are giving more books. Our report for month of November is as follows:—Nov. 5th in Dorchester 11 churches, 1024 booklets; Nov. 12th in W. Roxbury and Jamaica Plain 14 churches, 986 booklets; Nov. 19th in Dorchester and Roslindale 18 churches, 1269 booklets; Nov. 26th in Newton 13 churches, 1444 booklets; also in Brookline during month 4 churches, 154 booklets; total of 60 churches, 4877 booklets; average 81.2. We find churches larger than we anticipated. Quite a number with congregations of from 300 to 600 which accounts for our using more booklets than expected as well as the larger average. We still have 25 to 30 (brethren and sisters) engaged in work, and though we have accomplished a good work, the end is not yet. We are anxious to do all the important towns accessible by electric cars, provided you can keep us supplied. We leave that part for you to decide. Unquestionably all who work are receiving blessings, and are being built up in zeal and love in the Lord's service.

Sr. G. desires to be remembered. Your brother, in love and service of our Redeemer,

Alexander M. Graham,—*Massachusetts.*

[We are filling orders right along. Let the good work proceed. God bless the "Volunteers." Editor.]

Dear Brother Russell:—I am glad that at last I have concentrated my mind enough to write to you. Not till Mrs. Boehmer was here did I read and study anything in the truth so much as to do me any good, but while she was here my whole attention was turned. She gave me Vol. I. of M. Dawn but at first I could not read it without a great deal of will power. I read it only to show her I used the gift—it seemed so uninteresting. But at last it grew more interesting and I devoted most all of my time to reading it and I gave up almost all of my play especially with everybody but my brother and sister. (Do you consider this wrong on my part?) And I went to all the Dawn Circles and meetings here while she was with us, and mamma said the holy Spirit was upon me.

When Sister Boehmer left us all of my holy interests seemed to die out of me. I could read nothing Scriptural so that I could remember it or act upon it in my daily course of life. I think the reason why God let it happen so was because I got to thinking I was far ahead in the race and looked boastfully down on my neighbors. (Don't you think so, too?) But I went to meeting every Sunday and learned O, so much good! from Brother Wright and I think he is the best leader that could be chosen—that is, a human leader. But I could remember nothing through the week.

Now here is another case: A large "tough" is always trying to catch us for no reason at all but he claims for an excuse that we throw stones at him, but we did not. I wrote to Bro. Boehmer about it and he said I should avoid him as best I could, and in doing this I am obliged to run sometimes or get hit. Now do you consider this right or wrong? Twice we stopped and asked him what he wanted but he only hit us.

When Bro. Boehmer was here he said it would do me good to enter a gymnasium which I did the 1st of Nov. It is in a Congregational Church: I am also entitled to a privilege of boys' club and six lectures. Do you think I will fall into wrong there?

Here is $1 which will at least be enough to make one Watch Tower which will help some one along just like the Tower of Nov. 1 issue helped me along; especially the articles about Nehemiah which induced me to write. So many things fit my case exactly,—like where it says while we are in the truth we will be assailed the most, and when we get drowsy and lazy about studying the truth we will not be assailed. This is exactly right because it went so with me and I shall be happy in the hardest of earthly troubles. Your remark that each should build the walls near his home, has opened my eyes enough to see that I was in the wrong, because I do better in school and away from home than I do at home. Now I will try to do the best I can at home but will not lose my good part away from home.

I felt like opening my whole heart to you, and I have done it with the best intentions. I hope that your answer to this letter will come soon and bring tidings that will do me good.

Yours sincerely, Hugo Kuehn,—*Ohio.*

[Reply:—I am always deeply interested in the young who give their hearts to the Lord. My Christian life began at about the same age as your own (13), and I know how great a blessing it is to become a soldier of the cross at an early age. At no time do we more need divine wisdom and grace than in boyhood and entering manhood, and how comforting it is to all such to be able to realize that having committed their all to the Lord he is caring for them, guiding and shaping their affairs in the course which will be most to their advantage as respects the present and the eternal life.

In re the rude youth disposed to attack you with stones: My advice would be that you go to play in another quarter, and that generously you consider that the man may be just as much unbalanced in mind or as soured in disposition as some who in the language of Scripture. "Shoot out arrows, even bitter words, at the righteous." (Psa. 64:3) On the whole I believe that those who throw literal stones are much less dangerous than some who are outwardly more decorous who have the "poison of asps under their lips" (Rom. 3:13), and who backbite, speak evil of and slander others—even the Lord's "brethren." Let us thank God that the time is coming when there will no longer be in the world any except those who have the "spirit of a sound mind"—the disposition of the Lord.—2 Tim. 1:7.

Respecting your attendance at a gymnasium, and the hearing of lectures: It would seem to me that no evil need result from merely availing yourself of these privileges, and should advise that you do so, unless there would be something in the way of a bondage connected with this—some obligations—and quite likely there are none that would be objectionable in such a club. With much Christian love, Your brother and servant in the Lord, The Editor.]

Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society.

Dear Brethren:—The Volunteer distribution of the booklets, *The Bible versus the Evolution Theory*, has been completed in the District of Columbia, after a campaign lasting seven months. Fourteen Volunteers—brothers and sisters—visited 154 churches and distributed 10,934 booklets, besides other tracts. The congregations in the various churches varied all the way from 400 down, the average attendance being 71.

This work was taken up in accordance with the offer made in Tower of April 15th, '99, it being our desire in this manner to show our love and appreciation of the Lord and his truth—by engaging in a work which might result in the blessing of his true "brethren." The work has progressed with perfect harmony of hearts, hands and a willingness to serve in any channel, however humble, and has most evidently been under divine direction, for we have had many indications of providential guidance in selection of churches to be worked, etc.

We have been greatly blessed in this work which has given us many opportunities for letting our light shine for the Master,—upon some occasions the brethren being invited within the church building to explain the object of the visit and something of God's plan as testified to in the literature distributed. We were well received on the whole, notwithstanding some cases of opposition. We are thankful to God for these great privileges of serving his truth, and also to Brother Russell and the Tract Society as instruments in his hands. We are still "Volunteers," and ready to carry the good warfare into the adjacent towns with the booklets still on hand.

With love to all who are similarly engaged in the Volunteer work. Your fellow "Soldiers,"

The Church at Washington, D. C.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

CHURCHES AS SOCIAL CLUBS

Rev. John Watson, widely known in "orthodox" circles (as "Ian Maclaren," his literary *nom de plume*), wrote for publication recently, that in his judgment the churches of various denominations are rapidly becoming social clubs—ceasing to appreciate or use the place hitherto considered the true position of the church. The text for his criticism was found on a printed postal card sent out by an American Y. M. C. A., which read word for word as follows:

"DO NOT FORGET

"The next Social.
"The next Candy-pull.
"The next Entertainment.
"The next Song Service.
"The next Gospel Meeting.
"The next meeting of the Debating Club.
"The next Chicken-pie Dinner.
"The next date when you ought to make the secretary happy with your cash."

Commenting upon this card, he says:—

"This remarkable list of operations, combining evangelistic zeal, creature comforts, and business shrewdness, requires no commentary; the items give us a convincing illustration of an up-to-date religious institution—a veritable hustler of a Y. M. C. A.

"The Christian church and a Y. M. C. A. are of course very different institutions, and the latter is free from any traditions of austere dignity, but one is not surprised to find that the church has also been touched with the social spirit and is also doing her best to make religion entertaining. One enters what is called a place of worship and imagines that he is in a drawing-room. The floor has a thick carpet, there are rows of theater-chairs, a huge organ fills the eye, a large bouquet of flowers marks the minister's place; people come in with a jaunty air and salute one another cheerily; hardly one bends his head in prayer; there is a hum of gossip through the building.

"A man disentangles himself from a conversation and bustles up to the platform without clerical garb of any kind, as likely as not in layman's dress. A quartet advances, and, facing the audience, sings an anthem to the congregation, which does not rise, and later they sing another anthem, also to the congregation. There is one prayer, and one reading from Holy Scripture, and a sermon which is brief and bright. Among other intimations the minister urges attendance at the oyster supper, when, as is mentioned in a paper in the pews, there will be oysters and meat—turkey, I think—and ice-cream. This meal is to be served in the 'church parlor.'

"No sooner has the benediction been pronounced, which has some original feature introduced, than the congregation hurries to the door, but although no one can explain how it is managed, the minister is already there shaking hands, introducing people, 'getting off good things,' and generally making things 'hum.' One person congratulates him on his 'talk'—new name for a sermon—and another says it was 'fine.'

"Efforts have been made in England also to make church life really popular, and, in one town known to the writer, with some success of its own kind. One church secured a new set of communion plates by the popular device of a dance; various congregations gave private theatricals, and in one case had stage property of their own. Bible classes celebrated the conclusions of their sessions by a supper; on Good Friday there were excursions into the country accompanied by a military band, and a considerable portion of the congregational income was derived from social treats of various kinds. This particular town is only an illustration of the genial spirit spreading throughout the church in England. One minister uses a magic lantern to give force to his sermon; another has added a tavern to his church equipment; a third takes up the latest murder or scandal; a fourth has a service of song; a fifth depends on a gypsy or an ex-pugilist.

"If this goes on, the church will soon embrace a theater and other attractions which will draw young people, and prevent old people from wearying in the worship of God.

[Contrasting these modern and irreverent and unscriptural methods with those of the past, Dr. Watson continues:—]

"Perhaps it may be the perversity of human nature which is apt to cavil at new things and hanker after the good old times—which were not always good, by any means—but one is not much enamoured with the new departure, nor at all convinced that what may be called for brief the 'candy-pull' system is any improvement on the past. After a slight experience of smart preachers, and church parlors, and ice-cream suppers, and picnics, one remembers with new respect and keen appreciation the minister of former days, with his seemly dress, his dignified manner, his sense of responsibility, who came from the secret place of divine fellowship, and spoke as one carrying the message of the Eternal. He may not have been so fussy in the aisles as his successor, nor so clever at games, nor able to make so fetching a speech on 'Love, Courtship, and Marriage.'

"There are no doubt many points in which the congregation of the present has advanced on the congregation of the past, but it has not been all gain, for the chief note in the worship of the former generation was *reverence*—people met in the presence of the Eternal, before whom every man is less than nothing. And the chief note of their children, who meet to listen to a choir and a clever platform speaker, is *self-complacency.*" —*The Ladies' Home Journal.*

* * * *

We have frequently pointed out these same tendencies, but we are glad to be able to quote the words of another—of one who stands so high in Churchianity. But Dr. Watson will ere long find that he must not criticize "Babylon;" and that if he persists he will lose caste with the lords thereof. So conservative a journal as *The Advance* has already intimated that "Candy-pulls" and other *modern methods* of making Christianity attractive must not be interfered with by "old fogies."

And so say we! Let the innovations proceed—they are essential to the very existence of "Babylon." And besides, the sooner the social Churchianity clubs act out their real sentiments all along the line, the better it will be for *true* Christianity, whose separation from Churchianity is now due to be accomplished in this harvest time—"wheat" from "tares." The more it becomes apparent that, with the vast majority, religion is merely "a form of godliness," the more will those who have the power of it as well realize the width of the gulf which really separates the two classes in divine estimation. The louder grow the revelry and irreverence and the scoffing at God's Word by "higher critics" and the boasts of Evolution, the louder in the ears of the Lord's true saints will sound the Master's command: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen! Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. 18:2, 4.

* * * *

The Editor of the Washington City *Times* gives his opinion of some of the methods of Churchianity, thus:—

"A sensational Brooklyn preacher lately discoursed on subjects like these: 'Would Christ Belong to a Labor Union?' 'Would Christ Go to a Brooklyn Theater?' and so on. It is rather difficult to conceive the moral status of people who actually approve of sermons of this sort. Undoubtedly a large part of the audiences which they attract come from mere curiosity, as they might come to any other sort of show; and they might as well be at the theater for all the good that it is likely to do them. One of the most deplorable features of modern American life is the tendency toward sensationalism in the pulpit. It is bad from every point of view. It excites emotions which are in no way religious, and are all the worse for passing under that name. It is in execrable taste, it misleads people to a sort of contempt for religion, and it makes the churches which indulge in it odious.

"It has grown out of another bad feature of our modern life—the plutocratic ideal. Any sensible person may easily understand that when the attraction of a church for its members depends on this sort of thing, and on the ability of the people of the church to dress well and pay for a handsome building and a showy choir, there is no more real religion in the whole business than there is in a circus. . . .

"It would be much more to the point for the sensational preacher above quoted to ask himself, in private, whether his church is the kind which Christ would be likely to approve, or if it is full of money-changers and the sellers of doves.

"It is time that sensible and thoughtful religious people in this country understood what a church is really intended to be. It should not be a bad imitation of fashionable society, with all the meannesses, caste distinctions, pettiness, and jealousy of that society, veneered over with a coating of formal religion. . . ."

CHRISTIANITY IN JAPAN

Not long since Japan was considered the brightest example of progress in Christian missions, and with good reason. Everything coming from Europe or the United States was looked upon with favor—the Christian religion included. In a few years the number of converts to various shades of nominal "Christianity" ran up to 40,578 in 1878. However, a great change has occurred there: and within the past two years the total converts claimed by all the sects is only 403.

The beginning of this change of sentiment seems to have dated from the time that the different denominations began more or less to *compete.* It would seem that at first denominational and creed differences were considerably hidden from the Japanese, and they seem to have embraced Christianity in something of its simplicity of spirit if not of doctrine. However, when they began to send some of their young men to American and English colleges, the fact of the great varieties of contradictory doctrines, all claiming to represent Christ's teachings, became known, and was naturally followed by denominational reapings, chiefly, we believe, Presbyterian.

The Japanese are a *practical* people, and concluded that, if Christians of the West were so confused and divided respecting the teachings of the Bible, the Japanese could properly exercise their own judgments on the subjects also. In doing so they are rapidly tending toward agnosticism, doubt, uncertainty, unbelief, just as thinking people everywhere are doing, except as they get the truth and with it the spirit of a sound mind. How we would like to put into the hands of these Japanese and all truth-seekers the light of present truth showing forth the divine plan of the ages. We are on the lookout for the Lord to bring forward to the light some earnest, fully consecrated Japanese capable of presenting the plan by translating DAWN, VOL. I., presenting it to his Christian countrymen. We thought we had found the one two years ago, but it proved otherwise;—Christianity was unpopular, but the truth much more so—too unpopular for him.

Rev. Dr. Christlieb, for years the representative of the "Evangelical Protestant Mission Society" of Germany, discussed the set-back in Japan in a volume just published, entitled, "The Tendencies of Japanese Civilization and Christianity," in which he explains:—

"The opposition now generally entertained by the Japanese against the Christian church is due to the changed attitude which they have in recent years developed in so marked a degree to all influences from abroad—a conservative reaction of a pronounced type. This return to nativism is largely due to the easy success in the war with the Chinese. This reaction from the former enthusiasm for innovation has assumed a particularly determined character. The Japanese have reached the conclusion that they had been too hasty in discarding the old in favor of the new, and this spirit has found its way even into the Christian elements of Japan, which aspired to the establishment of a church independent of the churches in countries that had been Christian for centuries. Although the Japanese have known Christianity only for thirty years and there is scarcely a single adult native who has been a Christian since his childhood, yet they began to regard themselves more capable to develop a Christian culture and life than those who brought them the new faith.

"These ideas and ambitions are largely due to the fact that attempts were made to build up a Christianity wholly divorced from the national character of the people. The reaction is, to a certain extent, the result also of the radical anti-Japanese type of life that representatives of Western Christianity aimed to develop, completely ignoring the many excellent traits that make up the national character of the people.

"Still another element that has entered into this reaction is the fact that the Japanese, who is naturally not too deep intellectually and who is but half civilized, has been made acquainted with Western agnosticism and atheism as found in the writings of Schopenhauer and Herbert Spencer. Through these a certain dangerous contempt for the supernatural has been developed, especially among the younger generation. All these factors and others have united to produce the modern opposition to Christianity in the Japanese empire."

PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER

JAN. 21.—LUKE 3:1-17.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

Doubtless many commentors on this lesson will claim that John the Baptizer's ministry began with the year A. D. 26, and by positiveness of assertion seek to make up for their lack of evidence on this subject. Let all therefore bear in mind that such a dating of John's ministry will be purely arbitrary, to make it conform to the erroneous view which prevails among scholars in respect to the date of our Lord's birth. It should not be forgotten, however, that, although it is well established from the Scriptures that our Lord was six months younger than his second-cousin, John, there is no other Scriptural date which so closely and definitely connects the history of our Lord and of John the Baptizer with general history, as does the statement of this very lesson, that John began his ministry (when he was thirty years of age) in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar. Those who claim that Jesus began his ministry A. D. 27, instead of A. D. 29, claim that John's ministry began in A. D. 26; and in order to make this fit with the statement of the first verse of this lesson, they are obliged to count the reign of Tiberius Cæsar two years before its admitted date. For a particular discussion of this subject, however, we must refer our readers to MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., p. 54.

Of John it is written that he was filled with the holy Spirit from his birth. But we must not misunderstand this to mean that he was begotten of the holy Spirit, in the sense that Christians are begotten of it, for he lived before the time of spirit-begetting—in the Jewish age, not in the Gospel or Christian age. Thus our Lord said of him that, although there had not arisen a greater Prophet than John, nevertheless, the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he—the least one in the house of sons is on a higher plane than the greatest one in the house of servants. (Matt. 11:11; Heb. 3:5, 6) The Apostle again explains that "the holy Spirit was *not yet given,* because Jesus was not yet glorified."—John 7:39.

In harmony with this we must understand that John was filled with the holy Spirit, holy power or influence from God from his birth, after the same manner that the other prophets throughout the Jewish age had been under that holy spirit. The expression would lead us to understand that, although John was not born immaculate, as was Jesus, he nevertheless was well born, under holy influences, which tended to develop in him natural characteristics suitable to the mission he was intended of God to fulfil. This does not involve the thought of divine interference with the free will of the individual, for Paul tells us that he also was chosen of God from his birth to be a special servant to do a special work. (Gal. 1:15) Nevertheless, the Lord did not interfere with his exercising his own free will, even permitting him to go so far into blind error as to become the persecutor of the church. And even when the Lord rebuked him in the way to Damascus, that was not an interference with his *will* or nature, but merely a removal of his blindness, his ignorance, permitting his true will to come into exercise. And so no doubt others of the Lord's people from time to time have been from earliest childhood special subjects of divine Providence which has guided and shaped their experiences without interfering with their wills, so as to make of them *special instruments* for the accomplishment of divine purposes.

Of John's life from infancy to manhood we know nothing except the bare record, "The child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the desert until the day of his showing unto Israel" (Luke 1:80)—not in the sandy deserts, but more properly in the wilds, the uncultivated regions, perhaps in the "hill country," where his parents resided at the time of his birth. Possibly a part of the Lord's providence in respect to John's training for his work consisted in the ordering of the affairs of his parents, so that possibly they were forced by circumstances to reside in such a wilderness-home, where they would have comparatively little intercourse with others, and where John, probably as a forester, would have the experiences which the Lord saw would best fit him for the work intended. All Christians should learn to trust to the Heavenly Father's guidance, remembering his special promise, which is applicable to each one who is in Christ, *viz.,* that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God," and remembering this they should be content with the lot which Providence seems to mark out for them—not indolent, but content, when they have done all that their hands find to do,—not restless, peevish, dissatisfied, complainers against God and his providence. "Trust in the Lord and do good." It may be that the Lord is fitting and preparing us individually for some special service, and that the permitted experiences alone will prepare us for that service. Indeed, we know from the Word that God designs his "elect" for joint-heirship with our dear Redeemer in the glorious Millennial kingdom; and we can well realize that because of our imperfection we need much moulding and fashioning, chiseling and polishing to make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." We are to remember also that we are incompetent to judge of our own imperfections, and hence incompetent to judge of the experiences which would be most helpful to us. It is difficult for us sometimes even to see ourselves as others see us; much more difficult, undoubtedly, it would be to see ourselves from the divine standpoint. Here faith in God comes to the front—"This is the victory which overcometh the world, even your faith."

The time of John's "showing" or presentation to Israel was undoubtedly the time when he reached the legally required thirty years of age; and then it was that the word of the Lord came unto him, causing him to begin his mission. We are not to think of this expression as having to John the same signification as it has to us who are of this Gospel age. The word of God came to John as a prophet, for our Lord declared,—"There hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist." The Lord made clear to John that the time had come for the beginning of his ministry, not merely by an impression or surmise, but with positiveness, as in the case of all the prophets. In harmony with his commission he went to the thickly settled regions in the vicinity of the River Jordan, preaching repentance—that the people should reform—and baptizing in the Jordan those who professed a reformation. For this reason John sought the pools or deep places of the river;—for instance, he went to Enon, near to Salem, "because there was much water there"—a pool sufficiently deep for the purposes of immersion.

We are not to fall into the too common error of supposing from the record that John preached to the people that *repentance and baptism* would work for them *a remission of their sins.* To so interpret these words would put them in direct conflict with the entire testimony of the Scriptures, which is to the effect that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. The usual representation of this subject is therefore clearly in error. To the contrary, we are to understand this verse to mean that John preached a baptism signifying repentance *unto*, or *preparation for*, a remission of sins. The time had not yet come for the blotting out of the sins, and John neither had nor could have obtained authority to declare sins remitted because of repentance and baptism. Had it been possible for him to have made such a proclamation, truthfully, it would have proven that there was no necessity for the coming of our Lord Jesus to *give himself a ransom* for Israel and for all the families of the earth. If repentance and immersion in water would bring the forgiveness of sins, the "Saviour and a great one" whom God had promised to Israel for so long would have been wholly unnecessary. But when we view John's work and preaching as merely a preliminary one, to make ready a repentant people, desiring to have their sins forgiven, desiring full at-one-ment with God, and expecting a Saviour to accomplish all this,—then all is harmony.

And this thought, that the remission of sins was a work future from John's day, a work to be accomplished by Christ, is fully borne out by the succeeding context, a quotation from Isaiah the Prophet, which has not even yet been fulfilled, but includes the entire work of the Millennial age. That age will be one for *remission of sins* and *blotting out of sins*, and the full reconciliation of so many as will accept God's grace in Christ under the New Covenant. (Compare Acts 3:19-21) In that time, under those favorable conditions, and not before, will the statement be fulfilled, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God."

We are to bear in mind that John's work as a messenger was exclusively to Israel, and had nothing whatever to do with any of the Gentiles. To Israel he acted as the Elijah or Forerunner of *Messiah in the flesh*, seeking to induce that nation, in *its* "harvest" time, to accept the formal offer of God's kingdom by accepting Jesus as the King. But John's mission was not successful to his nation, and profited only a few of the people; those few who believed John's testimony, and received it into good and honest and repentant hearts, were prepared to *receive* Jesus and to appreciate and *receive* the remission of sins offered by God through him. The remainder of that nation, rejecting John's teaching, and being in an unrepentant condition of heart, were not properly exercised, were not ready for Jesus, and did not appreciate the offer of remission of sins through his blood as a consequence, and as a nation were rejected of God and wholly overthrown.

While John thus acted as the Elijah in introducing Jesus in the flesh to fleshly Israel, and gathered out a certain class who were ready to receive Jesus, and who were blessed by him, so we see that in God's plan there is a greater antitype of Elijah than was John, as there is a greater Christ than was our Lord Jesus. The greater Christ is the spiritual one, "The Lord from heaven"—"Now the Lord is that Spirit." And this glorified spirit Lord is the Head of "the church which is his body," and this body of many members will, in "the first resurrection," be made like him and to share his glory, and with him and under him constitute the *great Messiah*, who shall take unto himself his great power and reign, establishing God's kingdom amongst men, and causing his will to be done "on earth as it is done in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) The coming into power of this great Christ, the spiritual Christ (head and body) constitutes the second advent to mankind—"the manifestation of the sons of God" for the deliverance of the groaning creation. (Rom. 8:17-19) Thus the second advent of Christ the Head (with the church his body) will be seen to be on a very much higher plane than was the first advent of our Lord in the flesh, although the first advent was all-important in that without it and its sacrifice for sins there could have been no second advent of Jesus, the Head, in the glory of kingdom power, and there could have been no glorified members of his body to be associated with him.

After thus noting the relationship of the two events, it is proper for us to note also that as the blessings of the first advent were offered to nominal fleshly Israel so the presentation of the blessings of the second advent will be to nominal Spiritual Israel ("Christendom"), and as a Forerunner or herald was appropriately sent to fleshly Israel, to prepare them for the first advent, likewise it would be appropriate that a proportionately greater Forerunner should precede the second advent, and seek to make ready therefor all nominal Spiritual Israelites. As we have already shown,* this greater Elijah, who heralds the spiritual Christ, is composed of many members; Jesus in the flesh was himself the Head of this Elijah class, and all of his true followers, who will be, when glorified with him, members of the glorious Christ, will have previously been in their earthly lives members with him of the Elijah class, whose mission it is to show forth the principles of righteousness and true holiness, and to exhort both by word and conduct all men to repentance and to preparation for the second advent—the glorious appearing, the setting up of the Messianic kingdom, the actual blotting out of sins, the straightening of every crooked way, the leveling up of deep crevices of character, the leveling down of the hills of pride to the proper level of humility; and in every sense of the word *seeking to prepare all flesh* to see the salvation of God.

Nevertheless, we are to remember that the Scriptures distinctly indicate that the testimony of this greater Elijah will be equally unsuccessful with that of the lesser antitype of Elijah, John the Baptizer. The church in the flesh has not succeeded in making straight the paths of the Lord for a triumphal entry to his kingdom upon the earth. A few have heard, but the message has utterly failed as respects the vast majority, even those who profess respect for and to be waiting for the kingdom. Nevertheless, all God's good purposes will be ultimately accomplished, though necessarily introduced by troubles, calamities, distress upon "Christendom," in the end of this age or "harvest" time, similar to those troubles which came upon fleshly Israelites who were unready for the Saviour, and "knew not the time of their visitation," at his first advent. All this unreadiness, however, shall not hinder the work of the Messiah. As at his first advent he gathered all Israelites indeed to the new dispensation, so now he will gather his elect "little flock" to himself; his kingdom will be established; it shall rule over all; it will accomplish the straightening of every crooked path; it will level up the path of righteousness and holiness, and make of it "a highway" freed from stumbling blocks of error and from Satan's deception. (Isa. 35:8, 9) All mankind then brought to a knowledge of the *truth* will have the privilege of progressing through the times of restitution up this grand highway of obedience to the grand perfection lost for himself and his race by father Adam's transgression, but redeemed for Adam and his race by the precious blood of Christ. All flesh indeed shall see the salvation of our God, and so many as will may share therein, for this is the blessing which God has provided for all the families of the earth, through the true spiritual Seed of Abraham —Christ and his elect church.—Gal. 3:16, 29.

It would seem that John's ministry at first was somewhat popular, notwithstanding his probably uncouth "backwoods" appearance and great plainness of speech; so that great multitudes came to him: amongst these were some who seemed to John to be so vile that he could not properly accept them until they had given some proofs of reform. These he denominates "children of vipers"—very harsh language, we would be inclined to say. We are not to understand that such language is proper to be copied by the Lord's people of today. We are rather to suppose that there were special conditions at that time which made this language appropriate, and that John, as a prophet, was divinely guided into giving this sharp reproof. The Lord's people of the Gospel age are instructed on the contrary to speak with meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, etc.,—"in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves"—"reproving with all long-suffering." The Lord's people of today are under general instructions of God's Word, as regards all their conduct, and are not to depart therefrom unless it would be under special divine direction, as were the prophets of old—such as is not given to any at the present time so far as we are aware.

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* Millennial Dawn, Vol. ii, Chap. 8.

When John speaks of his hearers "fleeing from the wrath to come," we are not to get the thought that he preached, or that the people believed in, the doctrine of eternal torment, and that the words referred to this. Quite to the contrary, there is no such teaching in the Scriptures. The "wrath to come" referred to by John prophetically was the trouble that was about to come upon that nation unless they would receive Messiah, who had not yet been offered to them, but who would shortly appear, and for whose appearance they were to make ready by true repentance and baptism. The "wrath to come" *did come* upon the nation because of its rejection of Messiah, as our Lord and the Apostle Paul specially testify. (See Luke 21:23; Rom. 9:22; 1 Thes. 2:16) It burned fiercely against them in the great time of trouble which led to the collapse of their national polity in A. D. 69-70, and they have been under that wrath and unable to reëstablish themselves as a nation from that day to the present time. We shall find confirmation of this interpretation of the "wrath to come" further down in this lesson.

In John's preaching he found one difficulty, and that was that his hearers were imbued with the thought that they were God's specially chosen, "elect" people, whose glorification had been foretold in the prophets, and that since there were no better people in the world it was unreasonable to suppose that God would pass by the very best. They reasoned that he must take some, in order to fulfil his promises; and that they were not only the most obedient to his law outwardly, but also were the natural seed of Abraham, to whom the promises were made. Likewise the principal opposition to the teaching of holiness, entire consecration to the Lord, today throughout "Christendom," is the same error. A false theory has gotten into the minds of Christian people, which leads them to reason that holiness cannot be essential to the Lord's favor. Their process of reasoning is this: Out of the sixteen hundred millions of the world's population there are only about three hundred millions that make the slightest profession of Christianity, and this includes all the Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, and what Bishop Foster (M. E.) designated the "ring-straked and speckled" of Protestantism—infants and all. Now, say they, God must certainly intend to have some, and if he takes *all* kinds of Christians he will have only comparatively few, and if merely an ambition to be ahead of the devil were to move him, he could scarcely reject any who claim to be Christians, and who are even half-way decent. Consequently they reason that holiness to the Lord, sanctification of thought and word and deed, cannot be essential to divine favor, and is therefore rather carrying matters to an extreme. The declaration that only "the pure in heart shall see God," and that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," are, to them, extreme statements, and must be passed by, or else the word "holiness" must be considered as used in olden times in a very restricted sense, as meaning not openly or violently wicked.

Thus we see that the antitypical Elijah to the Jews encountered the same difficulties that are encountered now by the antitypical Elijah ministering to nominal spiritual Israel. But note John's answer; he laid down the conditions very strictly: Do not permit yourselves to be deceived into thinking that God is under compulsion to accept such as you, and that otherwise his word would become void; do not think that he could not get children of Abraham that would be purer than you, and therefore that he must take you; God is unlimited in power and unlimited in resource, and, if necessary, he could raise up children to Abraham out of these stones—out of some that you consider as far from the possibilities of being Abraham's children as though they were these stones at your feet. And similarly we answer "Christendom" today, that God utterly rejects hypocritical Christianity, as represented by the vast majority of its professors, still blinded by the god of this world, and ignorant of the true character of God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent; because not pure in heart, not consecrated fully to the Lord. Would that we had a trumpet voice that we might tell the millions of nominal Christendom the true state of the case, and would that they had circumcised ears to hear and reform, and be prepared for the glorious events now due to be ushered in,—without being obliged to pass through the great trouble time. All we can assure them is that God will find the full number of his elect, and that the full number is nearly complete now, and that in all it is but a "little flock" to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom; and that soon these will all be glorified with their glorious Head and Lord, and that then the kingdom established will be revealed to bless all the families of the earth. Nevertheless, we deeply sympathize with them in the fact that their condition necessitates that the introduction of the kingdom shall be with a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, and, thank God, shall never again be.—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21.

John, proceeding with his discourse, points out to his Jewish hearers that the time of *judgment* had come upon *their nation*. The axe was laid at the root of the trees; every Israelite who was not an Israelite indeed was to be overthrown, and to be cast into the "fire" of trouble with which that age and national polity terminated. The three and a half years of our Lord's ministry to the Jewish nation, and their final rejection by him, are represented by the barren fig tree parable, in harmony with the statement of John foregoing.—See Luke 13:6-9.

John evidently struck the chord of fear to some extent, but he struck it properly. There is a proper presentation of the truth, and a proper fear of God and his retribution, which may properly be kept before the mind of the transgressor; but this is wholly different from the terrorizing fear of eternal torment, which plays so important a part in all the theological teaching, directly and indirectly, today, and which has driven some to insanity, some to skepticism and infidelity, and has hindered the great majority even of saints from appreciating the true character and plan of our God. Let us present the wrath to come, truthfully, not misrepresenting the character of our God; for assuredly God will not hold them guiltless who blaspheme his holy name.

Under John's preaching the people began to inquire what course they should pursue, and summing the matter up John's instruction was that they should practice justice, mercy, love, generosity; they should avoid violence, extortion, etc.; and should seek to be content with such things as they had. This was excellent advice, and undoubtedly those who followed it would be in just the right condition of heart and mind to welcome the Lord Jesus, and his good tidings of *remission of sins through his blood* and thus to become reconciled with the Father. And similarly if any now inquire respecting the coming trouble, the wrath that is to come in the end of this age upon "Christendom,"—what must we do? We answer them,—Practice righteousness, truth, godliness, kindness, benevolence, justice, trust in the Lord, seek to walk in his ways. Or we may quote them the words of the prophet, specially bearing upon this time, viz., "Seek meekness, seek righteousness; it may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3) And furthermore, we may rely upon it that those who thus seek righteousness, etc., will be the ones most ready to welcome our King, and his kingdom, and we may be sure that when in this harvest time some fail to make their calling and election sure, and prove themselves unworthy of the crowns apportioned to them, the Lord will be pleased to select from among such penitent seekers of righteousness some as substitutes to complete his elect church.

So powerful was John's presentation of the truth, that the people began to wonder whether or not he might be the Coming One, the Messiah, but he set the thought at rest speedily, assuring them that he was so inferior to the Messiah that he would be unworthy the honor of doing toward him the most menial service of removing his sandals. Then, having given them a little glimpse of the character of Messiah, he proceeded to tell them respecting his work, that it would be higher than his own, and that those who received him would receive a higher baptism also: "He shall baptize you with the holy spirit and with fire"—some of them (the few) with holy spirit, the remainder (the mass) with the fire,—judgments, the great time of trouble which destroyed their national life and many individual lives.

He gave them an illustration of the matter, showing them that they had reached the harvest-time of their age, and that now a separating was to be expected—the separating of the true wheat from the chaff; and he represented our Lord's work with Israel as being that of a reaper winnowing the "wheat," freeing it from the "chaff" element. How forceful was the figure! how true the facts! Our Lord indeed gathered from that nation all the true "wheat:" we may be sure that not a solitary grain was lost. All that wheat was gathered into his barn, into a place of safety, into a higher dispensation,—they constituted the beginning or first members of the Gospel church. It was upon this wheat class that the holy spirit came at Pentecost, and it has abode with this true church since. After the separating (winnowing) of the "wheat," and the gathering into the barn, and its baptism of the holy spirit, in due time, the "chaff" of that nation was burned up with *unquenchable fire*—a time of trouble which *nothing could stop* or hinder. It will be remembered that various steps were taken to hinder the destruction of the nation of Israel, but all failed: even the Roman Emperor was desirous of preserving the nation, and of establishing order there, and the Roman army went not to destroy them but to establish peace in their midst; but the Lord had declared that the fire of trouble which he enkindled should not be quenched by any power, that it should do its work to the full; and it did.

Likewise it will be with the great "fire" of trouble with which this Gospel age shall end, and into which the "tare" class of Christendom will be cast; it will not be an utter destruction of life (although many lives will perish in the great trouble of this Day of Wrath), but it will completely consume earthly governments and Churchianity in a fire of anarchy. Nothing shall quench that fire, or hinder that utter destruction of present systems. But praise God that when this fire shall have consumed the stubble and the falsities and deceptions of present institutions, it will have but prepared the way for the great blessing which he has designed and provided for in his coming kingdom. This "fire," and the blessing to follow it, are particularly referred to in Zeph. 3:8, 9.

CONSECRATION FOLLOWED BY TEMPTATIONS

Jan. 28.—Matt. 3:13-4:11.

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

After John had been preaching and baptizing for about six months, about September, A. D. 29, Jesus, who had been residing in Galilee and was nearing his thirtieth birthday, set out to find John and to be baptized of him and to begin his public ministry at the earliest possible moment. He was to be a Priest as well as a King for his people, "a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec," and the law required of a priest that he be at least thirty years of age. Hence Jesus' ministry was hindered from beginning until this age was attained, but he was free to begin it at the earliest possible moment after that time.

He was of course acquainted with his second-cousin, John the Baptizer, who evidently well knew of his upright life and unimpeachable character, and who was astounded to have him apply for baptism, whereas the class John was seeking was the renegade and sinful. According to the original reading, John "would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Realizing that Jesus had no sins to wash away, it seemed to John inappropriate that this ceremony should be performed upon Jesus, for we are to remember that John's baptism was merely a baptism unto repentance—reformation—and not Christian baptism.—See Acts 19:4, 5.

Our Lord did not attempt to explain to John that he was introducing a new baptism, not for sinners but exclusively for holy ones, and not, therefore, in any sense of the word symbolic of the cleansing from sin, but symbolic of a *sacrificial death* for the sins of others. It was not then due time to explain Christian baptism, and to have done so would merely have confused John and those who might have heard, without profiting him any, because the new baptism belonged to the new dispensation which did not begin until Pentecost, except in the person of our Lord Jesus himself. And in any case the force and meaning of the symbol is merely what is understood by the *baptized one*. It is perhaps well that we call special attention to this point, in view of the fact that a large and influential body of Christian people* are even today practicing John's baptism, "for the remission of sins," wholly failing to realize the import of the new baptism—Christian baptism—first symbolized by our Lord Jesus himself.

Our "Disciple" friends will not dispute the Scriptural statement that our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and hence that he had no sins to wash away, and consequently that for him John's baptism of reformation would have been worse than meaningless; it would have been a contradiction of fact and contrary to faith; and "whatsoever is not of faith is *sin*." Hence it would have been wrong for our Lord Jesus to have been baptized for the remission of sins—John's only understanding of baptism. We may be sure, therefore, that since "in him was no sin," his act of baptism was the first of a new order of baptism—practiced by his followers after Pentecost. (Acts 19:4, 5) We here note the fact that Christian baptism is only for believers in Christ —not for unbelievers, *not for sinners*. Faith in Christ is the justifying power; we are justified through faith in his blood. When justified we are ready for Christian baptism, and not before, but when justified we have no sins to wash away, being "justified freely from all things." To the Christian believer, baptism symbolizes precisely the same thing that it did to his Lord, viz., *consecration*—the full surrender of his will, his life, his all, to the Heavenly Father's will. By such a surrender of his will he becomes *dead to the world*, to earthly hopes and aims, and becomes *alive toward God*, to walk in newness of life, and by and by to have that newness of life actually, as a sharer with Jesus, his Lord, his Redeemer, in the "first resurrection." All this is *symbolized* in the proper Christian baptism.

Our Lord, being free from sin, required no justification by another, and when he had reached manhood's estate presented himself wholly, unreservedly, to do the Father's will. At the moment of *consecration* his earthly life was yielded up as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world,—and this was symbolized by his immersion in water. The remaining three and a half years of his life were already on the altar, and he merely waited for his sacrifice to be consumed, crying with his last breath, "It is finished!" Likewise he has invited all of his faithful, elect church to become *joint-sacrificers* with him, and ultimately to become also his *joint-heirs* in the kingdom to be given to the Royal Priesthood. As Jesus' baptism, therefore, signified his death sacrificially *for sins*, so the baptism of Christians symbolizes their participation with the Lord in *his sacrifice* (after they have first been justified by faith freely from all things by the merit of his blood). In our Lord's case the consecration was quickly followed by the symbol, and with his followers the consecration should be followed by the symbol as quickly as they *recognize the meaning of the symbol*,—which for centuries has been beclouded and obscured.

Quickly following our Lord's consecration and its symbolization came the evidence that his *sacrifice* was accepted of God: the heavens were opened unto him. This probably signifies that he was granted a vision of heaven, confirming to him his relationship to the Father, and connecting up the interim of his experience as a man with his prehuman experiences: and there came a voice declaring him to be God's well-beloved Son, and he as well as John (John 1:34) witnessed a manifestation of the divine blessing descending upon him like a dove. We are not informed that the people saw the heavens opened, heard the voice and saw the dove; on the contrary, the records seem to indicate that only Jesus and John saw and heard, and that the latter was granted the privilege to the intent that he might bear witness to the fact.

A dove was a favorite figure with the Jews as an emblem of peace and salvation. Indeed, Noah's dove, with its olive branch, seems to have become a symbol to all civilized peoples. It was most appropriate, therefore, that since some figure was to be used as an outward evidence of divine blessing, the dove should be that figure. Yet we are not to suppose that the holy spirit is a dove, nor that it has bodily shape like a dove, but as instructed in all the Scriptures, that it is a divine power or influence. The dove represented fittingly the meek and quiet spirit which is one of the striking ornaments of all those who possess the spirit of holiness unto the Lord. Such experiences as these which our Lord enjoyed are not granted to his followers nor to be expected today,—neither the voice nor the opened heavens, nor the dove. The coming of the holy spirit to the church at Pentecost was signalized by an outward demonstration, *which serves the entire church* throughout the age. Such outward demonstrations were essential at the beginning, as assurances to us that we are not following some vain imaginations of our own or other men's minds in respect to the holy spirit, and now we merely have the realities, which at first were symbolized or represented in tangible form. All who, after believing unto repentance, are justified from their sins, and subsequently present themselves to the Lord to be baptized into his death (Rom. 6:3), receive an opening of the heavens before them in the sense of an opening of their minds to see heavenly things, to appreciate spiritual matters: as the Apostle declares, "God reveals them unto us by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God,"—things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of [the natural] man." (1 Cor. 2:10) They also by faith hear the voice of the Father, speaking unto them, saying that, having thus come unto him through Jesus, and having thus consecrated their lives to him, they are now beloved sons, accepted in the well-beloved One. They also receive the blessing of the holy spirit, in the shedding abroad in their hearts of the peace-giving, meek and gentle spirit of holiness, and this becomes more and more a reality with them as they become more and more "filled with the spirit."

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* The Christian denomination, otherwise termed "Disciples."

Jesus was led of the spirit—his own spirit, illuminated by the spirit-baptism which he had just received—to go apart from John and the concourse of people into quiet solitude, and for this purpose he chose a wilderness place. Mark says he was impelled or "driven" of the spirit into the wilderness. The thought we get is that there was a great pressure upon our Lord's mind at this time. In a previous lesson we noted his study at Jerusalem at an early age respecting the "Father's business," and how he should go about it. We found the Law instructing him that it would not be proper for him to engage in the Father's business until he was thirty years of age, and that in consideration of this fact he desisted and served his parents. The momentous time for which he had been waiting for eighteen years had come. He hastened to present himself at the earliest moment, that his service should not be delayed; but now, under the enlightenment of the holy spirit, instead of beginning his ministry precipitately, he felt that he must know definitely the proper course to pursue: he must not make a mistake at the very outstart of his service; he must know the Father's will, that he might render his service in harmony therewith. Such motives impelled him to seek solitude for thought and prayer, and for reviewing the various Scriptures which hitherto he had studied and but imperfectly comprehended, but which now began to be luminous under the influence of the holy spirit which he had received.

How proper it would be that all of the Lord's people, when they have made a consecration of themselves to the divine service, should be impelled by the new mind, the new spirit, to go apart first and to commune with the Father, and to study his Word respecting how they should render their lives most acceptable in his service! Were this course pursued how many lives would be totally different from what they are; how many failures and changes and turnings, hither and thither, would be avoided! Our Lord expressed the matter in one of his parables, when he said that anyone taking up his cross to follow him should sit down first and count the cost—learn what the Father's will would be, as well as the results to be sought. And if any of God's dear children have neglected thus to seek the right path at the beginning of their consecration, we refer them to the example of our dear Master, who was wise in this as in all things, having not only the spirit of a sound mind, but a sound mind itself, through which that spirit operated perfectly. However, our study of the divine will need not be so completely alone as was our Master's—we have "brethren," he had none, being himself the forerunner. We may profitably take counsel of such as give evidence of faith in and consecration to God, that we may learn the more quickly and the more thoroughly the Father's will concerning us: especially may we have the aid of the words and example of our elder Brother, Jesus. We must never forget, however, that our consecration is to the Father's business, and that brethren can only be really helpful to us as they assist us in understanding the Father's plan and our part therein: otherwise they might become hindrances by substituting their own or sectarian plans and seeking our consecration thereto.

Our Lord's temptations may be said to have begun at this point—those temptations in which "he was tempted like as we are, yet without sin." It was not the boy Jesus, nor the youth Jesus, that was tempted "as *we* are." And our Lord's temptations after his consecration were not like the temptations which beset the world, but like the church's temptations. In other words, our Lord was reckoned a *new* creature from the time of his consecration at Jordan, as we are counted *new* creatures in him from the time of our consecration; and it was the *consecrated* Jesus who was tempted and tried like as his *consecrated* followers are tempted and tried. We shall see further evidences of this as we proceed to notice the character of our Lord's temptations, and to compare them with the temptations which come to his consecrated "brethren." Many have wondered why their temptations seemed to commence after their consecration to the Lord, rather than before: seemingly they expected that after consecration the adversary would flee from them, and they should have little or no temptation—totally misunderstanding the divine arrangement. Such temptations or tests of character as come to the consecrated are not appropriate to the unconsecrated: the present is not the judgment day of the world, but the testing time for the church.

It would appear that our Lord's temptations progressed throughout the entire forty days, but that the three temptations specifically described were the culmination of that period of testing. We may imagine our Lord in the wilderness solitude, intently thinking over the various prophetic references to himself, and linking these together, as an architect would first draw the outline of a building and subsequently fill out feature after feature of its internal arrangements. The outline before our Lord's mind from the Scriptures, beyond any peradventure, was the kingdom. He was to be the King, the Seed of Abraham, under whose gracious government and wise instruction all the families of the earth were to be blessed. This, the profile, was already clearly delineated in his mind, but other features needed to be properly adjusted. How was he to fulfil the type of the Law which represented the priest as giving up his life for the sins of the people? Where would come in the type of the everlasting priesthood? Where would come in the class of Israelites represented by Rebecca, as he himself was represented by Isaac, and the Father by Abraham, in the type? And if Israel would receive him, and become the Rebecca, where would come in the sacrifice, and how? And then other prophecies no doubt pressed his mind for a place in the plan, viz., the declaration that although Israel were as the sand of the sea only a remnant should be acceptable, and how then would the predestinated number of the "elect" be found, to complete the glorious royal priesthood; and by what process would the blessing come to all the families of the earth, if himself, as the High Priest, and his true followers, as the royal priests, were all to suffer and to die for righteousness' sake, as sacrifices?

We may well suppose that adjustment and re-adjustment, fitting and refitting, with much reflection and prayer, occupied many of the forty days, and there may have been temptations intermingled with these all; as for instance, questionings respecting the necessity of those features represented in the types and specified in the prophecies of the sufferings of Christ which must take precedence to the glories that would follow. There may have been temptations, too, to deal dishonestly with the records, to "wrest the Scriptures," and thus self-deceived, to choose a way not in fullest conformity to the divine outline; but we may safely suppose that as soon as such suggestions, one after another, presented themselves, they were promptly rejected,—our Lord being fully determined that he would be absolutely obedient to the Father's will and accomplish the work which he had sent him to do in exactly the manner prescribed.

So intent had been his study, and so earnest his desire for quiet fellowship with the Father and his law, that forty days were spent under such conditions, and apparently so deeply absorbed was our Lord that he did not even think of food Nor does this appear so strange to us, when we remember that he was perfect, while we are imperfect, physically as well as otherwise. "He afterward hungered."

It was at the close of this period of Bible study and prayer, when our Lord was weak from fasting, that the Adversary assaulted him with three temptations particularized in our lesson.

The word here translated "devil" is *diabolos*, and is used with the definite article—*the* devil. The arch-deceiver is thus Scripturally distinguished from the fallen angels, who throughout the Scriptures are spoken of in the plural, designated by another word signifying *demons*. Here, then, is one place in the Scriptures where the personality of the prince of devils is definitely affirmed, and his person and power acknowledged by our Lord himself. It is not necessary for us, however, to assume that Satan appeared to our Lord in a human form; he may or may not thus have been personally manifest. If personally manifest, we may rest well assured that he presented himself in his very best appearance, as an angel of light. Indeed, we may well remember that our Lord, in his prehuman condition, had, as the Father's agent, been the Creator of Satan, and we remember that Satan was an angel of very high order, whose sin consisted in an attempt to usurp authority and to become the potentate of earth, by stealing the sympathy, affection and obedience of humanity, and that on this account he fell under divine reprobation. We can imagine that a visit from him to Jesus would not be at all inappropriate, as he undoubtedly knew the facts of our Lord's consecration, and to some extent knew of the work which the Father had given him to do in the redemption of the fallen race of men. We can imagine him even presenting himself in a friendly manner, and assuring our Lord Jesus that he felt a great interest in him and in his work; that he himself had been painfully surprised to note the penalty of sin upon mankind, and the dreadful degradation which had resulted; and that now he would be glad indeed to have something done by which poor humanity might be delivered from its groaning, travailing, dying conditions. As a friend, thoroughly versed in the situation all around, and interested in its success, and thoroughly conversant with the mental moods and foibles of humanity, he was in a place where he felt qualified to offer some suggestions respecting the very work which our Lord Jesus wished to perform, the plan for which he was now considering.

TEMPTATION TO USE SPIRITUAL FAVORS FOR PERSONAL PROFIT

First, he manifests his personal interest in our Saviour by suggesting his weakness from lack of food and the necessity for taking proper care of his physical health if he would do the great and noble work he had undertaken. He reminded him also of his present power—that he had just been imbued with divine power, and that he had now full ability to supply his wants, and need only to speak the word and have the stones turned into food. Thus also, he suggested, he would be demonstrating to himself the verity of the new power which he witnessed coming upon him, and had subsequently felt. What more cunning temptation could be devised than this? Compliance with it evidently meant, not only the relief of his hunger and the strengthening of his physical frame, but additionally it apparently meant the conversion of Satan, who now seemingly was in a repentant attitude, and desirous of co-operating with him in the undoing of the evil work of the long ago. It was a strong temptation.

Such temptation comes also to all the consecrated; not in exactly the same form, nor in the same language, but somewhat similarly—suggestions that the new relationship with God, and the strength which it brings, may be used to some extent at least in creature comforts—may be utilized for our temporal advancement; may be made to make us shine before men as very honorable and favored of God; may be used to command large salaries, or at least as a means for seeking them, even if never found. We may then all note carefully how our Lord resisted his would-be friend and his worldly-wise suggestions. He flatly refused the suggestion of using his spiritual power to serve his temporal wants. The spiritual gift could no more be used to procure temporal comforts than it could be sold for money to Simon (Acts. 8:18-24); but without going into details, and without boasting that he was too holy to think of such a sacrilegious use of the power entrusted to him, Jesus simply answered the adversary in Scriptural language, that man's life was not wholly dependent upon what he should eat, but that obedience to the Word of God would be a surer guarantee of life. And after this manner each of the Lord's followers should answer every question which in any manner proposes the acquirement of earthly blessings and comforts at the sacrifice of the spiritual. To quite a number of the Lord's "brethren" the adversary has presented this same temptation in this form: If you follow too closely to the truth, and permit the holy Spirit of the truth to make you very zealous in its service, you will soon have no bread, no food, for the world's people with whom you must deal do not appreciate such things. They will discharge you from their employ, or they will cease to deal at your store, or they will dismiss you from being their pastor, or they will withdraw from you their fellowship, their society, etc., and you will starve for all the good things of this present life. The proper answer is that God is able to take care of all those who respect his spiritual blessings too much to sell them for a mess of pottage, as did Esau in the type; and that we are convinced that whoever lives according to the Word of God, tho he may lose some of the comforts of the present time, will eventually gain the far better, the life eternal with exceeding glory.

Our Lord's positiveness of reply shut off the temptation quickly, and discouraged the adversary from further proceeding along that line; and so it is with us, his followers: if we are positive in our rejection of temptation it increases our strength of character, not only for that time, but also for subsequent temptations; and it disconcerts to some extent our adversary, who, noting our positiveness, knows well that it is useless to discuss the matter with persons of strong convictions and positive character; whereas, if the question were parleyed over, the result would surely be the advancing of further reasons and arguments on the adversary's part, and a danger on our part that we would be overmatched in argument, for, as the Apostle declares, the devil is a wily adversary, and "we are not ignorant of his devices." Prompt and positive obedience to the word and spirit of the Lord is the only safe course for any of the "brethren."

TEMPTING GOD BY UNAUTHORIZED EFFORTS

Disappointed in his first effort, the adversary quickly turned the subject, not even dissenting from our Lord's judgment in the matter. The second temptation he presented is like all others that came to our Lord and that come to his consecrated followers, viz., not a temptation to gross wickedness—to steal, to kill, etc.—but a temptation to do the Lord's work in another way than that which the Lord had planned—the misuse of the divine powers given him by endeavoring to accomplish good results in an improper manner.

Satan took our Lord Jesus to Jerusalem and up to the flat roof of one of the wings of the Temple—not physically, but mentally, just as mentally we can go to various places and do certain things without change of physical location. The suggestion now made was this: I (Satan) can give you a good suggestion respecting a way to bring yourself quickly into prominence before the people of Israel, and you will be pleased with it, because it is a Scriptural way; indeed I have found that it is foretold in the prophecy that Messiah at his coming will do this: and the people will readily recognize it as a fulfilment of the words of the Prophet David, and thus they will embrace your cause quickly, you will become the leader of the people, and your work will go on most grandly: and as I said before, I will rejoice in seeing the prosperity of the work, for I am heartily sick of the degradation which I have witnessed for now four thousand years. My suggestion is that you go to the roof of the southern wing of the Temple which on its rear part overlooks the Valley of Hinnom, towering above it six hundred feet, and which also overlooks the court of the Temple in which there are hundreds of devout Jews: then leap from this eminence, and arise unhurt by the fall. This will demonstrate more quickly than anything else you could do or say that the power of the Highest is upon you, and that you are the Messiah. This, I say, is referred to in the Scripture which says,—"He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."—Matt. 4:6.

Similar are the temptations which Satan presents to the consecrated followers of Jesus:—Make a great show before the world and the nominal church; attract their attention by any means, and not simply by the preaching of the cross of Christ; use the spiritual powers and blessings that you have received for doing some great and striking work, which will appeal to the natural man, and thus secure quick and great success; do this instead of doing the quiet and less conspicuous work of presenting spiritual things to the spiritual class, which work the vast majority can in no wise appreciate, but will only shun you, consider you peculiar, and which not only will lose you the sympathy of the mass, but will bring you specially the hatred of some of the principal professors of Christendom.

Again our Lord answered promptly and correctly: "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Satan would like to have us walk by sight, not by faith; he would like to have us continually tempting God, and demanding some ocular demonstrations of his favor and protection, instead of accepting the testimony of his Word, and relying thereon implicitly in faith. In the light of the unfolding of the Scriptures we see that Satan, probably unwittingly, quoted a passage of Scripture wholly out of its proper meaning and interpretation, a passage which referred, not to the literal feet of Jesus, and to literal stones, and to literal angels, but to the symbolic feet-members of the body of Christ today, and to the stones of stumbling, doctrinal and otherwise, which are now permitted in the pathway of the faithful, and to the angels or ministers of divine truth who in the present harvest-time would be commissioned to bear up the feet members with such counsels, admonitions and expositions of Scripture as would be necessary for them.—Psa. 91:11, 12.

TEMPTATION TO OBTAIN DESIRED GOOD RESULTS BY COMPROMISE

Satan's third temptation we may presume was presented likewise in a friendly and sympathetic manner, indicative of a desire for co-operation in our Lord's great work. He took him to a high mountain—not literally, but mentally. Indeed, there is no literal high mountain near Jerusalem, nor anywhere in the world, from which all the kingdoms of the world and their glory could be seen. Satan took our Lord mentally to a very high symbolic mountain (kingdom). He pictured before him the immensity of his (Satan's) own power throughout the world, his control of all the nations and peoples to a large extent, and this our Lord subsequently acknowledged when he referred to Satan as "the prince [ruler] of this world." This panoramic presentation of Satan's power and influence throughout the world was designed to impress upon the mind of our Redeemer the thought that Satan's friendship and assistance would be most valuable—nay, almost of vital importance to the success of his mission, and hence that it was very fortunate indeed that at this juncture Satan had called upon him in so friendly a mood, and that he apparently so sincerely welcomed his efforts and was ready to co-operate therewith.

Satan possibly pointed out to our Lord that Messiah was specially referred to as the King of Israel, and to bless Israel, and he may have admitted that a light of influence would extend to all nations through him, but the center of his argument would seem to be that he proposed to Jesus a still larger kingdom than Israel. He proposed to him a kingdom embracing all the nations of the earth, and that he should have the control of all these, and be able to bring in the blessed reforms which were designed of God, only one condition being insisted upon, viz., that whatever kingdom or rule or authority might be established must recognize Satan. The adversary thus seemed to see what he thought a favorable opportunity for consummating his original plans, for we cannot suppose that his original intention was to gain control of a dying and depraved race, but that he much rather would be the lord or ruler of a highly enlightened and well-endowed people. He was willing, therefore, to see carried into effect all the gracious work which God had designed, and willing to reform himself and to become the leader of reform, provided only that he should be recognized as having the chief place of influence in connection with mankind. It was after this manner that he wished our Lord to do worship or reverence to him—to recognize his influence and co-operation in the work, and not for a moment can we suppose that he expected him to kneel before him and to worship him as God.

Our Lord's reply to this last temptation shows that it fully awakened him to a realization of the fact that there was no real reformation at work in Satan's heart; that he was still ambitious, self-seeking, as at the beginning of his downward course; and he realized that to even discuss the matter further with one who had thus avowed his real sentiments would be disloyalty to the Father, and hence his words, "Get thee hence, Satan"—leave me; you cannot co-operate with me at all; my work is in full accord with the absolute standard of the divine will; I can be a party to no program contrary to this, however alluring some of its features might be in promising a speedy conquest of the world, and a speedy establishment of a reign of righteousness and blessing and an avoidance of personal suffering; I cannot serve two masters; I can only recognize the one supreme Jehovah, as Lord of heaven and of earth, and therefore could not recognize you in any position of authority except as the great Jehovah would appoint you to it, which I know he would never do, so long as you are of the present ambitious spirit. I am operating along the line of the declaration, "Thou shalt worship [reverence] the Lord thy God, and *him only shalt thou serve.*"

We may readily discern that this temptation of our Lord was but a sample illustration of such as beset his followers all along the narrow way, from the same source, directly or through agencies. Satan, through his various mouthpieces is continually saying to the saints, Here is a more successful way of accomplishing your object than that which you are pursuing, a more successful way than the Lord's way. Bend a little; make compromise with the worldly spirit; do not hew too close to the line of the word of God and the example of the Lord Jesus and the apostles; you must be more like the world, in order to exert an influence—mix a little into politics, and a good deal into secret societies; keep in touch with the fads and foibles of the day, and above all things keep any light of present truth under a bushel,—thus alone can you have influence and accomplish your good desires toward men. But our dear Master assures us that we are to be faithful to the Lord and to his plan, and let things work out as best they may along that line; and that we may rest assured that in the end the Father's plan not only is the best but really the only plan for accomplishing his great designs, and that if we would be associated therein with him as colaborers, it must be by recognizing him as our only Master, and with an eye single to his approval.

Our Lord's utter refusal of every other way of carrying out his mission than the one which the Father had marked out, the way of self-sacrifice, the narrow way, was indeed a great victory. The adversary left him, finding nothing in him that he could take hold of or work upon, so thoroughly loyal was he to the very word and the spirit of Jehovah. And then, the trial being ended, we read that holy angels came and ministered to our Lord—doubtless supplying him with refreshment such as he had refused to exercise the divine power to obtain for himself. And such we may recognize as being the experience of our Lord's followers: with victory comes a blessing from the Lord, fellowship of spirit, refreshment of heart, a realization of divine favor that makes stronger for the next trial.

Another lesson here is that temptation does not imply sin. As our Lord was tempted "without sin" so may his brethren be if they follow his example and with purity of heart, purity of intention, seek only the Father's will. Sin could only come through yielding to the temptation. But let us not forget that hesitancy after the wrong is seen increases the power of the temptation. And we may note here that while Satan is tempter, endeavoring to ensnare us into wrong paths and wrong conduct, God is not so; "he tempteth no man" (Jas 1:13), and even tho he permit the Adversary and his agents to beset his people, it is not with the object of ensnaring them, but with the opposite object, that they may by such trials and testings be made the stronger, developing character through exercise in resisting evil. Let us remember too for our strengthening, the Scriptural assurance that God will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to resist and overcome but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape.

To avail ourselves of this provision requires merely faith, and the more we exercise our faith in such matters the more of it we will have, becoming stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might; and thus by divine grace and under the Master's assistance we may come off overcomers—conquerors. and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.—2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Cor. 10:13; Eph. 6:10; Rom. 8:37-39.

A LITTLE WHILE

A little while with weary feet to tread the narrow way,
A little while, the time will not be long,
A little while the sinless One to follow day by day,
A little while to suffer and be strong.

A little while with faltering tongue to testify for God,
A little while to suffer scorn and shame,
A little while with voice and pen to spread the truth abroad,
A little while to glorify his name.

A little while with humble faith to wage the goodly fight.
A little while, grasp firm the two-edged sword,
A little while, Satanic hosts shall all be put to flight,
A little while, then, trust thou in the Lord.

A little while, a little while, Oh, let this be our song,
A little while, lay not the armor down;
A little while, a little while, the strife will not be long,
A little while, and we shall wear the crown!

—GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

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THE PEOPLE THAT KNOW THE JOYFUL SOUND

"Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."—Psalm 89:15.

Salvation is the joyful sound, as the poet has well expressed it,* saying:

"Salvation! O the joyful sound,
What tidings for our race!
Deliv'rance for the world is found
Through God's abounding grace."

This joyful salvation sound is the Gospel, as declared by the angelic messengers—"Good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people." But alas, how few have heard this joyful sound! As mentally we glance over the sixteen hundred millions of the world's population, we find that even the most extravagant claims would show that not one-fifth of the whole have ever heard these blessed tidings; the four-fifths are totally blinded by the god of this world, and see nothing and hear nothing of God's grace. And the matter has been as bad as this, or worse proportionately for six thousand years. How we should rejoice that under divine providence we were born in lands where the light of truth sends forth at least a feeble ray, and where many are not totally deaf to "the joyful sound!"

Yet coming to civilized lands, we are surprised, almost appalled, at the gross darkness which beclouds the minds of the people of so-called Christendom, and by the dimness of vision and dullness of hearing of the vast majority in these most favored parts of the earth—of the majority of those whose lines have fallen unto them in pleasant places comparatively. Mentally we see nearly two-thirds of the so-called enlightened fifth of humanity bowing to the Virgin Mary, addressing her in prayer, and crossing themselves with reverence at the mention of her name, and generally grossly ignorant of the divine character and plan—believers in an eternity of torment for all except those of their own communions, and in long periods of purgatorial agony for the great majority of their members. Heart-sick with the picture, we exclaim, O that these people could hear the joyful sound! for evidently they have at very most merely heard an indistinct strain of it conglomerated with the jargon of Babel's confusion and Satanic discord.

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* POEMS AND HYMN OF DAWN, No. 255.

Looking expectantly to the remaining third of the so-called enlightened fifth of humanity, known as "Protestants," we inquire, Are these the blessed people who know the joyful sound? A hundred *discordant* voices answer, Yes! but we inquire, If you have heard it, why such discord, such clashing of doctrines, such separation from each other by creed-fences? Are not all the people who know the joyful sound one people—the one church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven? This at once arouses doubt respecting "Protestantism," and we hearken for evidences to the contrary, that many at least, if not all, know "the joyful sound." We perceive that in many respects amongst these are found people who know more respecting the divine character than do the outside fifteen hundred millions; and yet here also we find great blindness, obscure mental vision, great deafness to the voice from heaven. Truly amongst these also the great adversary has done a work, so that although in their midst more may be heard of "the joyful sound" than amongst other classes of the world, yet Satan has here also introduced the discords so as almost to drown the heavenly music—"the joyful sound." For while to some extent Protestantism discerns God's love and justice, the adversary has beclouded its vision and dulled its hearing for the truth, by whispering theories that are at variance with divine justice and love, and make void and meaningless "the joyful sound." To some he whispers that God never had either sympathy or provision for any except "the elect;" to others he whispers that God has the sympathy for all, but lacks the wisdom and power to give practical assistance to any but the few: and thus in the minds of nearly all "the joyful sound" is reduced to a song of praise and joy and thanksgiving and salvation from a little flock, with which will mingle to all eternity the anguishing wails of the vast majority of thousands of millions.

There are a few (but alas how few!) who not only hear "the joyful sound," but who discern that the discord is of the adversary, and that the joyful sound, if separated from Satanic inharmonies, is beautiful, harmonious beyond any other sound or song. Full of the spirit of the song themselves, they haste to make its beauty known to others, and to point out the origin of the discord. They feel certain that it will be merely necessary to indicate the discord and its source to have others like themselves instantly discern and reject the discord, and rejoice more fully than ever in "the joyful sound"—the true Gospel. But alas! what disappointment is theirs: they find that even amongst the "Protestant" fifteenth of humanity not only is the darkness great, but the depravity of heart and mind are so dense that the darkness and discord are *preferred*, and "the joyful sound," the good tidings of great joy for all people, is spurned, and considered to be the discord that is of the adversary. Only here and there can any be found who "*know* the joyful sound"—who can distinguish the joyful sound of the heavenly message from those by which Satan has "deceived all that dwell upon the earth."—Rev. 18:23; 19:20; 20:3.

SOUNDING THE JUBILEE TRUMPETS

The question may arise, Why did God permit Satan, through his human agencies, to bring false doctrine amongst his people during the dark ages, thus to blind and deafen them to the true light, and the heavenly harmonies of the divine plan?

We answer that God's purpose during this age has been the selection of merely the "little flock" of "overcomers" to be joint-heirs with his Son in the coming Millennial kingdom which is to "bless all the families of the earth;" and by permitting darkness to come upon this nominal church class he has (1) taught a great lesson both to angels and men concerning the necessity of not only starting right, but remaining loyal to the Lord and his Word, and maintaining a teachable attitude of heart. (2) Doubtless the majority of the "little flock" has been selected from the two ends of this Gospel age—its beginning and its closing years. (3) There may have been much more knowledge of the joyful message amongst God's people during "the dark ages" than we now have means of knowing, since the history of that time had few recorders, and their records then dealt chiefly with the error-blinded systems and ignored or misrepresented the unpopular instrumentalities used by God in making "the joyful sound"—some of whom quite probably were denominated heretics, because they knew the joyful sound of the true Gospel, and proportionately denounced the popular "doctrines of devils."

At all events, under divine providence the joyful sound is now heard above the din of "Babel" by those who "have an ear to hear," and it is found to be the very same gospel which was preached by the Lord and the Apostles and announced by the angels on the plains of Bethlehem—a "joyful sound," "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." Moreover, as we have seen in other studies,* we are now in the early dawn of the *Millennial day*, which in the Scriptures was typically represented to Israel by their *Jubilee year*—of release from bondage and the return to original possessions, etc. And as the *priests* were to announce the Jubilee year in the Day of Atonement, by the blowing of silver jubilee trumpets, so here we have the antitype: the royal priests in this, the close of the antitypical Day of Atonement (the Gospel age), are to blow the trumpets of truth (silver being a symbol of truth), announcing to the people that the grace of God is come nigh unto them, and that during the Millennial day (of one thousand years) now dawning the great High Priest, also Prophet and King, shall stand forth as God's representative, and by virtue of his own sacrifice shall give the needed *blessing of knowledge* to all mankind, and shall lift up out of degradation and sin and death, by his providence and grace, all who seek to come back to righteousness and fellowship with the Father through him.

So then, *as* it was appropriate in the type that this announcement should be made at the close of the Day of Atonement, *so* that indicated that it is a part of the divine plan that the sounding forth of the joyful sound, the message of the Jubilee of divine love and favor and blessing should be given at the present time—just in the closing days of the Gospel age—the closing hours, so to speak, of the great Day of Atonement,† and at the dawning, so to speak, of the Millennial age of Jubilee.

Now another matter, little in itself, and easily overlooked in our translation of the Bible, is the fact that the very word (*turnah*) used in our text, rendered "a joyful sound," is the same Hebrew word that is used in Lev. 25:9, where the *sounding of the Jubilee trumpet* is commanded. How strikingly the Lord has arranged his Word, to make it a basis for faith and joy to his people. How clear it is to those who "know the joyful sound," and yet how obscure to all others! Well does our text say, "*Blessed* are the people who *know* the joyful sound!" The blessing upon them is certainly not because of their own merit, for we are all conscious of the fact that in our flesh dwelleth no perfection, and that none of us could be commended to God by our own righteousness—all of these blessed people who know the joyful sound have reason, therefore, to give thanks unto him who loved them, and who bought them with his own precious blood, in whose merit alone they have standing with the Heavenly Father. And yet these blessed people have *something* to do with the matter of their blessing—something to do with the fact that they have *heard*, and hearing have *known* or discerned the joyful sound, while others hearing have not discerned it. They have the hearing of faith: from the little which they first heard they must have *cultivated* a love for righteousness, and a hatred of iniquity; they must have *cultivated* honesty with themselves, honesty with the Lord, honesty in handling his Word—"not handling the Word of God deceitfully." (2 Cor. 4:2) They must have consecrated their hearts fully to the Lord, and thus have come fully under the guidance of "the spirit of the truth," else they would not be able to discern better than others between the joyful sound of the truth and the discordant sound of error. Evidently in these we see fulfilled the Scripture, "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him [to know him, to know his will]."—Heb. 11:6.

THE NEW SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

Our Lord in symbol pointed out to us the fact that the message of his grace in the closing days of this Gospel age would be so different from the commonly accepted message, misnamed the Gospel, that it would properly be termed a *new song*, although it would be the old song of Moses—the message of blessing typified by the writings of Moses and by all the ceremonies of the Law, and the message of the Lamb, the good tidings announced in connection with our Lord's birth, and throughout his own ministry, when all the people "bare him record, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth" (not threats of eternal torment to nine-tenths of the human family); and the testimony of all the apostles respecting the Lamb of God and the great work to be accomplished by him in taking "away *the sin of the world.*" It is merely this same song that is now being sung by those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of present truth—it is "the joyful sound" which only the people thus blessed *know* or can sing.

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* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, Chap. 6.

† *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices.*

It is a worldly proverb that truth is stranger than fiction, yet this proverb is illustrated throughout "Christendom" today—the vast, vast majority of professed followers of Christ are strangers to the truth, but thoroughly familiar with the fictions of human invention—"traditions of the elders," which "make void the Word of God." It is in full accord with this that the angel declares to the Revelator that no man can learn to sing this song except the elect—the 144,000, the "little flock." (Rev. 14:3) Indeed, nothing is more manifest than that it is necessary to be somewhat of an "overcomer" of the world and its spirit which pervades nominal Christendom, ere any would have the courage to sing this song—to declare before men the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the goodness and grace of the divine plan, of which Jesus and his sacrifice are the center. To all others "the fear of man bringeth a snare," and stoppeth their mouths from speaking "forth the praise of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." "But the people that *do know* their God [his character and plan] shall be valiant and do exploits," and like the apostles of old will feel and say, Whether it be right to obey God or men, judge ye; but we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.—Dan. 11:32; Acts 4:19, 20.

Nor need we suppose that the fact that only the 144,000 can sing this song implies that those able to sing the song could not fall from their steadfastness and become castaways, and lose the privilege of singing it. On the contrary, the Scriptures most distinctly assure us that only by *unceasing* faithfulness will any be permitted to continue to be reckoned as members of that elect company, foreknown and prearranged of God. Our Lord clearly intimates that he will blot out the names of those who are unfaithful, that other names may be written in their stead. He clearly intimates that unfaithfulness will cause that the crown set apart for the faithful will, if he prove unfaithful, be given to another.—Rev. 3:5, 11.

THE WALK OF THE BLESSED PEOPLE

In harmony with the foregoing is the intimation of our text which implies that in order to be of the people who will know the joyful sound it will be necessary to "walk in the light of God's countenance." Or, reversing the statement, the thought is that all who walk in the light of God's countenance shall be his blessed people, and shall know the joyful sound.

What a lesson of holiness is here: not a lesson of human perfection and self-commendation to God, but a lesson of *abiding in Christ* under the robe of his righteousness, and of walking continuously *with him* and in the path of the just, which "shineth more and more unto the perfect day." And whoever would walk with Jesus in the light of divine favor, in the smile of divine approval, must needs walk the narrow way of self-control and self-sacrifice—"even unto death." Whoever delights in sin and sinful practices cannot walk in the company of Jesus, cannot be recognized as a member of his body or under his robe—can have neither part nor lot in this matter, whatever may be done with him or for him in the future age. As the Apostle expresses it, those accepted of Christ, and who would maintain affiliation with him, must remember that all of the "royal priesthood" are given the truth, not to make them vain or boastful, or heady and high-minded, but to purify them, and to sanctify them. He declares "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

A TEXT FOR THE YEAR

We suggest to the friends of the truth the adoption of the precious words of our text as a talisman for the year, if not for the remainder of the pilgrim journey. We believe that these inspired words will help all who understand them to more and more measure up to the divine ideal which they present to our minds: "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound—they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

Another line, in full harmony with this, from the succeeding Psalm, might profitably be added: "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Only those who see the beauty of the great King, who discern something of his justice, his mercy and love, his wisdom, his power, can clothe their new minds with these glorious graces which more and more shine before our anointed vision as the beauty of the Lord our God. And the more clearly they are discerned, the more faithfully can we copy them, and the better do we love the joyful sound, and the better can we sing the Song of Moses and the Lamb.

THE VOLUNTEER WORK

The open winter has been very favorable to the Volunteer work thus far, but we advise that those who have not already commenced this work make all their preparations for the springtime, when we hope to hear from all, and to have a goodly supply of reading matter ready for their use.

Meantime you will do well to have a meeting, call for enlistments in the service, appoint a committee with a central head to lay out the work systematically, that all congregations in your city may be served without duplicating, appoint your scribe to communicate with the WATCH TOWER office respecting the number of volunteers, the number of churches, the average attendance of each, and the time for distribution.

WE HAVE FOUND HIM! EUREKA!

FEB. 4.—JOHN 1:35-46.

After his wilderness temptation, Jesus returned to Bethabara, where John was preaching, fully convinced of the character of his mission—that it was not to be after the manner of Satan's suggestion of worldly methods, leading on to popularity and honor of men—that on the contrary it would be his part to bear witness to the truth in such a truthful and simple manner as would commend it and him to such only as were Israelites indeed. No doubt by this time he saw that before the glorification could come the new Israel must be selected, the "royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people"—antitypical or spiritual Israel. He had reason to expect that there was at least a remnant of this class in the nation of Israel after the flesh, and although fully realizing that no man could come unto him except the Father which sent him should draw him, he nevertheless recognized the propriety of putting himself in the way of those whom the Father would draw, that he might receive them as quickly and as favorably as possible. Hence his return from the wilderness was to the vicinity of John's mission work, where not unreasonably he might expect to find some of the Israelites indeed.

Our lesson shows that the Heavenly Father had made use of John the Baptizer's Mission and had exerted through it a drawing influence upon the hearts of some who by this time were quite ready to learn of Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life—the channel of approach to God. The drawing power which the Father exerts during this age is the truth—the knowledge of divine compassion toward mankind manifested through the sending of Messiah to save the people from their sins—to deliver them from the power of sin and Satan, as well as from the death penalty.

It was after our Lord's return from the wilderness that the delegation of priests and Levites, sent from Jerusalem, came to John asking, "Who art thou?" to whom he replied that he was not the Christ but merely a forerunner, a herald. To these John pointed out Jesus, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," explaining how he knew Jesus to be the Messiah by a previously appointed sign which God had given him—the descent of the holy Spirit in the form of a dove.—Verses 19-34.

It was the very next day after this testimony to the priests and Levites that John, in the presence of two of his disciples, looking intently upon Jesus as he passed near (no doubt wondering how our Lord's Messiahship would be made known), exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God!" This was the same testimony (only abbreviated) that he had given to the priests and Levites, and which had evidently fallen, in their case, upon dull ears. But note the difference in the case of those who were "Israelites indeed:" the two disciples immediately followed Jesus. John's testimony became to them the *drawing power of God*, because they were in a condition of heart to be susceptible to that influence. Thus we see clearly illustrated how some are drawn and others are not drawn by the same message, and we see also that the divine drawing does not operate arbitrarily, but in accordance with certain fixed principles pertinent to the divine plan. It was not sufficient that a testimony should be given, it was not sufficient that a curiosity should be aroused; it was necessary additionally that the interest awakened should be so powerful as to lead to action on the part of those who were drawn, as the poet expresses it,

"He drew me, and I followed on."

The Lord is seeking not merely the curious, but the truth-hungry, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and for fellowship with himself, and here, as in every instance, he that seeketh, in this proper attitude of heart, findeth. The two disciples had not followed the Lord far until their faith and zeal began to be rewarded: the Lord turned to them and was the first to speak, and thus he illustrated his own words respecting those drawn of the Father to him, "He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Had our Lord not thus condescended it would have been a difficult matter for these humble fishermen to have approached one so far above them in dignity and in appearance—one whom they had just learned was the great Messiah, long promised of God to be the Prince of the kings of the earth. Applying this feature of the lesson to ourselves, and remembering that the Lord is the same yesterday, today and forever, helps us to appreciate his condescension manifested toward all who would come unto the Father through him—we who now come to him because of the hearing of faith and the sight of faith, as well as those who then approached him because of the sight of the natural eye and the hearing of the natural ear.

Our Lord's salutation, "What seek ye?" not only overcame the diffidence of those who sought him, but the more they would consider his words subsequently, the more meaningful they would find them, as we do today. And this seems to be the question which the Lord puts to all those who approach him, and essay to become his followers, "What seek ye?" Are you seeking loaves and fishes of earthly advantage? Are you seeking earthly honor and social and political influence and preferment? The answer soon or later will be manifested by the conduct of the seekers, though evidently all do not realize, at the time, what are their real motives in seeking the Lord. It were better, however, that each should remember our Lord's own expression on this subject, and sit down and count the cost at the very beginning—that each one should learn that to seek the Lord truly is to seek after righteousness, fellowship with the Father and with the Son; and that this means the forsaking of sin, so far as the heart is concerned, and so far as possible the purifying of the flesh by the "washing of water through the Word."—Eph. 5:26.

All should learn also that seeking to be disciples of Christ implies not only a fellowship with him in the glory that is soon to be revealed, but also a fellowship with him in the sufferings of this present time—a "filling up of that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." If, as our Lord suggested, each one would sit down and count the cost beforehand, there would be less subsequent disappointment, and although the number of his followers would be much smaller, there would be many less "tares" amongst the "wheat," and this would mean the better spiritual prosperity of the "wheat."

The would-be disciples of Jesus heard the question without discerning, of course, its depth; nevertheless, being in the right condition of heart their answer was along proper lines—Rabbi (master), where are you stopping? They seem to have understood that like themselves he was a Galilean, and that like themselves and others he was merely visiting in that vicinity on account of John's mission work, which drew great multitudes. Their question implied in a pleasant way a desire to become more intimately acquainted with Jesus. And he accepted it in this manner, and invited them to his stopping place; as it was about four o'clock in the afternoon they remained with him the remainder of the day, and we may well imagine what the Evangelist has not recorded respecting the pleasure and profit which came to them during these hours of intercourse. As a result they were convinced of Jesus' Messiahship—their own intercourse with him tending to corroborate John's testimony. And thus it is with all who of a true heart seek to know of God's appointed way; not only are they kindly received by the Lord, but the very opportunities for knowledge, fellowship and communion which they desire are granted to them.

Andrew was one of these two disciples of John, and altho the other is not definitely mentioned it is the general supposition that it was the Apostle John himself, who seems to have been of a very modest disposition, quite unwilling to make his own name very prominent in his writings. Thus on other occasions he mentions himself not by name, but as "that disciple whom Jesus loved."—John 13:23; 19:26.

Andrew and John both had brothers, and the implication of the Greek text seems to be that both at once sought their brothers, to bring them to the Lord, but that "Andrew *first findeth* his own brother Simon," and it may be surmised that John through modesty neglected here to mention that he also found his brother James, and brought him to the Lord. This is a good illustration of the proper course for those who have found the Lord—they should at once begin to think of their brethren, friends, neighbors, and should carry the good tidings to them as quickly as possible. It was quite proper that these disciples did not follow the course that some are inclined to follow today, *viz.*, to seek to learn of the Master all that he would communicate, and then go forth and pose as wise ones amongst their friends, giving them the information they had received in driblets, and avoiding the mention of Jesus as the Father's channel of communication of the truth to them. Properly, they investigated privately to an extent sufficient to justify their confidence, and then immediately began to tell the good tidings to their friends. So each one who has found the Lord should seek to make him known to others; and more than this, like Andrew, we should not only seek to acquaint our friends with the fact, but should seek to bring them to the Lord for personal contact with him—such spiritual contact that they may see him with the eye of faith, and hear him with the ear of faith, that they may know him, whom to know is life eternal. Too many take a different course, and are satisfied merely to tell the good news to their friends without bringing them through faith and consecration into contact with the Lord. Let us more and more learn the right way to serve our friends. Let us learn that knowledge is valueless except as it succeeds in bringing the hearer into faith contact with the Saviour.

When Peter was brought to the Lord, "Jesus looked upon him," or as we might express it, "read him through and through," and then said, Your present name is Simon, and you are the son of John, but you shall be called Cephas—Hebrew for Peter (Greek, *petros*, a stone). This may be understood as a kind of prophecy on our Lord's part respecting a great change in Peter's character. Peter was naturally very impulsive—not sufficiently solid, too easily carried about; and yet our Lord evidently saw in him sterling qualities of heart, honesty, sincerity of purpose; and knowing the influence which his teachings and the holy Spirit would exercise upon such a character, he foretold a change which would make of Peter one of the staunchest and most substantial of his corps of disciples. This prophecy of change was implied in the new name given him, signifying solidity—a stone—whereas his previous name, Simon, signified a listener.

Although Peter was the only one of the twelve whose name was thus changed, we may readily suppose that the characters of all were considerably changed, under the influence of the great Teacher and of the holy Spirit, which came upon them at Pentecost. And so it is with all who become the Lord's disciples: to enter the school of Christ and to remain there means, as the Apostle expresses it, that we will be "*transformed* by the renewing of our minds." And the Lord promises all such that they shall have "a new name," expressive of the new character, but which no man can appreciate except those who receive it—the name of Christ.—Rev. 2:17.

In the case of Philip, the order of procedure was reversed, and instead of his coming to the Lord, as did the first two, and instead of his being brought to the Lord, as in the case of Peter and probably James, the Lord, on the contrary, "found him" or approached him on the subject, inviting him to become one of his disciples. This shows us the diversity of divine operation in respect to those who are ready for the truth. It may reach them in one way or in another, but all who are ready for it we may be sure will be brought in contact with Messiah—drawn of the Father. We are not to question that Philip had been previously under divine preparation and drawn into a condition of heart ready to receive Jesus, else he would not have become his follower when invited.

Philip was doubtless acquainted with Andrew and Peter, since they were of the same city, and like Andrew he seems to have thought at once of telling the good tidings to another, and he remembered his friend Nathaniel, whom he knew to be God-fearing, and living in expectation of the fulfilment of the divine promise of the Messiah. We note with pleasure the directness of his presentation of the subject, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law [in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament] and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth." He did not attempt to interest Nathaniel merely with the prospect of joint-heirship in the kingdom, though that of course would be implied indirectly; but he drew attention to our Lord's person. And his language shows that he was not a mere enthusiast, but that he had been making a study of the fact that Messiah had been described by Moses and the prophets, and that he had evidently been endeavoring, to the best of his ability, to test our Lord's title by those predictions and had found satisfactory evidence that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Sent of God. So it should be with all of us when we attempt to present the message of Christ to the attention of others. We should have the promises of God and their fulfilment in mind; and these should be our argument. It is not calling attention to Christ, nor at all following the example of Philip, to assail men with threats of eternal torment, and to urge them to join some human society called a church; nor is it following Philip's example to present as inducements the prospect of financial and social prosperity through church affiliations. On the contrary, the message to be delivered is respecting our Lord, and that he is the Deliverer whom the Father has sent, and that whoever would have the Father's fellowship and blessing must come to Messiah and in him find the wisdom of God and the mercy of God unto salvation.

Nathaniel is commonly understood to be another name for Bartholemew, and he probably, like the others, had been in attendance at John's mission. We may readily suppose that John's work not only attracted to him the social outcasts of Israel, seeking a life of reformation, but that it drew to him also certain colaborers in the work, who were known as his "disciples," and who assisted him in administering baptism to those who came as repentant sinners. (John 4:1, 2) This offers another suggestion respecting these Israelites indeed, who were of John's company, and were thus introduced earliest to Jesus, and were ready to become his disciples: their fidelity to righteousness, and their endeavor to serve the Lord according to the best of their ability, led directly to their more intimate association with Jesus and his service. So doubtless we will find it today, that some who are engaged in works of reform from proper motives are specially prepared for deeper truths, and grander privileges in connection with the present harvest work, and we should be willing to put ourselves in the way of such, after the example of our Lord with these his first disciples.

Nathaniel seems to have been rather of the incredulous type of mind; he was fearful that his friend Philip was being deceived by an impostor, and he began to offer objections. Nazareth itself was noted as being rather a fanatical city; besides, no doubt Nathaniel had in mind the declaration of the prophet respecting Bethlehem as the city that would be honored as Messiah's birthplace, and so he inquired, Is it reasonable for us to expect that any great good would come from Nazareth? Is there any Scripture to that effect? He was of course ignorant of the fact that our Lord was born in Bethlehem, and taken as an infant to the home of Joseph in Nazareth. His question, and the reasoning which it implies, were evidently very proper. But as we note Philip's reply, we are full of admiration for its simplicity and wisdom. He did not attempt to explain matters which are difficult to be understood, and which had not yet been explained to him; nor did he waver in his faith because of this suggestion of doubt. On the contrary he said, "Come and see:" when you have seen the man, and have heard him as I have, no doubt will remain in your mind that he is no ordinary man, and that he is all he claims to be.

It would be well if all of the Lord's dear followers would learn well a proper, simple directness of approach on religious subjects, exemplified by Philip's words to Nathaniel; and also they should learn not to attempt to take the Master's place, but to bring all true Israelites direct to him, as the Teacher, the explainer of the obscure features connected with himself and his work. Matters often look differently on the outside from what they appear on the inside, as faith and greater privilege display them. God has purposely arranged it so that those who look from the outside only see many inconsistencies, inharmonies and undesirable features, while those who get to view matters from the inside standpoint of faith can see riches of grace, beauty, harmony, divine workmanship. And this exterior view is the one that naturally comes to all of us first, as it came to Nathaniel, and the proper course to be pursued is that suggested by Philip—come on the inside and see how it looks; take the standpoint of faith in the divine revelation, and from that standpoint note the grandeur of the divine plan.

This same lesson is pointedly illustrated by an anecdote told by Pastor Spurgeon, deceased, of a man who was invited into an orchard to eat some of the fruit; he refused, for he said that he had picked up some of the apples by the roadside that fell from the trees, and they were poor and bitter. The owner replied those trees were placed there on purpose, so that bad boys would not be attracted into the orchard to steal. "But," said he, "come inside, and there the apples are delicious." Thus it is with those who see Christianity only from the exterior. They see many misrepresentations of true religion and true faith in prominent places, and even if they be able to distinguish as between the true Christianity and its misrepresentation in churchianity, they are apt to see only the self-denials, the crosses, the persecution for righteousness' sake, etc., and know nothing comparatively of the heavenly peace and blessing enjoyed by those who have entered into newness of life with Christ, who are supported well by the gracious promises of the divine Word and by the fellowship of spirit granted to them, which permits them to rejoice even in tribulation and count their disadvantages as but light afflictions enduring but for a moment, when compared with their higher joys, and their hopes that these shall be eternal.

Let us leave this lesson with two thoughts specially clear before our minds: (1) The importance of finding the Lord, and not merely of gaining information about him. (2) The propriety and importance of seeking out the "brethren," and of bringing them not merely to a knowledge of abstract truth, but especially to the Lord, and to intimate communion and fellowship with him.

THE KINGDOM ATTAINABLE ONLY BY A NEW BIRTH

FEB. 11.—JOHN 3:1-18.

Nicodemus was evidently a good man, and "not far from the kingdom"—not far from the attitude of heart necessary to the attainment of the kingdom. He was a man of learning and influence, a prominent member of the chief sect of the Jews, and one of the judges of their chief or Supreme Court, the Sanhedrim. His wealth, learning, etc., gave him advantages over many of the poor and unlearned, and yet they also brought disadvantages, as our Lord on another occasion expressed it: "How hardly [with what difficulty] shall they that have riches [of any kind] enter into the kingdom of God." It would naturally be more difficult for a man of large influence and social standing to receive instructions from Jesus, and to become his follower, than for humble fishermen to do so; pride, social caste, thought of what people would think and say, etc., would all tend to hinder him. For these reasons, as well as possibly with a hope to have a more quiet conversation, Nicodemus visited Jesus by night—semi-secretly.

Evidently he had been impressed by the teachings and the miracles of our Lord, for we find him ready to acknowledge Jesus as a great Teacher sent of God, although not ready to confess him the Messiah. Our Lord's ministry, while commending him to Nicodemus, was evidently a very different one from what he had expected of Messiah. As a Jew he of course had the usual Jewish thought respecting the kingdom of God, *viz.*, that Israel was that kingdom, merely shorn of its power by the Gentiles until Messiah should appear for its deliverance and to subjugate all nations before Israel, that the Jewish law might become the law of the world, going forth with power from Jerusalem. Nicodemus discerned the wide difference between such hopes and the kind of a kingdom proclaimed by Jesus and his disciples. We may reasonably infer, therefore, that his queries, though not stated, were along this line, and our Lord's replies, quoted with greater detail, so intimate.

It was with astonishment that Nicodemus heard from the great Teacher that himself and others of the Jewish nation could not possibly enter the kingdom without being born anew; and naturally his mind ran to the natural birth and he inquired how it was possible that a full-grown man could be born over again. Such a question was desired by our Lord, and gave opportunity for the explanation that the first birth which all experience, *viz.*, the birth of the flesh, by which mankind is born to human nature, and with a *flesh body*, is a type, a figure, an illustration of a higher spiritual birth, to a spiritual nature with a *spirit body.* "That which is born of the flesh is *flesh:* that which is born of the spirit, *is spirit.*" As a man cannot see trees, houses, flowers, etc., nor enter into the enjoyment of these, until after he has been born of the flesh, so likewise no one can either see or enter into the heavenly kingdom, except he be born of the spirit. In other words, a human being can see earthly things, but only a heavenly or spirit-born one can see and share in the heavenly things: and the long promised kingdom of God, the Millennial age, for which Israel was waiting, is to be a spiritual kingdom and not an earthly one, composed of spirit beings and not flesh beings; and only those born of water and of the spirit would ever see or enter into that kingdom.

The reference to water was probably suggested by some question from Nicodemus, respecting John and his baptism unto repentance—whether or not this had anything to do with the new birth. Our Lord's answer associates John's baptism of water unto repentance with the spirit begetting which began at Pentecost. Repentance from sin was essential to the right condition of heart which would prepare a Jew for transfer from the earthly typical kingdom, and make him ready for the

begetting of the holy Spirit through which, if obedient, he would finally be born into the heavenly kingdom in "the first resurrection." This use of the word "born" as representing resurrection is a Scriptural one, for do we not read that our Lord Jesus in his resurrection was "the first-*born* from the dead"—"the first-*born* amongst many brethren"—and was it not in respect to these "brethren" who would with him be *sharers in the kingdom* that he addressed Nicodemus?—Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15, 18.

While we hold that this Scripture in its full, ultimate meaning, relates to the first resurrection of the kingdom class into kingdom power, glory, honor and immortality, we nevertheless concede that the word *genao* is sometimes rendered *begotten*. We concede also that every one who is to be *born* of the spirit in the first resurrection must first be *begotten* of the spirit in the present life. We concede also that the new life now begun is frequently spoken of as though the new creature were *already born* by a figurative resurrection to newness of life. "You hath he quickened [made alive, by a figurative resurrection] who were dead in trespasses and sins." But these partial and figurative uses of the words "alive" and "resurrection" and "born" should not be permitted to discount our thought respecting the realities and powers and glories which can be attained only by a share in the actual first resurrection—"born from the dead."

While Jesus was talking with Nicodemus quite probably the wind whistled through the apartment in which they were sitting, rattling the doors, etc., and Jesus seized upon this as a good illustration by which to convey to the mind of Nicodemus the difference between human beings and spirit beings, and to give him a clearer conception of the nature and powers of the class who would compose the spiritual kingdom when set up in power and great glory. He said, The wind blows where it pleases; you hear its sound, but cannot know whence it comes nor whither it goes; and so it will be with those born of the spirit—all inheritors of the heavenly kingdom: they will be as invisible and can go and come as the wind, and men in the flesh will be unable to see them, as they are unable to see the wind, though they will be everywhere present and influential, as is the wind.

Nicodemus was astounded at the thought that the kingdom of God would be so different from what himself and others had expected. All this should not have been so strange to Nicodemus: he should have remembered that the powers which our Lord described as those which would belong to the spirit-born class were the very powers which in the past from time to time had been manifested through holy angels, who being sent on special missions appeared suddenly, and when their mission was accomplished, vanished just as suddenly, coming and going like the wind—none knew whence or whither. Nicodemus, as a teacher of the Law, should have had these things in mind, and our Lord rather reproves him for not grasping the subject quickly: Are you, a teacher in Israel, ignorant of these things? Is it difficult for you, who are acquainted with the Law, to realize these teachings? I have been telling you only such things as are known and to a considerable extent have been demonstrated amongst men through the ministry of angels, yet you are unwilling to receive the testimony. How could you expect to believe, if I should proceed to explain to you heavenly and spiritual things pertaining to that kingdom? You surely would be unprepared for such information. Nor would Nicodemus have been to blame for not understanding spiritual things if our Lord had told of them; for only the spirit-begotten can clearly grasp and appreciate those things. Our Lord was explaining to him that he must not expect a comprehension of such things at that time, but should merely expect a partial understanding, sufficient, however, as a basis of faith; clearer comprehension would come with the spirit baptism at Pentecost. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. . . . God hath revealed them unto us [spirit-begotten ones] by his Spirit" (1 Cor. 2:14, 10), and we may enter into the realities when born from the dead in his likeness.

Continuing, our Lord reminded Nicodemus that no man had ever ascended into heaven [none had ever been there, or seen heavenly things] except he himself, who had come down from the heavenly condition to the earthly condition—even the Son of Man.* Although aside from the main line of this lesson, it is not amiss that we here note the harmony of our Lord's words with the words of the Apostle Peter in his discourse on the day of Pentecost, "David is not ascended into the heavens." (Acts 2:34) All the testimonies of the Scriptures are in harmony on this subject, although opposed by nearly all uninspired writers, heathen as well as Christian, who follow the traditions of men instead of giving heed to the sure Word of God.

Having thus answered Nicodemus' questions to the very limit of possibility at the time, our Lord turned the subject, and by way of showing the grand basis for this spiritual kingdom, and that he himself could not enter into that kingdom while still in the flesh (1 Cor. 15:50), but that he must also be "changed" to spirit conditions by resurrection, he points out his coming ignominious death, and how it was illustrated and typified by Moses and the brazen serpent in the wilderness. The whole world is bitten by the fiery serpent of sin. The whole world is dying, and it was needful that our Lord Jesus should be lifted up as a sin-offering on behalf of the world, that he might subsequently be lifted up in glory, and in order that having thus paid the penalty for all, eternal life might be offered to all—"that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

In passing the point, let us notice that our Lord said not a word respecting any danger of the world going into eternal torment, nor did he utter a word respecting the salvation of any in ignorance. His declaration was that the world was *perishing*, and that the only way in which they could obtain eternal life at all would be through believing in him. So then to all who are willing to take the simple statement of God's Word, it is clear enough that the wicked who reject the Lord cannot have eternal life, and hence could not spend an eternity in misery, because without life there can be no feeling—without life they are *perished*. It is clear enough also that whoever shall be saved in this age or in the age to come must be saved by *believing* in Jesus, and cannot be saved through ignorance, according to this Gospel, which is the only authorized one.

Then our Lord gave Nicodemus a brief statement of why the Heavenly Father has provided the blessing which he had been describing—the kingdom, and the lifting up or sacrifice of the Son of Man as a prerequisite. The reason is God's sympathetic love for humanity. He beheld that although mankind were sharers in father Adam's sentence of death, yet many amongst them would, if granted an opportunity, gladly accept the divine arrangement, and come back into at-one-ment with their God, and rejoice to abide in his favor and to do his will. On this account God had sympathy for mankind, and prepared a great plan of salvation, of which the first coming of Jesus in the flesh as a *sacrifice for sins* was the first step or manifestation. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son [to humiliation and sacrifice in death], that whosoever believeth in him should not *perish*, but have [obtain] everlasting life." It has been said by some one that this 16th verse is the golden verse of the Bible, containing more than any other one a condensed statement of the Gospel. Luther called this verse "the little Gospel," or "the little Bible."

Perhaps in answer to another question, or perhaps merely as a part of the further discourse to Nicodemus, our Lord next explained to him that God's object in sending his Son into the world was not to have the world condemned, for the world was already condemned, sharing with Adam the original condemnation or sentence of death. On the contrary, God sent his Son to save the world—*to recover mankind from that sentence or condemnation*. This is in harmony with another statement of Scripture which declares of believers that "There is now . . . *no condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:1), yet only believers have thus escaped; all the remainder of the world are still under wrath, "children of wrath," and there is no other way of escape except through Christ, for "There is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved."

The 18th verse is in harmony with this thought, that believers escape the condemnation that is on the world, but that those who do not accept of Christ *remain under the condemnation* already upon them at birth, as Adam's heirs. Nevertheless, as is declared in the 19th verse, the condemnation already upon men is justified by their course, if after seeing the light they do not love it, but reject it, and fight against it. However, we are to remember in this connection the Apostle's declaration that many in the present time see only in part, the god of this world blinding them more or less completely. (2 Cor. 4:4) And we rejoice in the assurance of the same Apostle (John 1:9) that Jesus is the true Light, which ultimately, in the kingdom, shall be a great Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his beams, which shall shed forth light and knowledge to every member of the human family during his Millennial reign; so that all shall have the fullest opportunity of ceasing to be "children of wrath," and of escaping the condemnation that is on them through Adam's disobedience, and of coming back through the Mediator, during the times of restitution, to all the good things lost through sin.—Acts 3:19-21.

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* Oldest Greek MSS. omit the words, *"which is in heaven."*

While our Lord in his discourse to Nicodemus dealt only with the new birth of "the church which is his body," and which with him, born of the spirit, shall constitute the heavenly kingdom that shall bless the world, he nevertheless elsewhere intimates that the restitution blessings which shall come to mankind will be also after the nature of a new birth, though not a birth to spiritual conditions. Speaking to his disciples of the Millennial kingdom, when they should sit with him in his throne—the times of restitution—he calls that Millennial age and work *regeneration*—Greek, *palingenesia*. (Matt. 19:28) This is not the same word rendered "born again," but signifies more nearly restitution, restoration or renovation.

NOTHING TO DRAW WITH AND THE WELL IS DEEP

FEB. 18.—JOHN 4:5-26.

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Samaria was the name of a stretch of country lying between Judea and Galilee; we might call it a county and say that its chief city, of the same name, was its county seat. Its inhabitants were known as Samaritans, and the Jews, while dealing with them commercially, would have no intercourse with them socially and religiously, but treated them in every respect as they treated Gentiles in general, as being outside of divine favor, "aliens and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, without God, and having no hope in the world." (Eph. 2:12) The ancestors of these Samaritans were Gentiles, and were transported to Samaria centuries before, as the Israelites were transported to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar. (2 Kings 17:24-41) These Gentiles, through contact with the Jews, and through intermarriage with certain renegade Jews, obtained a smattering of knowledge of the Jewish hopes and worship, combining these to some extent with false ideas of their own. As a people they are described by the Apostle's words as feeling after God, if haply they might find him. (Acts 17:27) But the time had not yet come for God to reveal himself to the world, or in any sense of the word to accept Gentiles: thus far all divine favor had been concentrated upon Israel, the seed of Abraham, and upon only such of those as maintained their covenant relationship by circumcision; hence the Jews were *right* in not acknowledging the Samaritans, and in having no dealings with them religiously, nor intermarrying with them socially. This was not a matter of bigotry, but of divine regulation and prohibition.—Deut. 7:1-6.

It will be remembered that our Lord distinctly set the seal of his approval to this course, when sending forth his disciples to declare the kingdom of God at hand. He said to them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and *into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not;* for I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the *"house of Israel."* We remember, too, the city of the Samaritans concerning which the Apostles James and John said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire from heaven, to consume them?" To whom Jesus answered, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of. The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Nevertheless, we remember that Jesus would not perform his miracles in healing the Samaritan sick, and that it was for this reason that the Samaritans resented and would not receive him, or permit him to pass through their city on his journey.—Luke 9:51-56

It was during one of these numerous journeys from Judah through Samaria, en route to Galilee, that our Lord, wearied from the exhaustion of preaching and from the further exhaustion of his vitality in healing the sick, and from journeying, rested at Jacob's well, while his disciples turned aside to a village to purchase provisions.

Jacob's well had a great reputation throughout that region, because of the purity of its waters; that being a limestone country most of the water found was brackish, but Jacob's well, sunk to a depth of over a hundred feet, and about eight feet in diameter, struck a crevice in the rock, which yielded a large supply of desirable water. We are to remember, too, the scarcity of water in that part of the country, especially at some seasons of the year, which accounts for the fact that the Samaritan woman of our lesson had quite a distance to come to obtain her supply at this good and never failing well-spring. When she arrived, Jesus, who was sitting on the curb of the well, resting, was at once recognized by her as a Jew, and she was at once recognized by him as a Samaritan, not merely by facial lineaments, but also by distinctive features of dress—the Jews having a white fringe on their garments, while the Samaritans used blue.

For a Jew to make a request, to ask a courtesy, of a Samaritan, was unusual; and consequently when Jesus asked for a drink of the water the woman was drawing she was astonished enough to inquire how it came that he, a Jew, would make such a request of her, a Samaritan, and her question has in it the element of boldness, which is explained later on by her acknowledgment that she was not a virtuous woman. All this, however, makes it the more remarkable that our Lord would condescend to have any intercourse with her. There is a lesson in this, however, along the line of the Apostle's words, "Condescend to men of low estate." We cannot avoid supposing that the reason why many Christian people would utterly disdain to speak to such a woman is that they have almost unconsciously to themselves imbibed the spirit of their religious teachings, which would declare that God would so abominate such a person that he would deliver her over to the devil, to be eternally tormented, as soon as she came into his hands at death. They reason, almost unconsciously, that one so despised of the Lord should be shunned and spurned by humanity. They need a clearer knowledge of the divine Word respecting God's attitude toward sinners, his unwillingness that any should perish, and his provision that the wilfully wicked, who reject all his mercies, shall not be tormented, but be blotted out of existence. (2 Pet. 3:9; Acts 3:23) True views of the divine character and plan are very helpful to God's people in shaping their course properly.

Had there been a company of Jews to whom the Lord could have talked at this time, we are bound to suppose that his energies would have been expended on their behalf, to the neglect of the disreputable Samaritan; but there being none of the "children" to be "fed" at the time, he let some of the crumbs of knowledge and blessing fall to the Samaritans, who, like the Gentiles, were not "children," but in comparison were "dogs." (See Matt. 15:27) Our Lord's course here is an instruction for his followers, an illustration of the Apostle's words that we should "do good *unto all men as we have opportunity,* especially to the household of faith." Further, it illustrates our Lord's own declaration, that it was his meat and drink to do the Father's will, to be engaged in the Father's business. Although he was weary, and knew that further talking would interfere with his rest and refreshment, he was ready to sacrifice his own convenience that he might be helpful to another, even to a social outcast. So the Apostle exhorts all of the Lord's people to be "instant in season and out of season," in preaching to willing ears.

There was wisdom in our Lord's method of introducing himself to the woman. He made a request that would not be difficult for her to comply with, and at the same time he laid himself under obligation to her; and experience shows that this is one of the best methods of approaching all—condescension and an expression of confidence in their generosity, with the implication which it gives of willingness to return the favor in some manner.

Not heeding the rudeness of the woman's reply to his request, our Lord proceeded to teach a lesson respecting the grace of God, using the good water of Jacob's deep well as an illustration, telling the woman that if she understood the privilege she enjoyed she in turn would be asking him for "living water"—flowing water, not stagnant, always fresh. She perceived that there was some deep meaning to our Lord's words. He could not refer to Jacob's well, for he had no leather bucket and cord with which to draw from it; hence her inquiry, Whence hast thou living water? Father Jacob provided this well, and knew of no better water for himself and family. Are you able to provide better water than this? Are you greater than he? Our Lord then led another step in the exposition of spiritual things, assuring her that the water which he had to give was of a different kind; that it would not only satisfy thirst for the time being, but would be a continual well-spring within, ever giving satisfaction.

Water, living water, pure water, is a wonderful symbol, very expressive to everyone: and thirst is another. Thirst is desire, craving, longing. Physical thirst is said to be much more painful than physical hunger. The latter loses its powers gradually in weakness, but thirst continues and intensifies hourly until the very last breath. Water is that which quenches, which satisfies this demand of nature: and so there is also a soul-thirst and a water of life which alone can satisfy it.

Every ambition and desire is a thirst. A man's greatness, his individuality, is measured (1) by the number of his thirsts or desires; (2) by the character or quality of those thirsts or desires; (3) by the capacity and intensity of those thirsts or desires. And true education is the instructor of men as respects proper and improper desires, or thirsts: and respecting which should be gratified, and how to do so most wisely. He who has no desires has nothing to satisfy, and is practically a nonentity. The lesson of life is not that we should be without desires and plenty of them, but that these desires should be transformed from sinful desires to righteous desires, from sinful cravings to holy cravings. Thus the followers of the Lord are to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and are to be filled—satisfied—not by losing their desires, but by realizing them—by appropriating the Lord's provision, which is abundant and continuous, satisfying all proper longings. Improper longings are to be resisted, controlled, rooted out, while proper longings are to be built up, cultivated, to be supplied and to be enjoyed forever.

This satisfying water of life can be obtained from no other source than our Redeemer, and all who have received it well know it and can never be sufficiently thankful for it; for in it they have the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts. Instead of thirst for honor amongst men, they have the thirst for fellowship and honor with the Heavenly Father and the Redeemer. Instead of a thirst for earthly wealth, their transformed desires now thirst for heavenly treasures. Instead of thirst for sensual pleasures, their desires are transformed so that their chiefest joys and desires are for spiritual pleasures. And all these thirsts are abundantly and continually satisfied through the refreshment of the Word of Truth, and the holy Spirit of the truth—the water of life. which is communicated to us by our Redeemer, and is in each one a perennial living fountain.

Of course the Samaritan woman did not grasp the meaning of our Lord's words, nor could we, under the same circumstances. for we are to remember that the well from which our Lord gives us to drink is deep, and that neither the Samaritan woman nor we have anything to draw with. We, however, living under the new dispensation of the holy Spirit, have been abundantly supplied, for, as the Apostle declares, "The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the *deep things* of God. . . . That we might know [appreciate, be satisfied with] the things that are freely given unto us of God."—1 Cor. 2:10, 12.

Our Lord did not answer the woman's request for the true water of life, (1) because the time for bestowing the holy Spirit of the truth had not yet come, and did not come until after the great sacrifice at Calvary—until Pentecost. (2) Because she was a Samaritan, and as such could not receive divine favor and the holy Spirit until the appointed time, which was not until the door of favor would be open to all Gentiles—not until three and a half years after Pentecost: nevertheless the woman's interest and faith and the faith of her townsmen seem to indicate an honesty of heart pleasing to the Lord, on account of which he let fall to them some "crumbs" of comforting truth which may have prepared them for the Gospel when later it was fully opened to them and to all Gentiles. (3) Because the woman was not yet in the condition of heart to receive the water of life. It was unnecessary to explain to the woman the first two reasons, since the last was a barrier which she could more readily understand, and hence our Lord called her attention to the fact that she was living in sin. She perceived that he was gifted with a prophetic insight which permitted him a stranger to know of her sinful course of life, without asking.

It may be queried why our Lord would thus confer with a woman unprepared to receive the blessings he had to give, and one to whom he could not have given the blessing then, even if she had been prepared. The answer is (1) that he was making use of an opportunity to its fullest possible advantage; (2) that despite her sinful course of life the Lord saw traits of honesty in the woman's character, evidenced from the narrative: (3) he might reasonably hope that the influence of this discourse might tend toward righteousness and toward a true thirst for the water of life, which six years later, under the general preaching of the Gospel (without restriction to the Jews) might bring some of these Samaritans to a realization of the fact that the well of the water of life is deep, that they had nothing wherewith to draw, and that if they would have this satisfying portion they must receive it as a gift from him who laid down his life that he might have the privilege of supplying the water of life to whosoever wills. And should the poor Samaritan woman never have come under the influence of the Gospel, with an opportunity to drink of the water of life, we have the assurance of the divine Word that such an opportunity will be granted to her in the future, together with all who do not now have an opportunity.

We praise the Lord for the information afforded us in his Word, that although the water of life is now given individually, and enjoyed only by the "elect," "even as many as the Lord our God shall call," yet the time is coming that it shall no longer be thus a well of water *springing up within* the Lord's people, but during the Millennial age will be a river of water of life, broad and full and clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and of the bride the Lamb's wife and joint-heir, to all the families of the earth: and that then there will not only be trees of life, whose leaves will be for the healing, restitution, of the nations, but that the Spirit and the bride (then glorified) shall say, Come and he that heareth may say, Come, and whosoever will may come and have the water of life freely.—Rev. 22:17.

The Samaritan woman seemed anxious to avoid any discussion of her own character and life, and skilfully turned the question to a theological one—whether the Jews or the Samaritans were right in their different views respecting divine worship and its proper place. And in this we see that human nature is much the same today. Men and women of today would rather discuss theological problems and denominational controversies, than turn their glance inward, and note the inconsistencies of their own lives, with a desire to reform them. Nor did our Lord too closely press the moral question he had so promptly touched and to some extent made sensitive, and his course in this should be a lesson to his followers. It is sufficient that attention be called to a wrong, and often this is more efficacious than if they be teased and angered, and put on the defensive, by disrespectful "nagging."

Our Lord summed up in few words a great lesson respecting the proper worship of God. He told the woman most pointedly that the Samaritans had neither part nor lot in the matter, and worshiped they knew not what, while the Jews, on the contrary, were following the divine instruction. Nevertheless, he pointed to the fact that a great dispensational change was imminent, in which all distinctions and barriers of place and manner would pass away, and that under the new dispensation of this Gospel age any and all having ears to hear and eyes to see God's grace would be permitted to worship God anywhere, but only in spirit (with the heart, sincerely), and in truth, in harmony with the divine arrangement, in the true way—through Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and by whom alone there is access to the Father—the Messiah, the procurer and dispenser of the water of life.

An Oriental fable tells of a fountain whose waters were infused with a peculiar power, so that wherever a drop of this water fell on a barren plain it caused a new fountain to gush forth, so that provided with this water the traveler might pass through any desert, however wide or dry, and be always refreshed.

"Wild and fanciful the legend; yet may not meanings high,
Visions of better things to come, within its shadow lie?
Type of a better fountain, to mortals now unsealed,
The full, free salvation of Christ our Lord revealed!

"Beneath the cross those waters lie, and he who finds them there,
All through the wilderness of life the living stream may bear;
And blessings follow in his steps, until where'er he goes
The moral wastes begin to bud, and blossom as the rose!"

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

The anniversary of our Lord's death reckoned according to Jewish calendar will this year be April 13 at 3 p. m.—consequently the celebration of the Memorial Supper will be on the previous evening, April 12, after six o'clock p. m. We make this early announcement for the sake of friends afar off. Further statements and local announcements later.

Gethsemane can I forget?
Or there thy conflict see,
Thine agony and bloody sweat,
And not remember thee?

When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my Sacrifice,
I must remember thee.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother Russell:—A few days since dear Brother Norcott was in to call on me, and in the course of our conversation he mentioned you, and that he had often had a desire to meet you in the flesh, but that it was quite improbable now. He is getting very feeble, and it is a great effort for him to get about much, but he is anxious to do all he possibly can. Some time ago he felt a little better and took his horse and cart and went out and sold nine Dawns. He returned beaming with joy that the Lord had so blessed his work. It is hard for him to write, and he wished me, some time when I would be writing to you, to tell you of his great love for you as a brother in Christ, and his gratefulness to you for all the interest you had taken in him while he was in the colporteur work. He said that doubtless you knew of his love and prayers already, but that sometimes it was strengthening to us if some of the brethren came to us with a message of love, and he was sure you would appreciate the motive with which it was sent. Also that he was remembering you before the throne of favor, that our dear Master would grant you the needed grace to finish the work before you. So I write this to you.

And, my dear brother, I can also add that that is my own prayer on your behalf. I sometimes think we are too apt to hide our love and not express it as we should, and thus others may come to feel that we do not love them. May the dear Lord bless you abundantly, more than you are able to think. We wish to thank you for the strong nourishing food you have been spreading before us in the Towers lately.

Your brother, by the favor of the Lord,

W. E. VanAmburgh.—*South Dakota.*

[We cannot express in words our deep appreciation of the love of the brethren so often expressed in their letters as above. We assure these dear brethren and all that their love is most heartily reciprocated. We love the brethren and take pleasure in laying down our life in their service. We are glad to know that you remember us and the Lord's "harvest" work, which he has been pleased to center here in Allegheny, in your prayers. If we may judge from the letters received, thousands of prayers ascend daily on our behalf. We cannot tell you how deeply we appreciate this: it keeps us humble as we remember our needs, and it strengthens us as we remember the Lord's sufficiency and his willingness to pour out his blessings in answer to your prayers and ours. These prayers and the divine power to which they are attached are to our hearts a bulwark against the many Satan-blinded foes who beset you and us continually because of our loyalty to the Lord and his Word.

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
They shall prosper that love thee."—Psa. 122:6.

These words are as true of the Jerusalem the higher and her children of peace as of the earthly Jerusalem. Those who are praying the Lord's blessing upon his cause are seeking to serve it and are proportionately blessed. Those who are indifferent to the welfare of Zion and the Lord's cause now, are standing in a slippery place and are in great danger of falling.

Continue, dear brethren and sisters, to pray for us (1 Thes. 5:25; Heb. 13:18), and be assured that, as the Apostle Paul said, we have a care for all the churches and for the scattered sheep, and continually bear you upon our heart before the throne of the heavenly grace, and watch as well as pray for your interests and welfare.—See Heb. 13:17; 2 Cor. 11:28; 2 Thes. 1:11; Phil. 1:9. —Editor.]

Dear Brother:—Spiritual feasts, comforting, encouraging, instructive and edifying, did all the meetings, conducted by our dear Pilgrim Brother, Frank Draper, prove to be, and our only regret is that his stay with us was of necessity so limited, although even longer than we had hoped for. The public meetings, of which we had two, in a non-sectarian chapel were well attended considering the inclemency of the weather, fully fifty being present at each. As an immediate result of one of these, it is with pleasure that we announce at least one party was apparently thoroughly aroused and keenly interested, who formerly opposed present truth.

We desire to gratefully thank you and those contributing to the support of these Pilgrim brethren, for the blessed season we have enjoyed, and can heartily commend to any of the household of faith Brother Draper as an able and loving expounder of the Word of God, doing indeed a noble work for the cause of Truth, as it is in Christ Jesus our Redeemer, Exemplar and Lord, in thus visiting and exhorting to deeper consecration the little scattered groups.

Hearing of the beneficial nature of the recent conventions, it has been mentioned that perhaps much good would result in a similar gathering at this place during the State Fair and Exposition next fall, and we were glad to learn through Brother D. that hopes of such a meeting were also entertained and mentioned by interested ones he had thus far met in Texas, Arkansas and Indian and Oklahoma Territories, and we therefore take the liberty of mentioning the matter to you for advisement. If so, a cordial, brotherly welcome awaits you and other friends, who would be entertained to the extent of our ability.

The Musical Towers ordered were promptly received and used to advantage at meetings.

Our prayers are with you and we crave yours, to the effect that we may be faithful overcomers, even unto death. Yours in Christ, E. W. Brenneisen.—*Texas.*

Dear Brother Russell:—I feel inclined to give you a brief account of our Volunteer work, even though you may hear from others concerning the same.

We put out about 450 of the booklets last Sunday evening. I felt compelled to go out with the others, as I had been thinking of the letters in last Tower and of the blessed privilege thus offered us of sharing in the blessing that surely comes to those who do thus serve Him. I would urge all in every place to take up this good work of serving God's household of faith (of whom there may be many yet in Babylon) with this "meat in due season."

By a singular coincident I went first to the M. E. church, where I was converted 25 years ago. The second booklet I gave out was to a young man who offered to pay for it. Upon being assured that it was freely given to all Bible students, he still urged that I accept a dime and send it to the Tract Society, which I will do quite soon.

A little boy came running down, asking me if I would give him another one of those "little Bibles" for an old lady who wanted it.

How true that "Obedience is better that sacrifice," as it is first, or preëminent, and surely involves the true and acceptable sacrifice. How many we see, especially among the sisters of the Roman Catholic system, and also foreign missionaries who are making great sacrifices, yet not according to a knowledge of his plan, and consequently misdirected.

Jesus said, "My sheep hear (obey) *my* voice." "We ought to obey God rather than men." I firmly believe that all are doing this, who engage in the harvest work, which is evidently under the guidance of the Chief Reaper.

The church here has been greatly benefited by the publication of the Washington and Boston letters in last Tower. This is clearly discernable in the increased zeal of all for the work. May we not reasonably hope that the increase of zeal here and in other places may be prophetic of a larger work during the coming year?

May our heavenly Father bless the work to the glory of his name, and preserve us all with you unto the establishment of his kingdom! Yours in the hope of the high calling.

Mrs. C. A. Owen.—*Indiana.*

[Two letters have been received from sisters in Christ who are mothers, who are surprised at our advice to Hugo Kuehn in the January 1st Watch Tower. One is surprised that we would approve of anything that would bring the boy into touch with sectarianism; the other wonders whether or not all boys' clubs under church auspices are of the kind known to her, and if so she wonders very much that we could advise boys who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus to have anything to do with them. She says that in addition to the gymnasium for physical culture, they have cigars, cigarettes, billiards, boxing gloves, etc., all calculated to lead a boy far from the narrow way of true discipleship.

We certainly did not suppose that the basements of churches were used in such a manner, nor can we yet think that this is the usual custom; it would seem too extreme to be general. We hope that those known to this sister are rare exceptions. We assuredly would advise all boys who seek to walk in the footsteps of our Lord to shun all such places, and rather to do without the gymnastic exercises, if they could only be obtained under such conditions.

Our thought, in answering Hugo's question, was that the boys' clubs were merely lecture and recreation guilds, entirely harmless and at the same time profitable, and that the only question was whether or not its association with a nominal church system should properly separate from it those who sought to please the Lord. Our answer was along these lines, and we still think that a wide distinction should be observed as between joining a church, being bound with a misrepresenting creed, etc., and joining a boys' club without creed or other bondage except as respects good morals, and not for religious purposes, but merely for coöperation in obtaining the privileges of the lecture course and the use of the gymnasium at a moderate expense. To mingle with moral boys in this way is, in our judgment, merely a business transaction, and the same rules which would hinder a boy from thus associating with other boys in a moral and creedless club would similarly hinder the Christian father of the boy from dealing in any kind of worldly business with sectarian Christians and others. The Apostle seems to imply this point in 1 Cor. 5:10.

But we would sincerely regret to be understood as advising countenancing or having any sympathy with the kind of boys' clubs described by our sister's letter. Far better that the Christian boy should have no use of gymnastic appliances, or that he should construct some for his own use; far better that he should never mingle with other boys at all, than that he should run the least risk of having his heart polluted; for we remember how broadly applicable are the Apostle's words, "Evil communications corrupt good manners."—1 Cor. 15:33. —Editor.]

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

PULPIT VIEWS ON THE MILLENNIUM

The Philadelphia press recently interviewed the ministers of Pennsylvania and New Jersey on the subject of the Millennium, asking:—*Do you believe that the Biblical Millennium is at hand?* The majority of the responses denied faith in a Millennium, some expressed an expectation that the churches would bring it about by missionary effort, and a few declared faith in a reign of Christ near at hand, as follows:—

Rev. William McNally, Harrisburg, Pa., has made a careful study of the "Millennium" question. He says:—

"I believe that the millennium period is near—that we are living in the 'last days,' foretold in the Bible. The prophecies are all being fulfilled and the signs of the time all indicate it. There are 'wars and rumors of wars' now; there is moral laxity everywhere; the average church attendance is startlingly small, only 36 people out of every 100 attend any church in this country. There is moral and political corruption.

"All of these things indicate the approach of the millennium, as anyone may see by looking up the references in the Bible on this subject.

"The millennium will not be brought about by any human agency. We are not growing better."

Rev. Clarence E. Eberman, Lancaster, Pa., pastor of the Moravian church and president of the Pennsylvania Christian Endeavor Union said:—

"Sentiment or speculation can decide very little on this great question. The Bible alone offers the authoritative teaching. I believe confidently that Christ is coming again and that his second advent will usher in his kingly reign of a thousand years upon this earth."

Rev. George Fulton, Lebanon, Pa., pastor of the Fourth Street Presbyterian church, said:—

"I believe that the evidence of the nearness of the millennium is stronger than ever before. Signs have been found in every generation since Christ's ascent that pointed to his coming. The principal proofs are wars and earthquakes, distress of nations, sea and waves roaring, lawlessness and iniquity prevailing to an alarming degree. The Bible says 'When the Gospel of the kingdom shall have been preached to all the world as a witness unto all nations, then cometh the end.' This is a sign. It belongs only to our own age and the evidence here is strong. Another sign is the prophetic movement,—the restoration of Israel which has begun."

Rev. Sydney N. Ussher, West Chester, Pa., rector of the Church of the Sure Foundation, said:—

"The Millennium is a divine conception, with Scripture the only source of light and authority. No definite time is stated therein. I believe, however, the world is fast preparing for it."

Rev. William J. Houck, Carlisle, Pa., pastor of Grace United Brethren church, says:—

"I believe that the Biblical millennium is at hand."

Rev. M. E. McLinn, Bloomsburg, Pa., pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran church, says:—

"I am certain that a great change is imminent. Everything points clearly to a mighty social and religious upheaval and reconstruction. The very fact that this subject occupies men's thoughts so largely and that the 'secular press' asks the question is proof of it to me."

Pastor F. Jonte Stanley, of the First Presbyterian church, Atlantic City, N. J., believes "that the signs of the times, as I read them, point to the millennium as not being far off. One of the indications is the gathering of the Jews at Palestine; another that the Gentiles hear the Gospel the world over, and still another is that the nations are coming together commercially, intellectually and religiously."

Rev. W. W. Moffett, D. D., Lambertville, N. J., pastor of the Centenary M. E. church, says:—

"The trend of revelation on the subject of the millennium seems to teach that a time will come in the history of the world when the Gospel shall dominate all nations and Jesus shall reign in the majority of human hearts. To the close student of the world to-day there seem to be many indications that this happy period may be enjoyed in the near future."

Rev. Dr. James Lisk, Bordentown, N. J., pastor of the Baptist church, says:—

"As to your first question, I certainly do so believe. However students of the Word may interpret your phrase 'Biblical millennium,' there can be little doubt that some great change is soon to take place. The divine programme is being rapidly completed, so far as the present order of things is concerned. Prophecy is rapidly being fulfilled."

* * *

The majority of those who saw no evidence of a Millennium meant that they saw no evidence of the speedy conversion of the world to such a condition that God's will would be done on earth even as in heaven. And in this we must commend their judgment as sound. But alas! that so many should be so deluded by human theory as to so misunderstand the plain statements of God's Word—that Christ's Millennial reign is for the very purpose of *subduing* all things. (1 Cor. 15:25, 26, 28) False ideas of the "kingdom" and of the "judgment day," and imperfect views of the character and scope of the atonement, are at the bottom of this blindness to the signs of our times.

METHODIST FIGURES FOR 1899

Rev. A. B. Sanford, D. D., editor of the "Methodist Year Book," says in *"The Philadelphia Methodist,"*—

"Your readers may be interested to hear concerning the total membership of the church for 1899; as the statistics have been prepared for the new "Methodist Year Book," now passing through the press. In some measure, the result is preliminary, since the receipt of the figures from a few recent fall conferences will slightly change the additions that later appear in the General Minutes. The "Year Book" totals will not, however, be greatly affected, and show a decrease in members and probationers during the past year amounting to 21,934. In the analysis of this result, several interesting facts appear.

"1. The increase in full members through the whole church has been but 6,661. It is a serious fact that such strong bodies as the New England, the New York, the Philadelphia, the Central Pennsylvania, the New Jersey and the Wilmington Conferences suffered considerable losses, the decrease in these instances varying from the minimum of 1,368, to the maximum of 2,436.

"2. The decrease of probationers in the year 1899 has been 28,595.

"3. This decrease in members and probationers is accompanied by a decline in Sunday School scholars during 1899 of 16,716. It is a noticeable fact that the decline in Sunday School scholars thus occurs in the spring conferences, which as a body contribute a total loss in probationers of 22.572.

"It may be said in conclusion, that the net decline in members and probationers of 21,934 is the first positive decline that has occurred since 1881, and, with that exception, since the year 1863. The above facts are serious, but are such as it may be wholesome, for the church to know."

* * *

We do not rejoice in such evidences of a decline in denominationalism: nor do we expect it to continue. If the losses of denominationalism meant that God's children were getting out into *the liberty wherewith Christ makes free indeed*, then we would rejoice. But only a small proportion of the present decline can be credited to the spread of present truth. It means, therefore, indifference, worldliness.

It will not surprise us if in the near future a *Trust* Churchianity will have a season of great prosperity, lasting until the grand collapse which the Scriptures declare will be sudden.

PROPOSED FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN GERMANY

Prof. Beyschlag has issued an appeal to German Protestants which is being regarded favorably by many of them. It tends in the direction of the general religious federation we have long been expecting—which will revive religious tyranny and suppress religious liberty and stifle present truth; but not until it has borne its witness and gathered the "wheat" of the Gospel "harvest." The *Literary Digest* gives a summary of the proposed plan as follows:—

"There is to be no formal union of the various state churches, nor are these to lose their historical identity in the proposed new arrangement. Not a union is proposed, but a federation of the state churches, with the Prussian church which represents the Emperor, the *summus episcopus* of the Protestant church of that kingdom, as the head. The confessional status of each church shall remain undisturbed.

"The object of the federation is to unite the churches of the empire for practical purposes. Chief among these purposes is co-operation in providing for the religious needs of the Germans in the Diaspora, *i. e.,* those who are scattered in the various foreign lands and need religious care. Then, too, the Protestant church of the empire must have some means by which it can, as a body, be represented, just as the Catholic church has a representative in the Pope. A further but later purpose is to secure unity in church government and polity. In other words, it is to be, with the necessary changes, a federation for the good of the church such as the organization of the empire has been for the state.

"This federation is to find its expression in an imperial Protestant synod, which shall consist of representatives of the various state church governments, as also of the congregations, in such proportions as shall be agreed upon. The officials of this synod shall be the representatives and the executive board."

A CONGRESS OF RELIGIOUS HISTORY

This, at the coming Paris Exposition, is proposed as instead of a Parliament of Religions such as was held at the Chicago World's Fair. It is proposed to avoid *doctrines* and merely to show *works*—missions, charities, etc., and in all these matters Catholicism hopes to make the chief showing, and reap the greatest advantage.

Disapproving of the proposed Congress *The Midland*, a United Presbyterian journal, refers to the Chicago Parliament of Religions as follows:—

"Missionaries tell us that their work has been made more difficult, in India at least, by the boasts of devotees of the false systems of religion there that in Chicago they had met and triumphed over Christianity. Tho not intolerant, the Christian religion is absolutely exclusive. It can have no fellowship with systems which insult the true God and know nothing of that blessed Name by which alone salvation comes to any human soul. Its mission is to expose and uproot all other systems and rescue men from their delusion and destructive influence. We are convinced that these parliaments tend to obscure the distinction between the only true religion and the systems of error it must seek to destroy. One such experiment was one too many. If a second is to be attempted we hope the good sense of Christian people will keep them from participation."

We are pleased to note an expression of so much loyalty to the Gospel, and the only Name in which is salvation. It is as rare as it is refreshing in these days of evolutionary *unbelief* and Higher Criticism *infidelity*. Would that this editor and his readers might see that the blessed day of Christ's Millennial kingdom is near, in the which all the deaf ears shall be opened to hear the joyful sound of salvation and to know of that only name and of the eternal life offered to all who will obey him.

"WITHDRAWAL LETTERS"

These are not samples to be *copied* by pen, but regular letter all ready to date and sign and can be posted unsealed for one cent each. It is a kind but plain statement of our view of the true invisible Church and its head Christ Jesus and its bondage of love as contrasted with human institutions under Synods, Conferences and Presbyteries and held together with creed-bondage. All who get free from "Babylon" should send one of these letters to *each* church member with whom he associated in "Babylon." It will do them good and it will insure that you will not be misunderstood and misrepresented *unintentionally*. Otherwise your withdrawal is almost certain to be misrepresented as "Infidelity"—as leaving the *true* church and not merely leaving a *human* organization never recognized by the Lord nor instituted by him, but by fallible men.

Order all you need with tracts and envelopes accompanying *free*—after getting a *sample* and deciding you wish to use them.

"THIS CHARGE I COMMIT UNTO THEE, SON TIMOTHY"

1 TIMOTHY 1:18.

More than a year ago we intimated a desire to do something more than has been hitherto attempted to assist God's dear "sheep" in Great Britain and Ireland to hear the great Shepherd's voice and thus to be led into the green pastures of present truth. Our thought was to send over one of the "Pilgrim" brethren, but the Lord's providence did not seem to open the way for it, and instead Brother Hemery, already there, was started as a "Pilgrim," and we believe with beneficial results, for which the Lord be praised.

Still we are not satisfied that all is being done there that could be done, and since our last annual report we have been seeking to know the mind of the Lord respecting the great increase of his work in the spread of the "harvest" message, which we believe we may reasonably expect in the next few years. While we expect that most of the increase will as usual be in this land, specially prepared and specially favored and favorable, it seems to us that the thirty-five millions of Britain for several reasons deserve special consideration and special effort. (1) Because of our unity of language and religious ideals. (2) Because of the prevalence of a religious sentiment among the masses. (3) Because we have reason to hope that the present lamentable war is not only awakening the people, as wars always seem to do, but additionally because some of the reverses met with may prove to be blessings by bringing to the people a larger degree of humility and specially causing the religious to ponder over the evidences we present respecting the completion of the "elect" church and the speedy inauguration of the Millennial reign of righteousness. (4) Because so large a population of one tongue being within comparatively so small a space should make efforts there doubly effective of results, all other considerations being equal.

Accordingly we have planned, and from the first of the year have been arranging to send to Great Britain a representative to look the field over, with a view to the establishment of a branch office in London from whence that whitening field could be more thoroughly harvested. The proposition is, that the "Colporteur" work, the "Volunteer" work and the "Pilgrim" work could be much better carried on there from such a home office and by one thoroughly familiar with the methods the Chief Reaper has been pleased to bless here. True all these branches have already been started in Great Britain, but none of them work as smoothly and efficiently as we believe they will operate under the proposed plan. Many, we believe, hesitate to order tracts, papers, and books because of the distance, difference in money, etc.

The next question naturally was, To whom shall so important a mission be entrusted? And the question, under the requested guidance of our Lord, seems to be satisfactorily answered. With his hearty consent we have chosen our dear Brother Henninges, in whose efficiency for this service we have fullest confidence and who has given many proofs of his loyalty to the Lord and his cause, and of whose full consecration of heart to the Lord we have no doubt. He has had personal experience in all departments of the work for the past eight years—the last seven of which he has spent in the Watch Tower office and as a member of the Watch Tower family, whose "table talks" are in the nature of Bible schools.

We could not send you, dear British brethren, anyone in our judgment better qualified to assist you in carrying on the work we all so dearly love to serve. We trust that you will welcome him heartily and co-operate with him to the extent of your judgments and opportunities. We shall greatly miss him here, but will feel a pleasure in sacrificing our own conveniences for your sakes—that the grace of our Lord may abound toward many who have not yet "tasted that the Lord is gracious." May he always abound as at present in the knowledge of the truth and in its spirit of love for the Lord.

We have been in correspondence with the British Postmaster General and find that the postal rates and terms are less favorable there than we had expected—less favorable than ours; but having gone thus far we are not yet discouraged—hoping for some good results from a personal inspection of the field anyway. Brother Henninges will go direct to London, view the situation and write us,—meantime awaiting our reply, he will make a "Pilgrim" visit to various cities and towns where already there are little gatherings of Watch Tower readers; and this alone we believe will justify, should the London "branch" proposition prove to be infeasible.

Of course, Sister Henninges will accompany her husband, not only as his natural help-mate, but as his helper in the Lord's work. We commend our dear sister very highly to you all as a very earnest and faithful child of God and servant of his cause; full of the spirit of self-sacrifice, and firm for every principle of righteousness as she discerns it. Sister Henninges has been a member of the Watch Tower family for twelve years; joining in the office work with her brother when quite young. May God's blessing continue with both these dear members of our family, making them blessings in various ways to the household of faith across the great deep.

THE GOOD TIDINGS DISCREDITED

Feb. 25.—Luke 14:16-20.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."—John 1:11.

Remembering the proverb, "A prophet has no honor in his own country," our Lord did not begin his ministry in Nazareth where almost twenty-eight years of his life had been spent and where consequently he was well known to the people. His ministry began in Judea, and the people of Nazareth undoubtedly heard considerable respecting the marvelous works and words of their suddenly notable fellow-citizen, before he came thither. All this would be in their favor, and tend to prepare them to receive Messiah and his message, offsetting the familiarity which so frequently begets contempt.

Our lesson shows that our Lord had been in the habit of attending the religious services of the synagogue every Sabbath day, and intimates that it had been his custom to do the reading of the law—which implied an education far beyond that of the majority of his day. As synagogue-attendance was not strictly a part of the law, our Lord's example in thus seeking to associate as far as possible with the most religious people of his day, and his willingness to take part in the public services, are a lesson to his people everywhere, in harmony with the words of the Apostle that we should not forget the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, for the Lord's worship.—Hebrew x:25.

The passage of Scripture read by our Lord from the prophecy of Isaiah was quite probably the stated Scripture lesson for that day, for it would appear that it was a custom of the Jews to have Scripture readings each Sabbath day, taking up various parts of the Old Testament Scriptures alternately. At all events, the lesson read by our Lord is easily identified as a Greek translation from Isaiah 61. He read the first verse of the chapter, and stopped reading in the middle of the second verse, closed the roll, and returned it to the servant having charge of the closet in which the rolls were kept, and then, according to the custom of the time, as an indication that he was ready to make remarks, Jesus sat down. How much of an explanation of the Scriptures he gave his hearers we are not definitely told, but doubtless he commented liberally upon the various features of the prophecy, summing up his remarks with that which is recorded, viz., that the prophecy was in process of fulfilment at that very moment.

The audience, composed chiefly of his acquaintances, had a mixed sentiment as respects him; with the natural feeling of irreverence for those with whom we are intimately acquainted was blended another feeling of pride in a fellow-citizen, who had attained such renown; and as they listened to his exposition of the prophecy they were filled with admiration, "and all bear him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." They said within themselves and to each other, We have never heard such wonderfully good tidings before in our lives, and this from our neighbor, the carpenter. Little did they realize, when thus admiring his gracious message, that something would occur in a few moments which would completely frenzy them, and lead them to desire to murder the one who now declared himself to be the fulfiller of this prophecy, the Anointed of the Lord, the Messiah, ready to give in due time the blessings mentioned by the prophet.

The people of Nazareth were more interested, however, in the miracles of Jesus than in his claim to be the Messiah. The miracles were practical, and they could appreciate them, but his teaching that he was the Messiah seemed far-fetched, when they had known him for so long as the son of Joseph, the carpenter. They therefore began to wonder, and possibly to question, how soon he would do in Nazareth some of the wonderful miracles done by him at Capernaum and elsewhere, of which they had heard. Knowing this to be the attitude of their mind, our Lord anticipated their request for miracles, and explained that they must not expect miracles from him—though they evidently expected more miracles amongst his friends than they had heard of his doing amongst strangers. This made necessary a little explanation, which was not at all flattering to them.

Our Lord does not say that he was not permitted of the Father to do miracles at Nazareth, although this is implied in the fact that he did none, and implied also in the explanations and illustrations which he gave. Doubtless he was guided in the matter by certain principles governing his use of the power from on high. As we have already seen he might not use this power selfishly in his own interest; we may likewise suppose that he would not be at liberty to use it simply as a gratification to curiosity, but that it could be used only in response to proper faith. The people of Nazareth evidently were not in the attitude of faith, not therefore in the proper attitude of heart, to receive God's blessing—the wrong condition of their hearts was manifested by their actions, when our Lord refused to gratify their curiosity. We note the difference between this curious and unbelieving desire for miracles, and the course of action following it, in contrast with the faith of the Syro-Phoenician woman, her humility of heart, and the manner in which she received our Lord's first refusal to grant her request. (Matthew xv 22-28) We can but suppose that had the people of Nazareth been in a proper attitude of heart they would have accepted our Lord's refusal to work miracles in a different manner, and would have said, "Well, we enjoy the gracious words from his mouth anyway, for they have brought a healing and blessing to our hearts." And if such had been their attitude no doubt later our Lord would have performed miracles of healing in their city also.

By way of explaining to them why he might not perform his miracles in their midst, as well as toward others, our Lord cited two illustrations from the prophets of the past—Elijah sent to the poor Gentile widow, to be a blessing to her home, while widows of Israel were passed by; and Elisha healing Naaman of leprosy, while many lepers in Israel were passed by. These apt illustrations were unkindly received by his hearers, because, drawing the parallel, it likened them to starving poor and diseased lepers and implied our Lord's comparative greatness and superiority to them as a dispenser of divine bounty. After the same manner our Lord elsewhere told the Pharisees that he, as the Good Physician, had come to heal the sick and that the well needed not a physician. That this was their attitude of heart, and feeling no need of him, and the blessings he dispensed, they did not realize their sin-sickness, and their deadness in trespasses and sins, and hence did not realize their need of redemption and deliverance from the power of sin and death.

The effect of our Lord's illustrations was almost electrical upon the proud hearts before him, whose only interest in him from the first had been that of pride in him as a fellow-citizen and hope for miracle-proofs of his power. Now, however, this pride was turned to bitterness, and they would murder the one who had spoken so disrespectfully of them as to compare them to hungry widows and lepers, needing his aid. The congregation immediately became a mob, filled with angry passion; and surging forth with him the crowd led in the direction of a precipice with a view to casting him headlong from it. But by the exercise of some power, possibly a power natural to a perfect human being, our Lord mastered them with his mind, and passed from their midst, none daring to stay him, and went on his way.

Let us note carefully the message which our Lord declared was in process of fulfilment that day. He declared himself to be the Anointed One mentioned by the prophet—his anointing of the holy spirit dating from the time of his baptism, when John bore witness that the holy spirit descended upon him and abode with him. The anointing was for a purpose, as the prophet declared, and our Lord confirmed the same, saying that he was anointed to preach the gospel.

THE GOOD TIDINGS BORNE BY THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT

We are to distinguish between the preaching of the gospel or "good tidings" and the good things promised, which are to come to pass in due time. The preaching was begun by our Lord and has been continued throughout the Gospel age, by all those who by the grace of God became "members in particular of his body," the church over which he is the head forever. (1 Cor. xii:27; Eph. i:22-23) After this preaching of the Gospel shall have been given, and shall have accomplished its purpose and intention, then will follow the glorious actualities referred to in it. And if the mere description of the coming blessings is called the Gospel, good news, good tidings for all people, what may we not hope respecting the blessings themselves, of which only the message is now given to the hearing and sight of faith?

The Gospel was to be preached by the Anointed Head and by the anointed members of his body, to all who have ears to hear it, in the special interest of one particular class, viz., the poor, the broken-hearted—not the literally poor any more than the literally broken-hearted, but the "poor in spirit," the humble-minded, who are also the sympathetic, the tender, the heart-broken, as in contrast with the hard-hearted. We make this distinction as between the poor in purse and the poor in spirit because it is a very necessary one, which some failing to discern have been misled into grievous errors. True, not many rich, either in purse or intellect, will attain the kingdom, the majority, being chiefly the poor of this world in purse and intellect, but rich in faith. (1 Cor. 1:26-29; James ii:5) However, it is not because of their poverty of intellect and of purse that there will be more of this class chosen, but merely because poverty of purse and intellect are much more favorable to the development of humility than are riches of any kind; and humility is a prime essential to an inheritance with the saints in light.

While all of the anointed gospellers may during this age bear their message without restriction as to nationality or color or sex, to whosoever has an ear to hear, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, and while they may not be able to discern in advance which will prosper, this or that—nevertheless they will not waste time and effort upon those whom they find to be mentally "rich and increased in goods, and feeling that they have need of nothing." (Rev. iii:17) No: they are rather to take note of those who, when they hear the good tidings, give evidence of proper "ears to hear," the meek, the poor in spirit, realizing that it is this class that the Lord is specially seeking during this age.

Similarly, the anointed ones are not to spend their time endeavoring to break the hard hearts of the worldly, for this is not a part of its commission. God himself, through various providences, is attending to the work of breaking the hard hearts; some are broken and softened by the trials, difficulties, perplexities and adversities of the present life; some are torn and bleeding through severe trials of life and earthly disappointments; and the time of trouble fast approaching is specially designed of the Lord as the time for breaking and melting many hard hearts, in preparation for the Millennial kingdom and its blessings of restitution, etc. Now, however, the message is to "bind up the broken-hearted."

How much there is of this very kind of work that needs doing! The poor in spirit, contrite and mellowed of heart, disappointed with the world, vexed with the flesh and the adversary, are to be found in nearly every quarter of the world; and whosoever has received the anointing of the holy spirit should realize that this power upon him is given to be exercised upon this needy class—pouring in the oil and the wine of the divine promise, to cheer and comfort and bless, and prepare for joint-heirship in the kingdom, some of the very class whom the Lord will be pleased to accept. To these the gospel may be preached freely; they will not turn again and rend the messengers, but will hear it, and it will comfort and bind up their wounded hearts.

If then we have found the class to whom the anointed ones are to specially address themselves, what is the special message of peace and blessing which they are to bear, and which the Prophet and our Lord denominate the "Gospel"—the good tidings? Is it the announcement of the election of a handful to glory, and the reprobation of all the remainder to an eternity of torment? No; this is not the Gospel which the Prophet and Jesus declared. Is it the message of God's goodness of intention, but incapacity of execution, which will result in a very few being saved and the great mass of humanity being eternally tormented? No, not so. Evidently our Lord was not sent to preach this gospel (?) of damnation, so common to-day—for it is no part of the message here declared, nor would such a reprobation to eternal misery be called "gospel" truthfully.

Let us see what is implied in this "Gospel" message set forth in the Scriptures. Let us know how widely it differs from the various messages of heathendom, and from the commonly accepted messages of "Christendom." Let us note the true Gospel message that should be proclaimed by all who have been anointed with the holy Spirit. It is divided by the Prophet into five parts: (1) Deliverance to the captives; (2) recovering of sight to the blind; (3) setting at liberty them that are bruised; (4) the announcement of the acceptable year of the Lord, as preceding these blessings; and (5) the announcement of a day of vengeance in the close or end of the acceptable year of the Lord,—a "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." This last part, tho proper to be proclaimed by the anointed "body," was not due to be proclaimed by the anointed "Head" at the time of our Lord's discourse. All mankind are captives, all are blind, all are bruised; hence it is a universal blessing that is announced in this Scriptural "Gospel" message.

(1) The captives are the slaves of sin; Adam and all his race, "sold under sin." (Rom. 7:14) Through disobedience in Eden the race was born in this slavery, "born in sin, shapen in iniquity." Some of the sin-enslaved race have already been remanded to the great prison-house of death, while all others are on their way thither. The "good tidings" which Jesus preached and which all his followers under the same anointing of the spirit must preach, is the resurrection of the dead, or as the Apostle expressed his teaching, it is "Jesus and the resurrection." (Acts 17:18) Jesus, the Redeemer, Jesus the anointed Head of the spiritual Seed which, as God's kingdom, is shortly to bring to mankind full opportunity of release, not only from the prison-house, but from all the other incidents of their slavery through the first Adam,—he having redeemed the first Adam and his posterity with his own precious life.

None but the anointed body of Christ are commissioned to preach this good tidings, and every member of that body is so commissioned irrespective of human distinctions of "clergy" and "laity;" and whoever does not fulfil this mission is unfaithful to his commission. And alas! as we look around us, throughout the length and breadth of Churchianity, falsely called Christianity, we find that evidently very few indeed have been anointed, because very few indeed know this message of the resurrection,—indeed that the majority of ministers in all denominations are heartily opposed to the doctrine of the resurrection because it is in direct conflict with their unscriptural theories.

(2) The promised recovering of sight to the blind has a far deeper signification than mere natural eyesight. It refers to the blindness which sin has brought upon the hearts of men, perverting their mental vision, hindering them from seeing the divine being and his divine attributes in their true light,—as loving, gracious and true, just and wise. The blindness that is upon mankind, and "the gross darkness that covers the people" in general, is described by the Apostle as being the work of the great adversary Satan, who by false doctrines not only amongst the heathen but also amongst Christians, has misrepresented the divine character, the divine Word, the divine plan, "putting light for darkness, and darkness for light," and has thus deceived the whole world, all nations, with the very small exception of the few whose eyes of understanding have been enlightened with the true light. We have no hope for this general opening of the blind eyes in the present age—only the few now get the eyesalve. In some respects indeed it is better that the majority should be permitted to remain blinded until by the establishment of the Millennial kingdom the condition shall be much more favorable than at present, that when then the eyes of their understanding have been opened, and their responsibilities proportionately increased, it may be under circumstances more favorable to them.

(3) "To set at liberty them that are bruised" gives the thought of sin's captives sore and distressed from the manacles with which they are bound. This figure fitly represents the bondage of corruption, infirmity, etc., which are concomitants to the death penalty. The promise for such a deliverance means "restitution" in active operation (Acts 3:19-21), in the assistance and uplifting of the world of mankind during the Millennial age—to all the glorious perfections lost for all through father Adam's disobedience, and his sentence of death. What a glorious hope is here! No wonder this also was included as a part of the good tidings. How comparatively valueless would all the other features of blessing be, if sickness and pain and imperfection continued. It is when we see not only Sin, the taskmaster, itself removed, but also all of its results counteracted, and all the sinner-race privileged to return to the full liberty of sons of God, and that all this is provided for through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and through the kingdom which is to be established in his hands for the blessing of all the families of the earth—then we discern why it is called "good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people," and hear the echo of John's prophecy from the standpoint of the future perfection, saying, "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying,

neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."—Rev. 21:4.

(4) "The acceptable year (or acceptable time or epoch) of the Lord" is this Gospel age, which began with our Lord's consecration at his baptism, and his anointing with the holy spirit, and which will continue until the last member of the body of Christ has "filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ"—until all the sufferings of Christ (head and body) are complete, when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.—Isa. 40:5.

This Gospel age is called the acceptable epoch, because during this time God is willing to accept sacrifices for sins. First he accepted the sacrifice of his only begotten Son our Lord, and secondly he has been accepting throughout the age all those who come unto the Father through Jesus, and who, justified by his merit, present their bodies living sacrifices to God as a reasonable service, and thus become joint-sacrificers with Jesus, and joint-heirs with him in the coming kingdom, as it is written, "Heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*—Rom. 8:17.

WE WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT

However, it is well to notice that while the "Gospel" includes all the foregoing blessings for mankind in general, it brings a sooner and still greater blessing to the "little flock" whose ears are blessed that they hear, and whose eyes are blessed that they see, in advance of the world. To these all of the coming blessings are anticipated, not literally, but by faith, for "We walk by faith, not by sight." Already the true church ("whose names are written in heaven" Heb. 12:23) is not only justified by faith, and thus reckonedly released from captivity to Sin and Death, but also reckonedly is risen with Christ, reckonedly has become "new creatures" in Christ, reckonedly, under the New Covenant, are no longer in the flesh but in the spirit, and so accounted of God, and so accounted also of each other, who henceforth know each other, not after the flesh, but after the spirit—as new creatures.—2 Cor. 5:16.

These have a new sight, seeing with the eye of faith things that are not visible to the natural sight. They are guided into all truth, as it becomes due; yes, they discern "the deep things of God," because they possess the spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:9, 10), seeing with the eye of faith things which the natural eye hath not seen, hearing with the ear of faith things which the natural ear has never heard, neither has entered into the heart of the natural man to conceive of or imagine—the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him,—and who manifest their love by their devotion to him and his. The eyes of their understanding being opened, they are enabled to "comprehend with all saints the length and breadth, the height and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth (human) knowledge."—Eph. 3:18.

Altho this special class is not set at liberty from the bruises and imperfections of the mortal body during the present life, but require in this as in other things to walk by faith and not by sight, nevertheless, in one sense of the word they are set at liberty from these imperfections, because under the terms of the New Covenant* they have the assurance of the Lord that none of the natural blemishes and imperfections and physical weaknesses are henceforth counted against them, their standing being reckonedly that of new creatures, and their judgment in the Lord's sight being according to their intentions of heart, and not according to the weaknesses of their flesh, which is reckoned dead.

We exhort all of the redeemed who have made a covenant with the Lord, "a covenant of sacrifice," to remember why they are reckoned as members baptised into the body of the anointed one (the Christ)—here plainly set forth by the Head of our body, viz., that each one is to be a preacher of this Gospel and not of another Gospel. Let us be faithful for yet a little longer, until the great High Priest shall fully qualify us as the "royal priesthood" in the glory of the kingdom, that then it may be our privilege with him to bring to mankind all the wonderful blessings forestated in his gospel, for the blessing of all the families of the earth, with a full opportunity of attaining the truth and the liberty of the sons of God.

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* See *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices.*

* See June 15, 1919, for critical examination of Covenants.

"AND HE HEALED MANY THAT WERE SICK"

MARCH 4.—MARK 1:21-34.

Jesus made Capernaum his home and the center of his work in Galilee for a considerable time. It will be remembered that it was here that the Roman centurion, whose servant Jesus healed, lived, of whom the Jews testified that he was a friend of their nation, and had built them a synagogue or house of worship and Bible study. (Luke vii:5) Some ruins in that vicinity have recently been exhumed which are supposed by scholars to be the remains of this synagogue, because they seem to be on the site of Capernaum, and represent the most substantial synagogue structure in all that region, the walls being ten feet thick, seventy-four feet nine inches long, and fifty-six feet nine inches wide, with a roof supported by four rows of columns.

As indicating our Lord's strict attention to the Father's business, we have the statement that "straightway," at once, on arriving at Capernaum from Nazareth, our Lord went into the synagogue (probably the one built by the centurion), and began his teaching. This reads peculiarly at the present day, when custom has completely barricaded every opportunity for free expression of opinion in almost all places devoted to worship. The Jewish arrangement was certainly a liberal one, and every way favorable to the truth, because whatever errors might creep in, the truth always had an opportunity for challenging them and exposing their weaknesses and referring to the divinely inspired oracles. Who can doubt that if we had just such simplicity or arrangements today, by which truth could challenge the various errors which have crept into all sectarian teaching, the result would be favorable—not favorable to sectarian systems, it is true, but favorable to the establishment of each individual in the truth, as presented in the divine oracles.

The people who heard our Lord's discourse were astonished (1) At the things which he taught, and (2) at the manner in which he presented them. He taught with authority, that is to say, our Lord had a clear understanding of the subjects he handled, and his presentations were not vague suppositions and imaginations, and foundationless hopes and speculations; but were clear-cut and distinct; and well proven by the testimonies of the Law and the Prophets, so that they were conclusive in the minds of his hearers, who hitherto had been used to hearing the scribes guess, wonder, suppose, etc. Since the Lord has not seen fit to provide us with even a condensed statement of his discourse, it implies that a full knowledge of it would not be specially advantageous to us. However, a hint or inference respecting a portion of the sermon is furnished in the statement that during its progress a man present, possessed by an unclean spirit, cried out—evidently opposing something Jesus had said, saying, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?"

The clear inference is that Jesus had been speaking against sin, and the power which it exercised over humanity, involving all in the death penalty, with its sickness and pain and trouble; and incidentally no doubt he had mentioned demoniacal possession, so common at that time—and more common today than most people suppose. It is our guess that the gospel preached at Capernaum must have followed somewhat similar lines to the gospel preached at Nazareth, declaring the time at hand in which God would be pleased to receive back into harmony with himself those who had been alienated through sin, and who had thus been brought under the bondage of corruption. He no doubt declared himself to be the great Life-giver, the Good Physician, sent to heal earth's woes and to reveal to mankind the Heavenly Father, and to become to as many as would avail themselves of it, "the Way, the Truth and the Life," by which they might return to divine favor in fullest measure. The language of the evil spirit, speaking through the man as its mouthpiece,* clearly implies that these fallen spirits had at least a general understanding of the time when their evil course would be run, and that they knew that the just wages of their sinful course is destruction—not eternal torment. They recognized Jesus and his mission and his holiness, and that he was the representative of the Heavenly Father, but they had no hope for themselves—no expectation other than that when the time should come they would be utterly destroyed, annihilated. From various Scriptures, however, we learn that these fallen angels, demons, wicked spirits, will not be destroyed without first being given an opportunity for repentance and reconciliation with God.*

Our Lord did not deign to hold conversation with these spirit beings, who had fallen under the ban of divine condemnation, and with whom the Heavenly Father could no longer have intercourse. He did not, therefore, explain to them that his first advent was merely to pay the ransom price, and to start the gospel message which would select the "little flock" to be members of his "body" and joint-heirs with him in the kingdom, that when complete and glorified should bless and judge the world and judge the fallen angels also. (1 Cor. 6:3) And our Lord's course in having nothing whatever to do with these fallen spirits, but on the contrary commanding them to hold their peace, should be a lesson to every one of his followers, who should seek in this and in every other matter to walk in his steps. We have known some to get themselves into serious difficulties through curiosity—which led them either to spiritualistic seances or to privately have communication with these fallen ones. Their cunning and deceitfulness is far too deep for humanity, and he who seeks communion with them in any manner or degree does so in violation, not only of the Scriptural command (Lev. 20:6; Isa. 8:19), but in violation also of Jesus' example; and such run great risk of thus being entrapped and falling from their own steadfastness. The Apostle gives us to understand that even unwillingly and unwittingly we frequently wrestle, not with flesh and blood, but with these evil spirits, who inspire and use fallen fellow-creatures.—Eph. 6:2.

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* See *What Say the Scriptures About Spiritualism?*—Price 10 cents, this office.

The unclean spirit "tore" the man in coming out, that is, caused violent convulsions, and used the man's mouth in uttering a loud cry. Our Lord, of course, could have forbidden such manifestations of the demon spirit, but preferred to allow it to be so, that thus might be manifested the malignant disposition of the evil spirits, as well as the power of his command which, with all their malignity, they could not disobey. The effect of the miracle upon the audience of course was wonderful. They saw "the man Christ Jesus" exercising in their very presence a superhuman power—controlling spirit beings. No wonder they were amazed, and no wonder his fame spread throughout all Galilee.

Leaving the synagogue, our Lord, accompanied by James and John, went with Simon Peter and Andrew, his brother, to their home, where Peter's mother-in-law lay sick of a fever. Jesus visited her, and "rebuked the fever," took her by the hand and helped her up (Luke 4:39), and immediately the fever was gone, and even the usually accompanying prostration of strength did not remain, but on the contrary, she was able to entertain and serve her company.

The fame of Jesus spread rapidly, and at sundown, in the cool of the day, many sick were brought to him to be healed, and many possessed of devils, to have the evil spirits cast out. The concourse was a great one, from all parts of the city, and again our Lord manifested his mercy in healing ailments, and casting out demons; again, however, refusing to converse with the demons and even refusing and forbidding their giving testimony respecting him. Praise and commendation from an evil source are never to be desired.

The question naturally arises, Why did the Lord perform such miracles? If they were merely from benevolence and with a desire to help the afflicted, why did he not do more of them?—for instance, in the city of Nazareth, regardless of the condition of the hearts of those who were afflicted. Why did he not at one word rebuke all the fevers and all the other diseases which afflicted humanity, throughout the whole of Galilee, the whole of Palestine, the whole of Asia, the whole of Africa, the whole of Europe and the whole of America? Quite evidently the performance of these miracles was not merely from benevolence toward mankind.

Indeed, we have reason to question whether or not it would be a benevolent act to cure all the ills of humanity in the present time. The aches and pains, the troubles and sorrows, of humanity are in many senses of the word blessings in disguise, just as was the part of the original sentence of Adam, which declares: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." He who succeeds in avoiding the earning of his daily food by some kind of toil has succeeded in placing himself in an unfavorable condition, for idleness is not only the mother of vice, but the father of discontent. Similarly, there is a ministry of instruction in sickness and trouble which should not be overlooked. The Prophet refers to this blessing that inheres in tribulation, saying, "Before I was afflicted I went astray;" and many of the Lord's people can if they will trace some of their greatest blessings and greatest helps in the development of true character to their experiences in various kinds of troubles and disease. Note where we will throughout the world the finest and the noblest and the best balanced characters, and trace these characters in their development, and we find that much of the chiseling and polishing which has made them what they are was done by affliction of one kind or another—guided, if they were consecrated Christians—by the unseen hand of Providence.

The miracles which our Lord performed in the little country of Palestine, by which a small proportion of their sick were relieved temporarily, was merely a prophecy of the great healing blessing, freeing from the power of Satan and sin, which he preached, and which is to be fulfilled in due time—during his Millennial kingdom.

His object in performing these miracles was not, however, merely to thus prophesy the future and greater universal blessings of his reign, but more particularly as signs, as evidences, as witnesses respecting his teachings. It was his doctrines or teachings that were to move men; so that as the power of God these might draw to him that certain class which the Father has given him during this age. If he would utter things respecting a heavenly condition, a birth of the spirit to a spirit nature, a spirit kingdom, etc., it would be eminently proper for any hearer to enquire respecting his authority for making such statements and promises, unknown to others and unproven from any earthly standpoint. It was therefore proper that our Lord should anticipate such enquiries respecting his authority for his teachings by giving miraculous demonstrations of his superhuman power, which he explained to be of the Father and witnessing to his integrity.

But someone may say, If such miraculous manifestations were proper and reasonable to the generation in personal contact with our Lord, why would not similar miracles be proper and reasonable for us of the present time, and for others all down through the Gospel age? We reply that some evidences, proofs or miracles would be proper now, and that greater miracles are before us today, as witnesses to the truth of Christianity. These are not of the same order as those which introduced the Gospel age in the "harvest" or end of the Jewish age; they are, indeed, of a far higher order, and more in harmony with the age in which we live. They are none the less real than the miracles of Jesus' day, though they may be less obtrusive and less likely to be noticed, except as attention shall be called to them. Our Lord seems to refer to these present-day miracles when he said to his disciples, "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto my Father."—Jno. 14:12.

Which is the greater work—the opening of the eyes of the naturally blind, or the opening of the eyes of the understanding? Which is the more valuable? In the end of the Jewish age our Lord healed eyes that were blinded either by accident or poison or a sting or what not, and that was a miracle, but today the Lord's disciples, under the guidance of the holy spirit, and through it, are able in many instances to open the eyes of the understanding, that those who are blind to spiritual things might see them—and this blindness, the Apostle tells us, is not a mere trifling thing or accident or sting, but is the skillful and intentional injury of the mental eye by the god of this world, Satan. (2 Cor. 4:4) Do we not, therefore, see many more miracles of this kind—the opening of the eyes of the understanding with the eye-salve of the truth in this harvest-time of the Gospel age—than are recorded of the natural sight restoration amongst the Israelites in the harvest of the Jewish age? And which is the more serious of the two blindnesses? Whether would we prefer to be blind naturally or to be blind to the spiritual things? Whether, therefore, is it the greater miracle to be relieved of natural blindness or to be relieved of spiritual darkness? Undoubtedly the latter.

Similarly with all the diseases, we might draw parallels and find these the greater miracles. Peter's mother-in-law was being consumed with a fever which the word of the Lord rebuked. But how many men and how many women throughout Christendom today are being consumed of a fever of ambition or pride or discontent, to whom the word of the Lord comes, through some of the household of faith, speaking peace, release from burdensome anxiety and cares of this life, lust for riches, and consuming ambitions and pride of life? How many have been restored to normal conditions and granted to have the peace of God ruling in their hearts, with thankfulness, and how many such have found their strength renewed, so that being released from these fevers they arose to do vigorously the Lord's business, to minister, to serve, the Lord and his "brethren?" Similarly also we might trace the lamenesses and impotencies of the past, and find analogies in the present—dead hands, worse than dead, used actively in the service of evil, have been recovered for activity in the service of the Lord; men and women dead in trespasses and sins, awakened to newness of life in the service of the Lord and of the truth. Such miracles as these, far greater than the ones of Jesus' day in the flesh. He is now performing through his willing servants and handmaidens, and these are the greatest witnesses imaginable to the reality of the Lord's gracious message that he is the Messiah, the Sent of God, to bring salvation to the race of mankind.

The transformations of life and character, hopes and aims, by which some in the present time are blessed, like the physical healings in the harvest time of the Jewish age, are prophecies of what the grace of God can and will do for humanity when God's due time shall come, when his kingdom shall come, and through its administration of love and justice his will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. He who can see now the earthly blessings and healings, accomplished by our Lord, were but foretastes of the coming general blessings to be accomplished during the Millennium, should be able also to see that the regenerations of heart and transformations of character now in progress in the "elect" church are merely foretastes or a first-fruits, illustrative of the blessings of transformed character which the kingdom will accomplish for all who will come into subjection to its righteous arrangements.

"THE SON OF MAN HATH POWER ON EARTH TO FORGIVE SINS"

March 11.—Mark 2:1-12.

Following the miracle of our last lesson and probably other miracles not recorded in this connection, our Lord apparently made another preaching tour; after returning to his home city of Capernaum the incidents of this lesson transpired. Evidently our Lord, with his mother and brethren, had been making Capernaum his home for some time, and it is entirely probable that the house mentioned in this lesson was our Lord's own home. Dr. Schaff suggests that according to the Greek text this might read "at home," instead of "in the house." As we saw in our last lesson, however, Capernaum was the home also of Peter and Andrew, and the incident of this lesson might possibly have occurred there, though this is less probable.

The return of the young and wonderful Teacher to his own city and home was soon widely known—"noised;" the result was a considerable concourse of people, not only filling the house and the courtyard, but even the door or gateway. Amongst these callers were Pharisees and Doctors of the Law (rabbis, scribes), who came out of the various towns of Galilee and Judea to hear Jesus, and to note his miracles.—See Luke 5:17-18.

Our Lord's mission was the preaching of the Gospel, and, as already pointed out, the healings, miracles, etc., were incidentals, and not by any means his chief work or object—the "times of restitution" (Acts 3:21) not having come, the miracles of our Lord were merely attestations to and corroborative of his teachings respecting the kingdom and the kingdom class which he had come to call and gather—out of Israel and from amongst the Gentiles. Undoubtedly he preached the same message delivered in Nazareth respecting the Lord's spirit being upon him, anointing him to preach the good tidings to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted and to declare a coming deliverance to the captives of sin and death, and the restoration of sight to those blinded by Satan, and the setting at liberty of all the captives subject to the bondage of corruption, but probably this one message was presented from various standpoints at various times, and various texts used, as also various parables introduced in illustration of it. This, however, was the "Word," the message, which our Lord was commissioned to deliver, and we may be sure he did it faithfully.

While our Lord was in the midst of his discourse a paralytic, evidently full of faith, borne on a stretcher of some kind by four friends, sought opportunity to reach him, with full faith in his power and willingness to heal. Finding no opportunity of making their way through the crowd, the bearers took their burden onto the roof by the outside stairway, customary in that country—the buildings being usually but one story in height. It is not at all probable that the building and roof were of the ordinary kind that would have obliged that lifting of stones and cement and dirt, and the breaking of the plaster beneath, for this would involve an absurdity, and the falling of the stones and debris and dust upon our Lord and the congregation would have been insufferable as well as dangerous. The more reasonable supposition is that the house was one of the less common kind, enclosing a courtyard capable of accommodating quite a large audience, the living rooms being built around the wall of the courtyard at one end, and a veranda or porch-roof over a part of the open court, covered with tiles, which could be removed without much difficulty. The thought would be that our Lord stood under this veranda, preaching; that some of his audience were likewise under it and others standing out, exposed to the sunshine in the court. Dr. Thompson makes the following comment:

"The whole affair was the extemporaneous device of plain peasants accustomed to opening their roofs and letting down grain, straw and other articles, as they still do in this (Eastern) country. I have often seen it done, and have done it myself, to houses in Lebanon. I have the impression, however, that the covering, at least of the lewan (court) was not made of earth, but of coarse matting, or boards, or stone slabs, that could be quickly removed."—Compare this with Luke 5:19.

Our Lord was not offended by this intrusion. He doubtless remembered that all things work together for good to the Lord's people, who will accept them thus. So far from feeling offended at the intrusion and persistency, he entirely overlooked these when balancing them with the quality which he so much admires—faith. All of the Lord's people can well take note of this lesson, and learn more and more to accept the affairs of life as they come as being all subject to divine providence and all guaranteed in advance to be profitable, to work out some good result, if we will but so permit, by receiving them in faith. Let us learn also to overlook and forget rudeness, especially where there is evidence of sincerity of heart, faith, good intentions.

In various ways we learn that under the head of "paralysis" in olden times, in Oriental countries, various diseases were included, which are now specified under different names. For instance, titanus (lockjaw) would at that time and in that country be described as paralysis—indeed, any disease which would render the individual helpless, powerless—whether merely a deadness or accompanied by violent cramps. The incidents connected with this miracle would seem to indicate that it was a serious case, and had in it something of the element of urgency—necessity for seeing the Lord quickly and obtaining his help promptly. Otherwise propriety would have dictated a different course.

It might be questioned whether the faith was that of the palsied man or that of his friends, but we think the circumstances warrant the belief that the sick man himself exercised the faith and prompted his friends to take the steps they did in obedience to his request. This is implied in the fact that our Lord does not speak of the faith of the bearers, but does speak directly to the paralytic respecting his personal faith. Our Lord must have seen a very proper condition in the young man's heart, else he never would have said to him, unsolicited, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." Nor was this expression unpremeditated; our Lord evidently wished that the miracle he was about to perform should not detract from the preaching which it interrupted, but, on the contrary, should impress it as well as illustrate it. He foreknew also that such an unusual statement would awaken in his hearers questionings respecting his authority, and thus the miracle subsequently performed would emphasize the fact that he was the Messiah, and that the redemption of sinners and the forgiveness of sins had been committed to him by the Father.

The question of the scribes (that is, the Rabbis, the Doctors of the Law), Is not such a statement blasphemy? was a very proper one, and they are not to be blamed for making the enquiry. Our Lord did not deny its propriety, but answered it by saying, It would, of course, be easy for anybody to make the claim of forgiving sins, and it might be impossible to dispute his claim, but in my case I will substantiate my claim to be able to forgive sins by my power to heal this man physically; when, therefore, you shall perceive his miraculous cure of a physical ailment, it will be a lesson respecting the truthfulness of my statement in regard to his sins—that you may know that as the Son of Man I have power, authority, to forgive sins. (Compare Luke 5:24) Then came the healing of the paralytic, which, put in this form, became a proof, not only of our Lord's healing power, but also of his power to forgive sins. And when the sick man, in obedience to our Lord's command, took up his couch or stretcher and went forth in the presence of all, no wonder they were amazed and praised God.

Apparently all were fully satisfied with the demonstration, Luke saying that they were all filled with fear—reverence—in view of so mighty a demonstration of divine power in their midst. It was not a lesson of fear toward God in the sense of a dread of an unthinkable everlasting future torment, but a fear, in the sense of respect for the God whose love and sympathy and compassion had been so wonderfully manifested —a God who not only was willing to forgive sins, but also willing to help and to relieve his creatures from the difficulties which sin had brought upon them. Say what we will about the depravity and crookedness of human reasoning, there is, after all, a power of common sense in humanity which, if properly actuated, is the strongest possible lever in moving them in the right direction—far more influential with reasoning people than all the false and unreasonable theories which could be concocted.

One lesson for us, found in this incident, is that we, like our Lord, should seek to turn every earthly matter to some good account as respects our real mission in the world—the declaration of the good tidings, and the selection of the kingdom class to be joint-heirs with our Lord in his Millennial glory. Another thought is that in every instance the healing of the soul from the sickness and condemnation of sin should be placed first, as the highest and most important thing, far outranking physical conditions and blessings.

Although our Lord proved to his hearers that his pronouncement of forgiveness was evidently backed by power and authority, as evidenced by the miracle, nevertheless he did not explain to them the how and the why of his conduct, and hence, while giving them proof, he left the questions of their minds unanswered. His hearers belonged to the house of servants, and not to the house of sons—the holy Spirit of begetting and adoption not having yet been given because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:39) To the house of sons, however, this matter is explained in the Scriptures, in the light of the holy Spirit, so that we may understand the how and the why as well as the fact, thus:

There was a provision under the Jewish law for the forgiveness or covering of the sins of the people, through the offering of special sin-offerings by the priests, but our Lord Jesus was not a priest of the Aaronic order, and the palsied man before him had not brought a sin-offering, under the terms of the Jewish law. However, we see the situation in a new light when we realize that the paralytic evidently brought to the Lord the sacrifice appropriate to the new dispensation, "a broken and a contrite heart," full of faith, and remember also that our Lord at his baptism assumed the office of the antitypical high priest the moment he was anointed with the holy spirit, and that his sacrifice of himself was counted as given by him and as accepted by the Father, from the moment of his consecration to death, symbolized in his water baptism. Hence we see that our Lord's authority to pronounce the forgiveness of sins was in virtue of his having sacrificed his humanity (which was in process of consummation upon the altar) while he, as a new creature, was a priest of the new order, the "royal priesthood," fully empowered to forgive sins.

Furthermore, this willingness of our Lord to forgive and to heal gives us a suggestion of his willingness and ability to do these same things (forgive the sins and heal the body) when the times of general refreshment shall come from the presence of Jehovah—"the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21.

The various difficulties under which humanity labors, called diseases, illustrate sin in various respects; for instance, palsy or paralysis represents a condition of sin in which the individual loses his power—sometimes merely becoming impotent, in the sense of helpless; at other times, in combination with this may come an insensibility of conscience, a deadness to all principles of righteousness, such as the Apostle describes as "past feeling." In this condition are quite a good many at the present time; they are not only helpless as respects all ability to go to the great Physician, but additionally they are devoid of any desire, any appreciation of their need; they have no feeling on the subject. These must be left for the present, but we may rejoice that the time is coming, according to the promise of the Lord's Word, when all shall come to a realization, a sensibility of sin, and to a knowledge of the way of escape from its condemnation and its penalties. In the present time, however, some, like this paralytic, are not past feeling, and yet are so helpless as to need the assistance of friends in bringing them to the Lord.

Every true Christian should be such a friend to every fellow-creature who has a desire for the Lord's blessing, and healing from sin-sickness; and such should be not only sympathetic but helpful in bringing their friends to the good Physician of the soul. Nor should they be readily stopped by impediments, obstacles, but like those in the illustration, they should be ready and willing to take advantage of every proper circumstance and condition to place their friend near to the Lord and his power, that the blessing might result. And will not the Lord be pleased with our faith as well as theirs, if we persistently do all in our power in their aid?

"True faith, like truest love, invents;
Denied the door, it circumvents."

Another thought here is that the first and most important thing for all is the forgiveness of sins. It is in vain that any would endeavor to avoid this first essential step toward acceptable Christianity. Some are inclined to put doctrine instead of faith and repentance, but this will not do. There is no use whatever in endeavoring to grow a crop of wheat on soil whose sod has not been broken. The fallow ground must first be broken up ere the seed can find proper root and bring forth fruit. So only those whose hearts have been plowed and brought into the condition of meekness and contriteness, and a desire for fellowship with the Lord—these alone are proper subjects to be brought to the Lord. True, it is not within our power to break the stony hearts, nor to plow the fallow ground; all that we can do is to note those in whose lives experiences have produced such results, and to sow the good seed of the kingdom in such hearts. This being the case, we must not be surprised that not many are ready for present truth; but toward those who give such evidence we are not to make the mistake of leading them to suppose that repentance and forgiveness are nonessential, but rather we are to point them to these as primary conditions upon which alone they can properly make progress, both in knowledge and in grace, so as to attain ultimately to the gracious things which God has promised to them that love him.

THESE MANY YEARS

[This poem was a reprint of that published in issue of September 15, 1894, which please see.]

INTERESTING LETTER

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Enclosed find order for £5—being £2 10*s.* expenses incurred by bringing Bro. Houston to our October conference, which he handed back to us as a donation to the Tract Fund, to help defray the cost of "*Bible vs. Evolution.*" The remainder is from the church in Glasgow.

Sister Ferrie will tell you about our method of carrying out the Volunteer movement. Up to date we have given the books at 73 churches, and have distributed 10,093 copies, being an average of about 138. We have been greatly surprised at the smallness of the congregations. We distribute only at the forenoon service, which in most cases has the smallest attendance, but it invariably includes the more earnest portion of the congregation, and we are of the opinion that by this method the ripe wheat will be reached. There have been a few inquiries for further literature, from whom we hope to hear again. We have suffered no other annoyance than an occasional refusal to accept the booklet.

All the brothers and sisters who are able take part in the work, and some occasionally travel a considerable distance in order to enjoy this privilege. A few of us meet in the morning for a season of prayer before going out, and have found it most refreshing and helpful.

We note with pleasure your promise of another pamphlet for distribution at the churches which have received the one on Evolution. The church here feel very grateful for what you have given us, and deplore their inability to take a larger share in the financial responsibility. We are deeply interested in the work and are willing to do anything in our power to lessen your burdens.

Assuring you of the continued affection of all the members of our little company, and their high appreciation of your noble work, I am

Yours in the one hope, ALEX. TAIT,—*Scotland.*

[The "Volunteer" work in Great Britain naturally commenced later than here, but we are glad to note that it progresses splendidly. Ours is a campaign of blood—"the blood of the cross," and is far more worthy of time, energy, treasure and our life-blood than any other known in the world. Courage! dear fellow-soldiers. Steady! the eye of our Captain is for victory only by "laying down our lives for the brethren" as he set us an example. We regret that we are out of our error-destroying and new-hope and new-life-infusing ammunition. "Good Hopes" for this year justify us in beginning the work for this year liberally and paper mill already has our order for forty-six tons of paper for "Volunteer" work for immediate delivery. We hope to be able to begin filling orders about April 1.—EDITOR.]

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL FRIENDS TAKE NOTICE

A brother in the truth in the Nursery business at Post Oak, Texas, finds himself financially embarrassed and asks our aid in disposing of his large stock of fruit trees which he describes as of excellent quality one and two years old and 4 to 6 feet high. He has a descriptive catalogue which we will forward to all interested. He says the prices are right. He offers the Tract Fund *one half* the receipts from this forced sale: but as we do no advertising we turn this advantage over to the friends, who can thus secure good trees for Texas climate at HALF PRICE: *packed free* and delivered at Express Office. No orders received for less than $2. Drop postal card for free catalogue to us.

The catalogue at hand besides the fruit trees includes grape and other vines and shade and ornamental trees. The prices seem reasonable and the goods at half price should be a bargain. This notice is quite a digression from our rule.

VOL. XXI ALLEGHENY, PA., MARCH 1, 1900 No. 5

RE-ENLISTED VOLUNTEERS! TO ARMS!

The new lot of *"Bible vs. Evolution"* ammunition is not yet ready, but by March 15 to April 1 we will have plenty of the new ammunition for use where the *Bible vs. Evolution* has already been distributed. You will like it, we assure you this in advance. It will consist of "Which is the True Gospel?" and "What Say the Scriptures about Hell?" in the shape of a double number of the WATCH TOWER. Get your several squads together and let us have your orders stating (1) the number of white Protestant churches in the district; (2) the average attendance at service which the church members chiefly attend; (3) the number of Volunteers in your squad; (4) to what address would you prefer to have the ammunition sent.

"MARK THE PERFECT MAN! BEHOLD THE UPRIGHT!"

MATT. 4:25-5:12.—APRIL 1.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

What characteristics are essential to our attainment of the most blessed conditions God has to bestow? What must we be in order to inherit the kingdom, be filled with righteousness, obtain divine mercy and everlasting comfort, be called the sons of God, and be permitted to see his face, obtaining a great reward in heaven? What question, what topic, what Bible lesson, could be more interesting to us or a more profitable study than this one? The great Teacher made it the topic, the text, of one of his principal discourses at his first advent, and caused the gist of his argument to be recorded for the admonition of his true followers throughout this Gospel age.

While the character of our Lord, which we as his followers are to copy, is one; and the attainment of that one character or disposition means the attainment of all the blessings God has to bestow; nevertheless, in order to present the matter the more distinctly to our minds the Lord divides this one character or disposition into different sections, giving us a view of each particular part; just as a photographer would take a front view, right-side view, left-side view, rear view and angling views, of any interesting subject, so that all the details of construction might be clearly discernible.

THE FIRST ESSENTIAL

The first character-picture which our Lord presents we may reasonably assume was in some respects at least most important: It is humility. "Blessed are the humble-minded (poor in spirit) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." We do not understand this to signify that humility is the only essential grace, and that whoever is humble will therefore attain the kingdom; but rather that to the attainment of the kingdom humility is a prerequisite of first importance. In other words, while all humble people will not attain the kingdom, the kingdom cannot be attained by anyone who is not humble: the kingdom is theirs, in the sense that it is possible for this class to accept the terms and to attain to the honors and blessings, while all of a different attitude of mind—the proud, the haughty, the self-conceited, are absolutely debarred from any possibility of attaining the kingdom so long as these contrary conditions lie at the foundation of their characters.

O that all of the Lord's people might see this point clearly and distinctly, and realize once and forever that "The Lord resisteth the proud and showeth his favors to the humble" exclusively! How this thought should put a guard upon every one of the Lord's little ones who is seeking to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son. How jealously they would watch and foster the development of this spirit of humility in their own hearts, and how it would be more and more discernible to others in their daily course of life, and what a blessing and what an influence for good, especially upon the "brethren," would result!

Growing out of this first essential quality or characteristic, as a tree of many branches out of the root, come the other graces of the spirit, which the Lord has declared blessed—divinely approved. How different our Lord's teachings in this respect from all human teachings! Earthly wisdom would say, on the contrary: Hold up your head; think well of yourself, if you would have other people think well of you; be high-spirited, instead of poor in spirit, a little haughty, rather than of humble demeanor; it will have a greater influence in many respects, for no one will think more highly of you than you think of yourself, nor give you credit for more than you claim; hence, think highly of yourself, and claim much, carrying a high head, and having a lofty and self-important look.

No doubt there is worldly wisdom in the worldly counsel; no doubt there is some truth in the worldly suggestion, so far as success in earthly matters in the present time is concerned. But here as in other instances, the Lord shows us that his ways are not as man's ways, but higher, as the heavens are higher than the earth. He assures us that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted in due time, while he who exalts himself shall be brought low, in due time. (Matt. 23:12) In the Scriptures he points us to our dear Redeemer as the illustration of the humble and obedient one, whom he has now exalted to the right hand of divine power; and our attention is also called to the great adversary, who, taking a reverse course, sought to exalt himself, and has been abased, and is ultimately to be destroyed.—Phil. 2:9; Heb. 2:14.

A sharp distinction should be noted between being poor in spirit and being poor in pocket, or in intellectual gifts and attainments. We have all seen people who were poor in these earthly senses, yet proud in spirit. The point to be noticed is that whatever our financial or intellectual gifts and conditions, the thing acceptable in the divine sight is humility of spirit. Such a disposition is essential to those who would receive the wisdom which cometh from above—they must have a humble appreciation of their own deficiencies and lack of wisdom, else they cannot receive freely, heartily, the wisdom which God is pleased to grant in the present time, only to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it. And it will be seen also that this humility of mind is essential as a basis for the spirit of a sound mind—for who is in a proper condition to think justly, reasonably, impartially, except first of all he have a humble disposition? Hence we must agree that humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ.

CONSOLATIONS THE REWARD OF SYMPATHY

The second beatitude or blessed condition mentioned by our Lord stands closely related to the first—"Blessed are they that mourn." Mourning of itself is not a grace, but it betokens an attitude of mind which is acceptable in the Lord's sight. Nor should we think of a mournful spirit, without consolation or joys, as being a Christian spirit. We cannot suppose that our Heavenly Father and the holy angels are continual mourners, as they would certainly be if mourning possessed any merit of itself. The thought rather is, Blessed are ye that mourn now—to whom present earthly conditions are not entirely satisfactory and happifying—who are not blind to the difficulties and trials through which the human family as a whole is passing—sin and sickness, pain and trouble, dying and crying: blessed are those who have sympathy of heart under present conditions, and to whom they are not satisfactory; for the time is coming when, under God's providence, a better order of things shall be instituted, and their dissatisfaction with present conditions will but bring them into closer sympathy and fellowship with those better things for which the divine plan is preparing. When God's kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven, all cause for mourning and for sorrow and for tears will be done away: that will be a time for consolation, for satisfaction, to this class.

Indeed, a good measure of comfort comes to the Lord's people even in the present age—through faith built upon the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word. The fact that they are able to discern the wrongs, the inequities, the distresses of the present time, creates in this class that very condition of heart to which divine promises appeal, whereas others not so touched at heart with sympathy for the groaning creation, are unable to so thoroughly appreciate the hopes set before us in the gospel. Hence it is by a natural law that such are drawn to the Lord's Word, and are enabled to draw therefrom consolation which speaks peace to their hearts, and gives them an inner joy which the less sympathetic cannot know under present conditions. Blessed are the sympathetic!

As we can cultivate the first of these graces, humility of mind, and by cultivation develop more and more of this first and essential characteristic, so we can cultivate also the second grace, the sympathetic spirit. To do this we should frequently think of others—their interests, their trials, their difficulties, and should seek to enter into these as though they were all our own, and should seek to lend a helping hand and to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith."—Gal. 6:10.

HOW THE GENTLE INHERIT

The third of these graces which the Lord declares blessed is meekness, or, as we should say, gentleness. Webster's Dictionary defines meekness to be, "Submission to the divine will; patience and gentleness from moral and religious motives." It will be perceived that there is quite a difference between this patient, gentle submission to the divine will, and the ordinary gentleness and patience which may frequently be exercised simply for the gratification of selfish desires. Patient submission to the divine will is impossible to those who have not the first grace in the list, a humble mind: the proud and self-willed find it impossible to be submissive to divine conditions; self rises up, perverts their judgments, and misleads their consciences to such an extent that they cannot have full confidence in divine providence, but feel that they must put forth their hand and steady the ark.

Moreover, patient submission can be developed only in those who mourn, in the sense of having large sympathies, and who have been comforted by the blessed promises of God, through which the holy Spirit comforteth his people. Realizing the evils of our time, and that they are permitted of God for the present for a wise purpose, these not only sympathize with the groaning creation, but this sympathy and the comfort received as its reward tend to make them patient, submissive to the divine will. Remembering that all things are working together for good to them that love God, they are prepared to recognize divine providence in whatever may befall them, and prepared also to look for the lessons of those providences, as blessings which will be helpful to them and to others, in preparing for the future and eternal joys.

This third grace—patient submission to the divine will—which can be noted by those with whom we come in contact, might be said to be the outer manifestation of the second grace, which is inward, of the heart, and which might not be outwardly discerned by our fellow-creatures. The grace of sympathy manifests itself in our patient submissiveness in all the affairs of life, realizing that to those who are in Christ all matters are under divine supervision, and this patience in respect to God's providences in our own circumstances and affairs leads also naturally and properly to patience with others in their weaknesses and failures and ignorance, and leads properly to helpfulness toward them as we have opportunity.

These "meek," patiently submissive to the divine will, shall inherit the earth. The Lord did not mean, nor is it true, that the patient and submissive to the divine will inherit the earth at the present time: quite to the contrary, the arrogant, the impatient, the aggressive, the selfish, succeed in grasping the chief things of power, of influence and of wealth now; and the patiently submissive have comparatively a poor chance. The reward of this grace, therefore, like the others, is future: following on under the divine leading, these shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; and the earth is a part of that great inheritance, which in turn, by divine arrangement, they shall bestow at the close of the Millennial age, upon the world of mankind who then survive—those proved worthy of eternal life by the Millennial tests.

Nevertheless, as there is a sense in which the Lord's people are comforted now, so there is also a sense in which they now inherit the earth—a figurative sense, by faith. The Apostle speaks of this when he says, "All things are yours—things present or things to come." (1 Cor. 3:21-23) Those who have the proper humble attitude of mind and are patiently submissive to the divine will, get more of blessing out of the things of the present time than do their actual owners, because their hearts are in the attitude in which it is possible to receive blessing. The world, full of selfish craving, is never satisfied, never contented; the child of God, patiently submissive to the divine will, is always satisfied—

"Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me."

FILLED WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS

The fourth blessing is that of hunger and thirst after righteousness. No one can have this hunger and thirst unless he previously have to a considerable extent the previous characteristics. If he have not humility of mind he will be satisfied with his attainments of righteousness, being unable to see beyond his own low plane, unable to discern the heights and grandeurs of the divine perfection. He cannot hunger and thirst after that which he does not in some measure comprehend. Unless he have the spirit of sympathy, which discerns the wrongs, the inequities of our present time (which in great measure mankind is unable to counteract and overcome—by which some of the human family, very deficient in the virtues, have an overplus of wealth and influence and authority, while some possessing superior virtues have scarcely the necessities of life) he cannot yearn for the better condition of things which the Scriptures declare can only be introduced by the establishment of Messiah's Millennial kingdom. It is a blessed indication then, if we find in our hearts a hungering and a thirsting for justice, for righteousness, for truth—an antipathy to untruth in every form, and to all injustice, in-equity—an antipathy, nevertheless, modified, influenced, controlled, by the third grace of this list, viz., by patient submission to the divine will. The control of this last quality is what the Apostle refers to when he says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men." It is this quality which stepping in hinders our hunger and thirst after righteousness, and our zeal for it, (both as respects truth and practice) from making us anarchistic or extremists in any sense of the word. This quality of hunger and thirst after righteousness, uncontrolled by the other of these graces of the spirit, has led many worldly people, as reformers, into wild excesses: whereas the child of God although having this same hunger and thirst in a larger degree than others, yet, under the control of the spirit of a sound mind, instructed from the Lord's Word, rests in his promises and waits for their fulfillment, patiently submissive, and assured of the victory of righteousness in God's due time, which he adopts as his time also.

Those who have and cultivate this blessed hunger and thirst shall be satisfied, abundantly satisfied, by and by, when God's kingdom shall be established, and when as a result of its reign all evil and all sin, all in-equities (iniquities) shall be suppressed, and God's holy will shall "be done on earth even as it is done in heaven." Our hunger and thirst after righteousness is not to be destroyed, but, as our Lord promised, it is to be satisfied. The appetite for truth and righteousness will still be there, but the prevalence of truth and righteousness shall be its satisfaction.

In this grace, as in the others, there is a sense in which by faith we already attain some measure of the fulfillment to come—although it is but a foretaste. Those who have the hunger and thirst for righteousness, in line with the other graces of the spirit, find in the gracious promises of the Lord that comfort and consolation which already, even in this present life, can be assimilated by faith, and which proves to be "meat in due season for the household of faith," sustaining, strengthening, resting, and at least partially satisfying the hunger and the thirst, as they realize the divine provision for everlasting righteousness is exceeding and abundant, more than all that they could have thought or have requested.

HOW TO OBTAIN MERCY

The fifth blessed condition is that of mercifulness. Mercy is the outward expression that man can discern, resulting from an appreciation of righteousness and a hunger and thirst for it in the renewed heart. After we have taken the preceding steps, and have learned to appreciate the inequities of the present time, and our own imperfections (unrighteousness) and those of other men; and after we have learned that God alone is able to right these matters in the full and complete sense, and that he has made provision for the righting of every wrong, and for the restoration to his favor of all who will accept his grace in Christ, to be made known to all in due time—it is then we begin to feel merciful, benevolent, kind, toward others, to an extent and degree that we could not feel these sentiments previously. Worldly people, who have not traveled on the pathway marked by these blessings of character and growths in grace, cannot to the same degree sympathize with nor feel merciful toward others.

The Lord lays great stress upon this quality of mercy, declaring that whatever else may be our attainments of knowledge or of grace, if we have not this one we can never be acceptable to him—if we do not have mercy upon others neither will our Heavenly Father have mercy upon us. And to insure that we do not consider this mercy to be merely an outward form, an expression of forgiveness and benevolence, our Lord expounds the matter, saying, "If ye do not from the heart forgive one another, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." It must be a genuine mercy, and not a feigned one; it must cover from sight, and so far as possible blot from memory, the failings and weaknesses of others, else it cannot hope for forgiveness and blotting out of its own short-comings which its hunger and thirst for righteousness has clearly revealed to it. Only the merciful shall obtain mercy: and if we have not mercy at the hands of the Lord all is lost; for by nature we were children of wrath, even as others, and under just condemnation.

The exercise of mercy, benevolence, forgiveness, is a blessing, not merely because it is essential to our own forgiveness; and hence to our salvation, but also because this condition of heart which sympathizes with others in their failures and imperfections helps to rid our hearts of certain of the works of the flesh and of the devil, which incline to cling to the Lord's people long after they have been justified by faith, and even after they have made full consecration of themselves to the Lord and are seeking to "walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

The Apostle includes amongst the works of the flesh which require putting away, after we are fully the Lord's, the following—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. All of these qualities of selfishness are antagonized by mercy, and by it largely they are driven from their secret hidings and entrenched positions in our hearts. The blessed character of mercy is closely related to love, for it is in proportion as we obtain the Lord's spirit of love that we manifest toward others mercy, even as he has manifested his love toward us in the mercy extended to us in Christ. Love and mercy, consideration for others, has much to do with driving out envy. How can we envy those whom we love sincerely? How can we have malice toward those who are our enemies, if we love them and have mercy, compassion, upon them, and forgive them from our hearts? How can we have hatred toward them, if we have mercy upon them, and feel toward them only a forgiving spirit? And how can we be strifeful, if we have a merciful, a forgiving spirit ready to forgive trespasses against us, as we hope for forgiveness of our trespasses against the divine law?

"Mercy rejoiceth against justice," the Apostle explains. (Jas. 2:13) Divine mercy satisfied divine justice, and thus prepared the way for the rescue of our race from the sentence of justice: and so those who have become partakers of the divine Spirit, and in whom it has reached a reasonable development, will permit their mercy to triumph over their conceptions of justice (for they have no law of justice over their fellows which needs to be satisfied).

While justice may not be blind in the Lord's people, while they may discern the faults of others most clearly, and while they may seek to let justice rule in respect to all of their own words, and thoughts, and actions, nevertheless they are to let mercy triumph in their hearts over justice as respects those who trespass against them, and they are not to hold resentments against those who have done them injury, nor to seek to avenge themselves and to inflict justice upon their opponents. Rather, they are to say, It is for God to be just; it is for me, who am a transgressor also against perfect justice, through the weaknesses which I have inherited, to have compassion upon my fellow-creature, who has inherited similar yet different weaknesses: it is for me to exercise accordingly the divine command, the blessed characteristic of mercy, compassion, forgiveness. And those who do so not only get rid of the evil works and sentiments of the world, the flesh and the devil, but increasingly become filled more and more with the spirit of love and gentleness and patient submission to the divine will, and thus the merciful are blessed even in the present time.

"WITHOUT HOLINESS NO MAN SHALL SEE THE LORD"

The sixth step of blessedness is purity of heart—purity of motive, purity of intention, purity of effort, purity of will: purity, in the sense of sincerity, of transparency, of truthfulness. In other words, Blessed are the honest-hearted, those who have absolutely right intentions. True, there are worldly people who to some extent might claim honesty of heart, purpose, intention, but until they have come along the way of divine appointment in Christ, until they have become his followers through faith and consecration to him, and until they have taken the preceding steps of blessedness, we could not recognize them as being of the class here specified.

Many have misunderstood this statement, "pure in heart," and have thought of it as signifying absolute perfection—not only outward but inward; not only of words and of deeds, but also of thoughts. This view of the matter has tended to discourage some who honestly said to themselves, I am not perfect in deed nor in word nor in thought; how then can I claim to be blessed under this provision as one of the pure in heart? We answer that this is a misconception. The Lord knows as well and better than we do, that in our flesh dwells no perfection; that by reason of the fall all of Adam's children have their teeth set on edge by the sour grape of sin, so that sometimes we cannot do the things that we would do, and through ignorance we no doubt frequently leave undone the things which we ought to do.—Jer. 31:29, 30; Rom. 7:16-18.

The Lord taught a great lesson during the Jewish age by the giving of the law to that people, with a promise of life attached to it, but the Apostle assures us that God foreknew, even when he gave that law to the Israelites, that "by the deeds of the law should no flesh be justified in his sight"—that on the contrary the clearer the law would be discerned the more clear would be the knowledge of sin—of imperfection. God's provision in Christ is that he will forgive those imperfections which are due, not to personal wilfulness, but to the original sin, and the weaknesses and imperfections which have resulted from it—he will extend his mercy toward us as respects those deflections which are not wilful. That our Lord Jesus was not ignoring human imperfection is evident from the statement he makes in reference to the fifth of these blessed characteristics, via., that the merciful "shall obtain mercy"—an implication of our need of mercy. Having assured us that we may obtain mercy, he is not in this sixth beatitude declaring that we must be absolutely perfect in thought, word and deed; for if were so, or could attain to such a condition, it would be wholly unnecessary for God to provide us mercy and forgiveness of sins through Christ's sacrifice.

The thought of "pure in heart" is not perfection of conduct nor of word, nor of thought, but perfection of intention as respects all of these. Our desire and effort must be for perfection—in thought, word and deed. The standard before us, to which our hearts, our wills, must give assent. is the divine standard, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48) God has set no lower standard than this absolute perfection, but he has provided for us grace, mercy and peace through Christ, if we will walk in his footsteps,—this purity of heart being one of the essential steps in the narrow way.

Only the pure in heart have the promise of seeing God. They continue faithfully to the end of the pilgrimage, not only attaining the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ in the present life (Rom. 8:29) in their purity of heart, purity of intention, sincerity of their efforts toward God and men, but eventually according to the Lord's promise, they shall, by the power of the first resurrection, be changed from earthly to heavenly, spiritual conditions. Then, as the Apostle declares, "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." And when we have thus become changed to be like the glorious Son of God, who is "the express image of the Father's person," we shall be able also unquestionably to see the Heavenly Father himself, and shall be introduced to him by our dear Redeemer—"complete in him," "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."—1 John 3:2; Heb. 1:3; Eph. 5:27; Col. 2:10.

In this, as in the other blessings, a portion, a foretaste, comes in the present life. There is such a thing as having the eyes of our understanding opened, that we may be enabled to "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ." (Eph. 3:18) But not all have this opening of the mental eye; not all are privileged to see the glories of Jehovah's character in symmetrical harmony, divine justice, wisdom, love and power co-ordinated and co-operating in unison for the blessing of every creature, according to the purpose which God purposed in himself before the world was.

But who may enjoy this blessing, this clearer vision, and who may, by seeing it, be enabled more and more to grow in likeness of that glorious perfection? Only "the pure in heart," only the sincere, the honest-hearted. Those who have a double mind, a double will, are Scripturally said to have a double vision, a double eye. They see spiritual things cross-eyed, see things double, and proportionately indistinctly. Many of God's people have failed thus far to grow up into Christ in all things, see thus doubly and confusedly—they see something of the heavenly things, and something of the earthly; they see but dimly and indistinctly the lines of the divine character, and proportionately they lack ability to copy it. Let all who have named the name of Christ seek more and more to have

but the one Master, and an eye single to his glory and service —a pure, a sincere, a faithful heart.

THE SONS OF GOD ALL PEACEMAKERS

The seventh beatitude is an outward manifestation of the sixth. The purity of heart toward God, which others cannot discern, will manifest itself in this seventh characteristic of blessedness and growth—namely, in peaceable desires and efforts to promote peace in others. For beyond question no one will be a peacemaker from this divine standpoint unless he have already become sincere, pure in heart toward God; and unless he have also the preceding developments of grace in his heart: (1) humility, (2) sympathy, (3) patient submission, (4) hunger and thirst for righteousness (which includes trust) (5) a love or mercifulness toward others, (6) sincerity of heart. And one who has developed these characteristics to any particular degree can surely be nothing else than peaceably disposed himself, and a peacemaker with others.

Very evidently but a small number of the Lord's people have progressed so far as to have this grace markedly developed and exemplified in their lives. The great majority, even of those who have named the name of Christ, seem to pursue a reverse course, which indicates that even if their hearts are pure and their sympathies large, they have still much to learn in the school of Christ; for instead of being peace promoters they are strife promoters. Yet this is not of evil intent, but rather of habit, and of ignorance and of failure to discern the wide difference between the divine course of love, and the opposite course of selfishness which prevails in the world. Strife-making is chiefly stirred up with the tongue, though it may be aroused by a gesture or by a glance. Likewise, peacemaking is chiefly done with the tongue, though it also may operate through the eye. How many Christian people we all know who have tongues which are continually stirring up strife! The adversary controls many in this manner long after they have escaped from his control in many other respects; and this is largely because they do not detect that in this they are doing Satan service—do not even detect that they are stirrers up of strife, hatred, envy, malice, and planters of roots of bitterness by which many are defiled.

When will Christians learn the length and breadth and depth of the injunctions "Speak evil of no man," and "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying?" (Titus 3:2; Eph. 4:29) How long will it take some of God's true children to learn that in uttering an evil thing (even if they were positive of its truth), they may be doing a world of evil? How long will it take them to learn that it is not always necessary to speak the truth, nor even proper to do so except when it would be for the edifying of others? How many lessons, line upon line, must they have to convince them that they are not only to avoid gossip about other people's business, and fault-finding, and cynicism, but that all these are evidences of their deficiency in love—of their deficiency in the likeness of Christ, and their lack of the qualities of the peacemaker; and that these lacks need to be striven against earnestly, if they would make their calling and election sure to a place in the heavenly kingdom?

Oh, that all would learn by heart, and continually seek to exemplify in life, the words of the Apostle, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Those who are thinking on the true and lovely and good and beautiful things will speak to each other of the same; hence the importance of having our hearts filled with good things, in order that out of the abundance of the good things of our hearts our mouths may speak continually good things, that the Lord would approve, and that would minister blessing to those who hear.—Phil. 4:8; Luke 6.45.

Such have a very precious promise, well worthy of their efforts—"They shall be called the children of God"—they have God's spirit, the likeness of his dear Son has been traced in their hearts; they have been sanctified with the truth; they shall ultimately be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." Only such at heart will the Lord ever recognize as his sons and joint-heirs with his great Son, our Lord, in the kingdom. Moreover, this is a test which we may well recognize for ourselves particularly, and to some extent for each other, as evidencing the degree of our growth as children of God—our peaceable dispositions, and our carefulness to pursue such a course in life as will tend toward peace.

Some of the Lord's people find in themselves naturally considerable of a spirit of combativeness, unfavorable to peace. Indeed, it requires something of the spirit of combativeness to fight a good fight against the world, the flesh and the adversary, and to "contend earnestly for the faith;" so that those who have combativeness naturally find themselves in antagonism with others along some line continually. However, they should not be discouraged by this, but should remember that combativeness is a valuable servant and soldier, if turned and exercised in the right direction. Its exercise toward fellow creatures must be modified by mercy, by a realization of our own imperfections and the imperfections of all. Combativeness must be trained to fight along the lines of love and mercy—to fight for the truth and for all the servants and agencies of the truth, and against the error,—but not against the blinded and ignorant servants of the error. Combativeness must be given plenty to do in fighting against the imperfections and weaknesses of our own natures, and being thus busily engaged in this good work, it will find comparatively little time for assaulting others: and realizing the difficulties connected with the conquering of self it will have the greater compassion for the weaknesses of others.

ATTAINING GREAT REWARD IN HEAVEN

The blessing that comes through persecution is the eighth beatitude. It is not until the Lord's people have experienced some of these preceding blessings of his grace that they reach the point where they can "glory in tribulations also," as did the Apostle Paul. But our Lord carefully distinguishes as between different kinds of persecution, marking out the blessed kind as distinct from all other sorts. We are not to invite persecution by fault-finding and general cantankerousness and combative opposition to everybody and everything; nor are we to invite persecution by fanaticism. Rather, we are to cultivate the "spirit of a sound mind," and to learn gradually what the sound mind of the Lord is, as revealed in the Scriptures. Even then, no doubt we will be falsely accused by the world of "fanaticism," because the wisdom of God is oft esteemed foolishness with men, as often the wisdom of men is foolishness from the divine standpoint.

Whenever a course of action would appear to be fanatical and unreasonable, we are to hesitate to do it until we have first made sure that we find the same spirit, teaching and example in our Lord and in the apostles: then we may safely follow, regardless of what the world may say or think respecting our course. For instance, from the divine standpoint it is insanity for a man to labor day and night to amass millions, for his children to fight over at his death, but from the human standpoint this is the reasonable course. From the divine standpoint it was wise for the apostles to spend their lives in the service of the truth, sacrificing earthly interests and prospects, name and fame, to obtain eventually a better resurrection, and eternal glory, honor and immortality; but this, from the world's standpoint was foolishness, fanaticism.

If persecution comes to us as a result of our following the Lord, and the apostles,—their teachings and example, and if it is because of our faithfulness to the vows of consecration to his service that all manner of evil is said against us, falsely, then indeed we may rejoice; for so were the prophets persecuted, so was our Lord persecuted, so were the apostles and all the faithful ones since persecuted. Being thus in good company in our experiences, it becomes a witness or testimony to us that we shall be in like good company in that day when the Lord shall make up his jewels.

All who have such experiences may well rejoice, and if, as the Lord's words intimate, the more of such experiences we have the more will be our reward in heaven, then the more we may rejoice in these experiences. And if we be without any such experiences it behooves us to look well to ourselves, lest peradventure it mean that we are not faithfully walking in the "narrow way" of self-sacrifice,—or are not doing with our might what our hands find to do, but are holding back our sacrifice. Should such be the reflection of any let him not be discouraged, but, in the language of the Prophet, let him "bind the sacrifice to the altar," with fresh cords of love and of zeal, praying the Lord to accept the sacrifice, and to furnish opportunities for being and doing and suffering for His cause, and for the Lord's and the truth's sake.—Psa. 118.27.

The prismatic sum of all these graces is—love; and those who have them are lovable and shall by and by be made gloriously lovely, with and like him who is "altogether lovely." Our call is to attain these blessed conditions in the kingdom.

Lead us in holiness, the road
Which we must keep to dwell with God;
Lead us in Christ, the living way;
Nor let us from his pastures stray.

Teach us in watchfulness and prayer
To wait for thine appointed hour;
And fit us by thy grace to share
The triumphs of thy conq'ring power.

THE ROYAL LAW—THE GOLDEN RULE

MATT. 7:1-14.—APRIL 8.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

In this lesson we have another leaf from our Lord's great Sermon on the Mount. This is not a sermon to sinners but to the Lord's consecrated people; and although there were multitudes within the hearing of our Lord's voice, all of whom belonged to the typically consecrated nation, yet our Lord addressed himself specially to his twelve chosen disciples, who were being particularly and fully instructed, that they, under the spirit dispensation soon to be inaugurated, might become the twelve foundations of the heavenly kingdom, represented symbolically in the New Jerusalem of Revelation.—Rev. 21:14.

True, many of the features of this royal law were then and still are sound advice for all who can receive them; but the fact remains that comparatively few are blessed with the opening of eyes and unstopping of ears to permit their appreciation of these holy pearls of truth; and assuredly they were addressed to and intended for only those who could receive them. Thank God for the good hope that ere long, the kingdom being established, all the blind eyes shall be opened, all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and that in God's "due time" these precepts of the Golden Rule of love will be appreciated by all and be applicable to all—whether they respond to them or reject them.

Following our Lord's example and injunction, we are endeavoring to set meat in due season, "things new and old," before the household of faith, the children of the kingdom, and not before "dogs"—those who are still outside of divine favor, who have not yet received the grace of God and been adopted into his family and constituted sons. These precious truths are pearls of great price—of great value—to those who have the hearing ear and the understanding and appreciative heart —those who have been begotten of the spirit and are "new creatures in Christ Jesus," and seeking to live the new life. We do not attempt to present these matters to the brutish, the swinish, knowing that they would not appreciate them; but would merely feel a disappointment and resent our good intentions to our injury. Our Lord points this out later on in the discourse (verse 6), and his words are in full accord with those of Solomon, "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee."—Prov. 9:7, 8.

It is to the household of faith, then, that the Lord says, "Judge not that ye be not judged." It is useless that we give this advice to others than the pupils in the school of Christ, for not having put themselves under the instruction of the great Teacher it gives evidence that his instructions are not appreciated by them. But all true disciples (learners, pupils) should give earnest heed to this injunction, and should understand that it contains a very important lesson, which unlearned will render them unready for the great examination, unready for graduation, unready for the kingdom; because in their examination this will be one of the tests. If they have been fault-finding, cynical, hypercritical, etc., judging others harshly and uncharitably, it will be a clear token that they have not developed the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love,—which is full of kindness and consideration: hence such would be judged or condemned as unfit for the kingdom, for according to our way of judging others we will be judged—since nothing else will better demonstrate our true spiritual condition,—the presence or absence of love.

Whatever measure of mercy and generosity we mete out to others will be the measure of divine mercy that will be extended to us. If all the Lord's people could have well impressed upon their hearts this lesson from the great Teacher's lips, how wonderfully it would affect their attitude toward others, in thought as well as in deed; how generous, how forgiving, how sympathetic for the weaknesses of others they would become; how the spirit of love would grow in their hearts and manifest itself in their words and deeds!

RAFTERS IN THEIR EYES

Emphasizing this lesson, our Lord suggests that those who are always finding fault with the "brethren" who, like themselves are seeking to walk in the narrow way—who can never see the noble efforts of the "brethren" to copy the Master, but are continually picking at them, are the very ones who have the greatest of faults in themselves,—lovelessness. The exaggeration of our Lord's words of reproof to this class seems to imply a vein of sarcasm, for literally he says, Why do you stare so at your fellow who is troubled with a grain of sawdust in his eye, while you have a whole rafter in your own eye? All the "brethren" are more or less troubled with difficulties of one kind or another, weaknesses of the flesh,—because all have the treasure of the new nature in imperfect earthen vessels—marred by original sin. "There is none righteous, no, not one" absolutely perfect. Yet the brethren whose hearts are full of love, even though they have sawdust in their eye of faith, or intellectual discernment or spiritual discernment, and perhaps also splinters in their hands, which affect all the deeds of life, and render their work imperfect, and though many of them have splinters in their feet also, so that their walk is by no means perfect, as they would desire it to be—yet if they have the spirit of faith and of love and of sympathy, the spirit of Christ, they are his, and far more acceptable to him than any could possibly be who are devoid of the spirit of love and sympathy, and who therefore in this parable are represented as wholly perverted in their judgment of others, because possessing so little of the Lord's spirit and so much of the spirit of the adversary—the great "accuser of the brethren."

This loveless, fault-finding, brethren-accusing class the Lord denominates hypocrites. Why? Because in finding fault with others they are evidently wishing to give the inference that they are not afflicted with the same malady of sin themselves; they evidently wish to give the impression that they are holy, and since they know in their own hearts that this is untrue, and that they have many failings, many imperfections —therefore their course is hypocritical, false, deceptive, displeasing to God. Their claim that their fault-finding is prompted by love for the erring and a hatred of sin is deceptive and hypocritical as our Lord's words clearly show. Otherwise they would find plenty to do in hating and condemning and battling with their own sins and weaknesses;—casting out their own rafter of self-conceit and hypocrisy. The experiences thus gained would make them very tender and merciful and loving in their assistance of others.

All of the "brethren" should carefully view this picture which our Lord portrayed, and should note well to see whether or not they have any of the evil disposition of heart—fault-finding, nagging, harsh criticism and denunciation—different degrees of the same fault. If they find any trace of such a "beam" of lovelessness and self-conceit in their spiritual eye, they should go at once to the great Physician and have it thoroughly eradicated, that they thus may speedily become gentle, sympathetic assistants to the "brethren," and be prepared as successful surgeons and physicians for the great work of the Millennial age—the kindly and sympathetic opening of the blind eyes of humanity and the healing of all the wounds of sin.

TYING GRAPE CLUSTERS TO THORN BUSHES

But while we are not to judge our "brother," who with us professes to be endeavoring to walk in the footsteps of our Master, and who gives any evidences at all of sincerity in the matter, we nevertheless are to do a certain kind of judging as respects mankind in general. Elsewhere the Lord intimates that "by their fruits" we are to "know" gravevines from thorn-bushes, and figs from thistles. And in this sermon he intimates that we are to judge or discern as between the brethren and "dogs" and "swine"—the selfish, the sensual, who mind earthly things and who have never been begotten of the spirit of God. We may know these by outward evidences, for "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his;" and if he is none of his, not a branch of the Vine, we are not to waste our time in trying to tie onto him bunches of the fruits of the vine. We are not to attempt to deceive others or ourselves by helping to counterfeit the true holy spirit in the selfish, unregenerate world. We are not to expect that this class, whose appreciation is only for earthly things, to appreciate holy, heavenly things, any more than we would expect that dogs would appreciate the difference between meat from the butchershop and the holy, consecrated meat eaten only by the priesthood. We are not to expect that the swinish and groveling, who think only of money and the things of this life, would appreciate the pearls of truth which are so precious in the sight of the brethren, begotten of the spirit.

This does not mean that we should never bring holy things to the attention of those who are not the Lord's consecrated people; but it does mean that a mere presentation of the first principles of righteousness and truth should quickly manifest to us those who have an ear for the truth, and those who have not,—that finding the hearing ear we might give diligence to serve it, and finding the ear closed we might cease to waste our time, knowing that the effort would be fruitless as respects the calling of this Gospel age—to saintship, to the divine nature, to joint-heirship in the kingdom. The Millennial age will soon be ushered in, and that will be God's time for breaking the hard hearts, for opening the blind eyes, and unstopping the deaf ears.

Indeed, in some respects the efforts which have been expended upon the "dogs" and the "swine"—the thorn-bushes and the thistles, endeavoring to tie to these various imitations of the fruits of the spirit of Christ, and to make the meat of the household palatable to them, have been positively injurious to the Lord's cause. The "brethren" have been neglected in the endeavor to feed the "dog" class; the making ready of the bride for the bridegroom, and adorning her with the pearls of truth, has been neglected in the endeavor to interest the "swine" in the pearls. The real value of the true vine, in producing good fruit, and the wide difference of nature between it and a bramble bush, has been greatly obscured by the appropriation of the vine's natural fruitage to the bramble. Let us not be wise above what is written; let us attend in the present time to the work which God has appointed for this age, and leave to his appointed time the general work for the world of mankind.

HOW TO OVERCOME LOVELESS SELF-CONCEIT

Returning to the lessons which the "brethren" must learn, and possibly having specially in mind the correction of the tendency to judge one another, our Lord gives instructions how these wrong qualities may be eradicated. We are to ask of the Lord the needed measure of love and sympathy which will hinder us from judging others, and which will help us in correcting our own defects. If we ask sincerely, truly, we will receive his grace and help in this direction. And while asking, it is our duty to be seeking the things which we lack, the holy spirit of love to fill our hearts: and if we seek it we shall find it. We are to knock upon the Lord's store-house of grace and blessing by continued efforts, as well as prayer without ceasing, and as a result it will surely be opened to us. The asking, the seeking, the knocking, will all imply faith in the Lord, which will be pleasing in his sight, and it will also imply faithfulness on our part and a desire to be conformed fully to the Lord's will. And these good desires of our hearts shall be gratified, because, as an earthly parent would respond to his child's request for earthly food, so will the Lord respond and supply grace in every time of need to his children. He will not deceive us nor give us evil things, when we desire the good, but will do for us exceedingly abundantly more than we could ask or think; for is not our heavenly Father much better than any imperfect human father could possibly be?

Luke's reference to this discourse (11:13) declares that the good thing that God will be pleased to give these asking, seeking, knocking ones, is his holy spirit. And this is exactly what is needed, as an offset to the unholy, unloving, selfish, judging and fault-finding spirit of the flesh, which must be cast out. The antidote for the poison is that we should be filled with the holy spirit, the spirit of love, for "love worketh no ill to his neighbor;" love "suffereth long and is kind;" love "is not puffed up" to see the faults of others and to be blind to its own; it "vaunteth not itself" to be a general critic, fault-finder and "accuser of the brethren." Love is sympathetic, helpful, the spirit of God.—1 Cor. 13.4; Rom. 13:10.

"WORKING IN YOU THAT WHICH IS WELLPLEASING IN HIS SIGHT"—Heb. 13:21

"Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." The word "therefore" shows the connection between this and the preceding features of the lesson: it signifies that this will be a test or rule by which we may discern when and to what extent we are misjudging the motives of others, and officially endeavoring to perform the very delicate operation of removing their splinters. This verse is therefore known as the "Golden Rule,"—the rule which God would have his people use in respect to all the affairs of life—especially in their relationship and dealings with the "brethren." When disposed to find a fault, or pick a flaw, when disposed to condemn another or to criticize another's faults, or to hold him up to odium, we can generally know of the propriety or impropriety of so doing or thinking by asking ourselves the question: Would I wish the brother to do, to say or to think thus respecting me, if I were he and he were I?

This rule, closely followed, will very generally be a guide, and yet we have known instances in which the Lord's people seemed so anxious for an excuse for slander, for evil speaking, for gossip, that they found some kind of a way of excusing themselves for the violation of the Golden Rule, even when they remembered it and at heart wished to obey it. Let us be very careful, dear brethren, how we handle the Lord's rule—that we do not handle the Word of God deceitfully—that we do not blind and deceive ourselves respecting its true importance—that we do not thus vitiate and impair our consciences—that we do not thus thwart our prayers for the holy Spirit. For the holy Spirit can flow into our hearts only as the channel is open; and the channel can be kept open only by keeping this Golden Rule continually at work at its full gauge. This Golden Rule and all these lessons, that seem so new because presented by the great Teacher in a clearer and sharper light than ever before, were nevertheless the gist, or essence of the Mosaic Law, and of the Lord's teachings through the prophets.

NARROW IS THE WAY

Our Lord intimates that such a life of carefulness respecting not only our actions but also our words and even our very thoughts (which are the springs from whence proceed our words and actions) will be a very "narrow way"—a difficult way. And yet it is the only way by which we can hope to enter into the life and kingdom of joys which are now set before us in the Gospel call. The broad way, the easy way, the selfish way, the worldly way, does not lead to the kingdom; on the contrary, it leads to death—to the second death, to utter destruction. The many are going in that way now, and only the few find and enter into the strait gate and narrow way to the kingdom and its glory, honor and immortality.

This does not, however, either say or imply that the present age is the only one in which any opportunity will be given to escape the destruction toward which the broad way and the world tend; though it is the only way now open. The Word of the Lord elsewhere points out to us that after the select little flock, the elect church, the bride, the body of Christ shall have been selected from amongst mankind—composed of those who seek and walk in the narrow way—after these shall have been glorified with the Redeemer, will come a time when, in the Lord's providence, a grand highway of holiness shall be opened to the world of mankind, during the Millennial age. While it will be an upward way and not a downward one, so that it will require effort to walk thereon and to attain to the full restitution, the prize at its further end, nevertheless it will be very different from the narrow, the difficult way now open before the elect church, God's peculiar people. It will be a way of righteousness, but not a way of sacrifice, as is the present narrow way, which thus selects the "royal priesthood," each one of whom must present his body a living sacrifice, in order to make his calling and election sure.

No lions shall be in that grand Millennial highway; nothing to hurt or destroy or intimidate from well-doing; nothing to seduce or to devour as a prey those who seek to walk righteously and to come back into harmony with the Lord; whereas all these besetments are now about us, because Satan, the prince of this world, is still unbound. (Isa. 35:8, 9; Rev. 20:2) All who now enter the "narrow way" are compelled to fight a good fight, to contend earnestly for the faith, to resist the devil, if they would secure the greater "prize" of our high calling. We must not only contend with the weakness of the flesh, which we have inherited, but we must also wrestle with wicked spirits in exalted places (Eph. 6:12), but the Lord giveth us the more grace, that thereby we may come off conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.—1 Tim. 6:12; Jude 3; Jas. 4:7; Rom. 8:37.

JESUS SAID UNTO HIM, FOLLOW ME

MARK 2:13-22.—MARCH 18.

Capernaum, where our Lord had been teaching and healing, was situated on the sea of Galilee, or, as we today should say, the Lake of Galilee. It was a city of considerable commercial importance, especially for the fish business, and undoubtedly the lake-shore in that vicinity was quite populous. The tense of the Greek would seem to indicate that our Lord kept going by the sea-shore, stopping here and there to discourse to the people, multitudes of whom flocked to hear him. It was during this journey that he passed Matthew, formerly known as Levi, a custom-house agent of the Roman government—a revenue collector, who was attending to his business, and whom our Lord addressed, saying, "Follow me," and who obeyed the call to discipleship.

Many get a false thought from the brevity of the narrative, and infer that Levi (Matthew) had never heard of Jesus before, and that our Lord, as he passed him, cast upon him some kind of a spell which led him to instantly drop his business, as though bereft of his senses. On the contrary, we are to remember that the Lord and his disciples were well known in that vicinity for years, and that probably Matthew had not only knowledge of our Lord, but also faith in him, as the Messiah. Not until now, however, had Jesus invited him to become one of His immediate disciples; not until now, therefore, could Matthew essay to become such. There evidently were many who heard the Lord discourse time and again, and who were to be reckoned as amongst his friends, but who were by no means invited to become special followers, companions and associates in the ministry of the Gospel, as were the twelve.

Nor are we to suppose that Matthew left his money-drawer open, and his accounts with the Roman government unsettled, to immediately follow the Master. Rather, we may assume that it may have taken days, or possibly weeks, to straighten his affairs and to enable him to respond to the Lord's call to apostleship. We should remember that the history of several years, and many discourses, conversations and incidents, are crowded in the Gospel narrative into very brief space.

It would seem probable that as Simon's name was changed by the Lord to Peter, so Levi's name was changed to Matthew, which signifies "the gift of God." He was a publican—a person who farmed the taxes and the public revenue. The name "publican" and the profession were both extremely odious to the Jews, who very reluctantly submitted themselves to the tax regulations of the Romans. Publicans were counted unpatriotic, disloyal to their own nation, in that they accepted the service of an alien government, and made use of their knowledge of their country and people in assisting to collect revenues deemed unjust. The office, as will be readily seen, offered many opportunities for dishonesty and extortion, bribery, etc., but we cannot for a moment suppose that Levi was one of these dishonest publicans, for had he been so we may be sure he would not have been called to the apostleship and would not have responded to the call, for we are not to forget that it is written, "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him."—John 6:44.

THE CONSECRATED HOME HONORED

Matthew was a man of influence, and as soon as he accepted the Lord's call, and responded by consecrating himself and his all, he set about to use his influence in drawing others to the Saviour. He would announce his own devotion to the cause in such a manner and under such favorable circumstances as if possible would win some. To these ends he arranged a banquet for the Lord and his disciples at his house, and invited many of his friends and business associates. These in our lesson are called "Many publicans and sinners."

We have seen why the publicans were ostracised by the scribes and Pharisees—not because they were wicked, but because their business was disesteemed: and being thus cut off socially from the ultra-religious, the publicans were forced to have most of their social intercourse with the non-religious, by way of contrast called "sinners." By the term sinners we are not necessarily to understand vile persons and evildoers, but rather persons who did not profess nor attempt the holiness claimed by the Pharisees—persons who did not claim to be absolute keepers of the divine law—who did not profess to make the outside of the cup or platter absolutely clean, tho perhaps in many instances the inside was as clean or more clean than were the hearts of the Pharisees, who professed perfect holiness. This our Lord intimated on several occasions. When, therefore, we read that our Lord was the friend of publicans and sinners we are not to understand that he made companions of the rowdies or moral lepers of his time. We are rather to understand that in the usage of that time one class of Jews was designated the holy people (Pharisees), and another class designated as not professing absolute holiness (sinners).

Matthew's endeavor to bring his friends and associates into contact with the Master and his teachings is certainly commendable, and is a good illustration of what each one who enters the Lord's flock should do. Each should seek to exert his influence where it is greatest, amongst those with whom he is acquainted and who are acquainted with him, and upon whom either his past honesty and good character should have an influence, or else those to whom his radical change of life would be the most manifest. Another lesson for us is the propriety of using hospitality as a channel for the advancement of the truth—the homes of those who have consecrated themselves to the Lord should be consecrated homes, in which the first consideration should be the service of the Master; and its influence should be to draw out friends to the Lord, that they might be taught of him. Too frequently the consecration of the home is overlooked and antagonistic influences are permitted to dominate, with the result that neither the Lord nor the Lord's people are entertained, nor his cause served in them. Such a house and home loses a great blessing, and the head of such a house has serious reason to question whether or not he is overcoming, and therefore an "overcomer," to whom only the prize is promised,—or whether he is being overcome by adverse influences.

The Lord desires a courageous people, a people so full of faith, and love to him and his, that they will conquer adverse influences in the interest of righteousness. What would we think of Matthew if he had said to the Lord: Master, I would much like to have a banquet at my home, and to invite there some of my friends, that I might introduce you to them, and that thus a favorable influence might be exerted on behalf of the truth; but I have no liberty in my own home—my wife would not hear of it for a moment,—or, my children are unruly, have no respect for me as a parent, and would create a great disturbance if I were to mention such a thing as a banquet in your honor, so greatly are they offended that I am giving up my lucrative business, and so fearful are they that they will not have the same social standing as before, or the same privileges of extravagance?

We would consider him a most unfit man to be an apostle, or to occupy even the position of elder or deacon in the church, according to the terms laid down by the Apostle Paul. (1 Tim. 3:4, 5) We would esteem such an one unworthy of any responsible position in the church, and so deficient in the qualities of an "overcomer" that he would be in great danger of losing the prize, unless he promptly instituted a reform of his character. It is only what we should expect, to find Matthew's case very different from this—to find that he had a strong character. Nor can we expect that the Master would have said to him, "Follow me," unless he had such character that would permit him to follow in the Master's footsteps, for surely our Lord Jesus, while gentle, kind and loving, was never weak or characterless.

And what would we have thought of Matthew's wife and family, had they objected to the banquet? We would have considered them rather hopeless as respects saintship, and that his wife had not learned even the first element of wifehood;—that she was a hinderer instead of a helping mate. As it was we may be assured that with the Lord came a special blessing to that home.

SPIRITUAL FOOD AT THE BANQUET

It would seem from other narratives of this same banquet (which was probably several weeks after Matthew's call) that a large number of people were gathered at Matthew's house, aside from those who partook of the banquet (Luke 5:29), and from the connection of the narrative it is supposed that it was on one of the regular fast days of the Pharisees. These facts led to the two questions:

(1) Why does your Teacher associate with these people, who do not profess sanctification? The objection was not that our Lord should not teach the publicans and sinners, but that he should not eat with them, which implied a social equality, and the Pharisees evidently recognized that our Lord and his apostles were professing and living lives of entire consecration to God.

In answer to this query our Lord said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;" the implication being that the physician had a right to go to and mingle with those whom he sought to relieve, and might mingle with them in whatever manner he saw to be expedient for their cure. This language does not imply that the Pharisees were not sick, and that they did not need our Lord's ministry, tho the fact was that not admitting that they were sin-sick they were not disposed to receive his good medicine of doctrine. The same thought is otherwise expressed by our Lord in the same connection, saying, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Anyone who considered himself to be righteous would be beyond the call of repentance. His first lesson would be to learn that he was not righteous, not perfect; hence our Lord went chiefly to those who admitted that they were not righteous, and whose hearts therefore were better soil for the truth than others. Our Lord intimated this in his parable of the publican's and the Pharisee's prayers, assuring us that in God's sight the publican had the better standing, because of his acknowledgment of imperfections and his petition for mercy.

Another of the Evangelists adds others of our Lord's words—"Go ye and learn what that meaneth: I will have mercy and not sacrifice." (Matt. 9:13) Our Lord here evidently quoted from Hosea 6:6. The lesson the Pharisees should have learned from this was that in their particularity respecting sacrifices, self-denials, tithing of mint, anise, cummin, etc., the very things in which they boasted as evidences of their holiness were things which God did not appreciate nearly so much as he would have appreciated mercy. They should have had compassionate feelings toward their fellow Jews, the yearning compassion which would have delighted to have lifted them out of sin and brought them nearer to the Lord and nearer to righteous influences. Instead of having this spirit of mercy, which would have been very pleasing in God's sight, and would have prepared them to be recipients of his mercy, they had instead a loveless sentiment which despised others and boasted of self,—a self-satisfied and complacent condition of mind and heart, very reprehensible to the Lord—a condition of heart unready to be blessed with divine mercy.

FASTING AND FEASTING—TYPICAL AND ANTITYPICAL

(2) The next question was: Why is it that your Master and all who affiliate with him are banqueting and feasting and rejoicing, while we Pharisees "fast twice in the week," and the followers of John's teachings also fast? Is not this a sign that you and your Master are not so devout as we?—Luke 18:12.

The Lord's answer is very comprehensive and far-reaching, and requires considerable study to be appreciated. He explained:—

(a) That it would be inappropriate for his followers to be in sadness and mourning at a time when they were receiving such wonderful blessings—at a time when the Bridegroom himself was present, cheering their hearts, refreshing and strengthening them, opening the eyes of their understanding, and giving them hearing ears to appreciate the divine favor that was coming unto them. Such would not be an appropriate time for fasting and mourning. By and by, when the Bridegroom would be away, there would be an abundance of perplexity and sorrow and then fasting would be in order. And so surely it has been: the Lord's people throughout the Gospel age have frequently felt called upon in times of darkness and adversity to seek a very close approach to the Lord by the humbling of the flesh, and have found fasting a valuable means to this end.

But fasting has a typical significance—it means self-denial. So long as the Master was with his people, and especially so long as he was honored by the multitudes, it required comparatively little self-denial to be one of his followers—it was in many respects an honor to be called to follow him, and an honor to sacrifice something of earthly interests to be a follower; and this made his kind of self-denial or fasting really a feast of pleasure. But later on trials came, when the Master got into the toils of his enemies, when his cause was unpopular, and the multitudes clamored for his death—then it required self-denial (antitypical fasting) to confess him and follow him; and so it has been all through the Gospel age—none can be a follower of the Lamb without self-denial, fasting, refusing the desires and appetites of the flesh—sacrificing some and mortifying others in the interest of the new creature and its spiritual development.

Now, in the Lord's second Presence, we might say that the feast has begun again—that from a spiritual standpoint there are so many and so great blessings, so much and so dainty spiritual food, that to those who are invited into the Lord's banqueting house and whom he causes to sit down to meat, and to whom he brings forth things new and old, newly and refreshingly served, it almost appears as tho the fasting time has passed, and that the feasting and "joys of the Lord" have begun. Not that there are no trials and difficulties, according to the flesh, but that as new creatures his people are so refreshed and exhilarated with the meat in due season that the trials and difficulties and self-denials (fastings) incidental to the way may now be esteemed so lightly as not to be worthy to be compared with the spiritual refreshments enjoyed, tho these be but foretastes of the great marriage feast soon to be enjoyed.

(b) In addition to the fact that our Lord's presence with his disciples would antidote sorrow, was another fact which the Pharisees did not comprehend, viz., that our Lord's work was not like that of John the Baptist—was not a work of reformation, seeking to patch up the Jewish system and arrangement. John had been commissioned to do that if he could, and had failed and been beheaded; and the work which Jesus was doing was a new work altogether; he was not attempting to patch and reform Judaism with his doctrines, but was making an entirely new institution, gathering out a church, which would not be a Jewish church nor a Reformed Jewish church, but a wholly different institution, a Christian church. This was the reason he was not attempting to discuss with the Pharisees the proprieties and improprieties of their methods, and to straighten them out. He would let alone the old garment, already worn out and ready to be laid aside; he would provide as a new garment, not the impossible righteousness required by the law, but an imputed righteousness according to faith, based upon the merits of his own sacrifice for sins.

Had he attempted to combine Christianity with Judaism the result would have been disastrous to both, for they are opposites—the one demanding absoluteness of righteousness, which was impossible to sinners; the other demanding that the impossibility of personal righteousness should be acknowledged, and that faith should be the only condition of forgiveness and mercy.

(c) The same lesson was illustrated by the custom of that time in the use of skins of animals as instead of the barrels and bottles of today—indeed, such skins are used to the present time in various parts of the world, and called bottles. New wine put into such skins in fermenting would stretch them to almost bursting point, and such skins could never be used again for new wine, because the elasticity having gone out of them the new wine in fermenting would surely burst them. The lesson which our Lord taught here is that Judaism having had its day, had accomplished its purpose; and that it was not the divine intention that it should be reformed, as his hearers expected. The system had become effete, and to have attempted to put into Judaism the new doctrines, the new wine of the Gospel, would have meant that not only the Jewish nation would have been convulsed and wrecked by the spirit of the new teachings, but also that the doctrines themselves would have gone down with the wreck of the nation. Consequently it was the divine plan that a new Israel should be started, "a holy nation, a peculiar people," and that it should be the receptacle of the new grace and truth then due.

Similarly now in the end of the Gospel age we perceive the impossibility of putting the new wine which the Master is now providing into the old wine skins of sectarianism, and all sectarians realize this too—they realize that to receive what is now being presented as present truth into their denominations would unquestionably mean the utter wreck of the denominations. God is therefore now, as in the end of the Jewish age, calling out of the whole system such as are Israelites indeed, that they may receive at his hands the wine (doctrine) of the new dispensation just at hand. As for the old institutions, they have served a purpose, partly good and partly bad. Their work, so far as the divine plan is concerned, is at an end. "The voice of the Bridegroom and of the bride shall no more be heard" in Babylon at all. (Rev. 18:23) Babylon will not permit them to be heard. The voice, the teaching of present truth is consequently outside her walls; and whoever has an ear for the truth, whoever desires to be filled with present truth, must come outside of sectarianism before he can thus be filled and blessed and used as a vessel in bearing the blessing to others.—Rev. 18:4, 23.

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

Our usual custom of celebrating our dear Redeemer's death on its anniversary will be followed this year by a larger number, we believe, than ever before. The date will be the evening of April 12th after 6 P. M.;—that date corresponding to "the fourteenth day of the first month" Jewish time.

Our Lord, as the antitype of the Passover lamb (1 Cor. 5:7), was crucified the day before the "*Feast* of Passover" began; and "on the same night in which he was betrayed" he took bread, representing his flesh, and "fruit of the vine," representing his blood, and with these instituted a new memorial by which the spiritual Israelites were to celebrate their greater antitypical Passover, secured by his "blood of sprinkling" applied by faith, and his flesh, eaten by faith, "meat indeed."—John 6:55.

Our celebration has nothing in common with that of the Jews: indeed what they celebrate is the "Feast" week; while we celebrate on the day preceding their Feast the death of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. The day we celebrate represents the entire Gospel age, in which the entire church—the body of Christ Jesus, the Head—must suffer with him as voluntary sacrifices. The Feast week to us typifies the glory and joy soon to be introduced,—in the Millennium.

"Our Lord's words respecting this Memorial are, "*This* do ye in remembrance of me." And the Apostle adds, "As oft as ye do *this* ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come"—till he in his kingdom shall have come in power and shall have gathered you unto himself. Many Christian people have assumed the liberty to celebrate this Memorial at various times—weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc.. but in harmony with the early church we understand our Lord to mean that we should celebrate this as we celebrate any other event—on its anniversary; just as we now might say, As oft as the Fourth of July is celebrated it shows forth the Independence of this nation.

Those who celebrate our Lord's *death* in the "Last Supper" at noon every Sunday, mistake it for the weekly "Love Feast" or "Breaking of Bread" practiced every Lord's Day by the early church in memory of our Lord's *resurrection* and his opening of the eyes of their understanding in the breaking of bread. Rightly understood, nothing in these weekly feasts of *joy* resembled the annual commemoration of our Master's sorrow and death—nor is the "cup" ever mentioned in connection with them.

The church at Allegheny will celebrate the Memorial Supper commemorative of our Redeemer's *death* for us, and of our *Pass-over* from death unto life through the merit of his sacrifice, and of our consecration to "be dead with him"—to drink his "cup"—on the evening of April 12th at 7:30 o'clock at Bible House chapel, Allegheny, Pa. Friends of the truth who can make it convenient to meet with us will be welcomed cordially: but we advise that wherever there are home-meetings or wherever such gatherings seem possible they be not deserted. No other season seems so favorable for the drawing of the hearts of the Lord's people closely together;—even as it seems also to be specially an hour of temptation to all professing to be the Lord's followers, who like Peter of old seem to be specially sifted at this season of the year.

The advice of our Lord to the early disciples, at this time of the year, seems still specially appropriate, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation?" And recognizing this the older systems Roman Catholic and Episcopalian still precede the Memorial with a fast or Lenten season—which entered into not formally but in the spirit we believe is a very helpful custom to many—not only physically but spiritually.

"Good Friday" was substituted for the Memorial Supper as originally observed by the Lord's people—the system of counting being slightly changed. The more frequent celebrations of the Lord's Supper by Protestants are based upon Papacy's celebration of the "Mass," an institution which both in fact and theory is an abomination to our Lord—denying as it does the fullness of the efficacy of the original sacrifice at Calvary.

We trust that the Lord's people everywhere will "do *this*" in remembrance of the great sin-sacrifice—not merely as an outward memorial but also and specially at the same time feeding on the Lord by faith in their hearts, and afresh pledging their consecration unto death with him while partaking of the "cup." For further particulars see our issue of March 1, 1898.

We will be glad to have prompt postal card reports from the appointed secretary or scribe of each little group—whereever "two or three" meet in his dear name to do *this*. Make all your arrangements beforehand that the precious season of heart "communion" be not disturbed by business affairs. Let us not only unite in prayer and communion, but also so far as practicable in our songs of praise—using numbers 23, 122 and 1 of *Hymns of Dawn*.

AVOID FLATTERY

In a recent letter one of the "Pilgrims," after giving particulars respecting his efforts to feed the Lord's sheep and lambs concludes thus:—

"Pray for me, dear brother, that I may be kept a 'servant.' Could you not in some way through the Tower suggest to the friends not to praise a 'pilgrim' to his face: they do not know what 'offences' they sometimes cause, what feelings of latent pride they arouse."

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WHICH IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?

"I am not Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."—Rom. 1:16.

A Discourse by Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., delivered at The Florida Chautauqua Assembly, Defuniak Springs, Fla., March 4, 1900, as reported by the Associated Press.

No apology seems necessary for our subject—"Which is the true Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed?" If time and thought may be profitably expended in the study of the earthly sciences—sociology, finance, etc., etc., built largely upon human inferences and conjectures—surely none could dispute the propriety of studying the science of divine revelation. If it be profitable to investigate the physical diseases of mankind and their causes, and the laws of medicine and of sanitation for the offset of these, it surely cannot be disputed that the Gospel which God has presented as the antidote for soul-sickness and soul-death, and as the science pertaining to life eternal, is worthy of still greater and more profound consideration.

The greatest minds, the noblest specimens of our race, have admitted our topic to be the one above all others in importance; and have weighed it carefully—whether as a result they accepted or rejected it. We are not now discussing the weight of mental acumen enlisted for and against the Gospel: we are merely noting the fact that all men of ability have recognized that the subject is worthy of their careful consideration, and as having claims upon their attention paramount to any and all others. Indeed, it may be set down as a fact that whoever has given the subject of religion no consideration is one of three things,—a novice in mental exercise, or a near relative to "the fool who hath said in his heart, There is no God," or a coward, preyed upon by fears, instigated by Satan to hinder honest investigation of the divine message of love and mercy.

Even a hasty glance into the intelligent faces of this large audience assures me that you all have given some thought to our theme;—though experience assures me that comparatively few of you have ever reached conclusions on this subject fully satisfactory to yourselves. Hence your faith and love and zeal toward God and your zeal for the Gospel are less strong than you could desire. Let us hope that as we reason together on this great subject to-day, we may, by God's grace, see more clearly than ever before which is the true Gospel—the one of which the Apostle was not ashamed, and of which, therefore, none of us need feel ashamed,—the Gospel, therefore, which should more and more move and energize. us as the power of God unto salvation.

No one of intelligence will dispute the meaning of the word "Gospel;" it signifies "good tidings," good news,—a good message. Nevertheless, in some unaccountable manner, by common consent, "a real Gospel sermon" is almost universally understood to signify bad tidings—tidings of eternal misery to the great mass of our race—to all except the little flock of God's faithful people. As a consequence the preacher of a "Gospel sermon" is expected to figuratively shake the congregation over an abyss of everlasting torture, making as strong an effort as possible to intimidate them thereby to a thorough reformation of life, in hope of thus escaping an awful eternity.

True, this that we might term "the Gospel (?) of damnation" is not so generally preached as it once was, because more enlightened minds of cultured people repudiate it as a fetich of the past. Yet this perversion of the Gospel is still to be heard in country places, at camp meetings, occasionally in the city pulpit, and universally in Salvation Army meetings. Nothing is further from our intention than a criticism of the consciences and honesty of intention of those who thus preach. It is no part of our mission to criticise persons and motives, but "With malice toward none and with charity toward all" we consider it not only our privilege but our duty to criticise doctrines, that thereby the truth may be more freely established, and error brought into disrepute.

Before we proceed to the consideration of the Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed—the Gospel set forth in the Scriptures—it will be expedient for us to take a glance at the different gospels set forth by the various denominations of Christendom. It is not our thought that each denomination represents a different gospel, for the differences in many instances are chiefly respecting ceremonies, forms, methods of government, name, etc., and not in respect to the message or gospel held forth. Nevertheless, there are three distinct lines of faith, or doctrine—three distinct gospels set forth in Christendom, all recognized as "orthodox," because they all contain as their fundamental the doctrine of the eternal torment of all mankind, except the comparatively few "saved." Each of these three gospels has millions of supporters, divided into numerous denominations. These in point of numbers are

(1) The Roman Catholic faith, or gospel, in which concur the Greek Catholics and Armenian Catholics, and some of the high-church Episcopalians.

(2) The Calvinistic gospel, which is held by the various Presbyterian denominations, the Congregationalists, Baptists, and many Lutherans and Episcopalians.

(3) The Arminian gospel, held and chiefly represented by the Methodists of various names and connections, and by the Free-Will Baptists: however, many of the denominations at heart accept the Arminian gospel, while their church connections identify them with the Calvinistic gospel. Hence we may say, so far as Protestantism is concerned, that the Arminian and the Calvinist gospels are about equally supported.

It may not be possible for us to handle our subject properly and thoroughly without offering some criticism of these three gospels which for centuries have entrenched themselves in Christian minds, each fortified by the decisions of its own Councils, backed by voluminous opinions from their several theological seminaries, but we can and assuredly will strenuously avoid saying one solitary word in criticism of those who we believe conscientiously uphold these several conflicting Gospels. We call you to witness that we are all Scripturally enjoined to "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" (the true Gospel), at the same time that we are enjoined by the same authority to "Speak evil of no man." We shall endeavor to keep strictly within these admittedly proper lines, and, additionally, as the Apostle admonishes, "Speak the truth in love."

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ROMAN CATHOLICISM

The gospel according to Roman Catholicism is that all men fell into sin and under sentence of eternal torment: that Christ accomplished a redemptive work which, supplemented by the sacrifices of the mass, and by prayers and penances, permits all believers (Roman Catholics) to escape that eternal torment, which will be the sure portion of all heretics, regardless of their good works or morals. As for its own people, it holds that even its highest officials, including Bishops and Popes, go to Purgatory for refinement, purification from sin and to be prepared for heaven. It claims that some will spend only a short time in Purgatory, assisted out of it by the merit of prayers, masses, etc., on their behalf by their friends after death. But their expectation is that ultimately Purgatory will be no more, its thousands of millions being prepared for a better and happier condition. But according to all the great theologians of Papacy, and according to all the Papal bulls, all Protestants, all rejecters of Papacy's teachings, will suffer endless torment. This is the Roman Catholic gospel fairly presented, as we understand it. It does not seem to us to be very good news—not very good tidings, even to those who get the very best it has to offer, and it certainly would be very bad tidings to all out of harmony with Papacy.

Let us next look at the great Protestant doctrine represented in the word Calvinism—the doctrine of the election of the church and the reprobation of all others.

THE GOSPEL PRESENTED BY CALVINISM

Calvinism claims that faith in Christ is essential to salvation and it admits that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Calvinism requires more than a mere knowledge of Christ and belief in him as a good and exemplary man, who died a martyr to his extreme convictions. It requires faith in Christ's death as a sacrifice for man's sin, and at least some manifestation towards righteousness of life before any could be recognized as being of the elect church. Consequently, according to Calvinism, the elect church could not include the heathen of the present time and all the way back through the past, who have never heard of the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved. Stretched to its very broadest, Calvinism could not include more than one in twenty of earth's fifty thousand millions that are estimated to have lived from Adam's day until the present time. In other words, according to the broadest possible estimate of this view, more than forty-seven thousand millions of humanity were, in the language of the Westminster Confession of Faith, "passed by" as non-elect in the divine plan.

And what does this mean—"passed by" or "non-elect?" It means, according to Calvinism, that God, who knew the end from the beginning, before creating this world and mankind upon it, determined that he would "pass by" and not elect those forty-seven thousand millions of his creatures to life and happiness, but would predestine them to an eternity of torture, and that carrying out this diabolical plan, he prepared a great place large enough to hold forty-seven thousand millions, and fuel sufficient to produce the necessary combustion there to all eternity—did all this with a full appreciation of all the awful facts and circumstances of the case.

Moreover, we remember the statement of Calvinism which many of us learned in our youth, to the effect that God's favor toward the elect is not because of any worthiness on their part, nor because of any works which they had done, but "of his own sovereign grace" he saves them from all the horrible conditions which he has predestined shall be upon the others. Now if the salvation of the elect is not because of their works or worthiness, but because of God's sovereign grace only, the simplest mind can see that God might without any violation of principle have extended that sovereign grace to others—to all, since it was not because of worthiness nor because of works, but merely of his own volition that any are saved,—according to Calvinism.

The celebrated Jonathan Edwards, when preaching upon this subject in New England years ago, after picturing the awful torment of the non-elect, was asked the question, Would not the thought of the anguish of the lost mar the bliss of God's people in glory? His answer in substance was, No: you will be so changed that such matters will not affect you; you will look over the battlements of heaven and see in torment your neighbors and friends, yea, your own parents and children, brothers and sisters, and turning round will praise God the louder because his justice is made manifest.

Now, my dear friends, I do not charge any who are here present with having so false a view of the divine character and plan as this. Indeed, I am glad to note that our Calvinistic friends in general are repudiating this doctrine, realizing that there is in it a serious lack, not only as respects divine love, but also as respects divine justice. I was glad some years ago to note that some of our Presbyterian friends were so moved by higher and nobler conceptions of the Almighty that they wished to rid themselves of any part in so blasphemous a statement respecting his character and his plan. I was sorry, however, that when the matter of "the revision of the Presbyterian standards" was taken up it was found that only a minority was in favor of revision, and I was still more sorry to note that that minority of intelligent, godly people was willing to continue to confess to such a horrible mis-statement of their true views—willing, shall I say, to continue to "blaspheme that holy name" because a majority of their brethren were unwilling that such blasphemous misrepresentations should be discontinued.

I am glad to believe that if this matter were brought to the intelligent attention of Presbyterians in general, a large majority would be found willing, nay, anxious, to undo the wrong and to make such reparation as would be within their power, by way of honoring the great Jehovah and attesting their appreciation of his love and his justice, as well as of his wisdom and of his power. This is just the point: Calvinism, in its anxiety to establish the wisdom and power of God, his foreknowledge and his ability to carry out his plan, has conceived of a plan which is far from the correct one, lacking both in justice and in love.

It may be argued that love is a grace and that its exercise is not incumbent upon Jehovah: that all that could be asked or expected of him would be simple justice, and some might be ready to claim that for God to eternally torment these forty-seven thousand millions "passed by" would be in strict accord with justice. This we deny! We claim that having the power to create mankind would not justify their creation if the Creator saw that the result would be the everlasting torture of a single creature. Justice would say that power is not to be exercised to the injury of another, and that to exercise the creative power under such foreknown conditions would be injustice. And wisdom attuned to justice would say, Better a thousand times never to have created anybody than to have created one being to suffer unjustly eternally.

This statement, dear friends, is a fair, impartial statement of the gospel according to our beloved brother, John Calvin, and those who subscribe to the Westminster Confession, and their allies. This surely is not the gospel of which the Apostle Paul, in our text, declared, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Paul would assuredly have been ashamed of such a Gospel, and so are all true Christians, who have the true spirit of love and justice,—none more so, perhaps, than those who unfortunately, through circumstances of birth, etc., and hitherto without realizing what it meant, have been lending their name and influence to this great blasphemy against the divine character.

THE ARMINIAN VIEW OF THE GOSPEL

Let us now examine the Arminian view. This view is growing popular. Its message or gospel is, God is love—he loves you; he loves everybody; he is doing all that he can to save everybody; if you are lost it will not be God's fault, but your own. On the surface, at least, this theory seems much more loving and much more just than the one already examined, but before we go far we will also find it very defective, very far from being either a reasonable or a Scriptural Gospel. We will find it inconsistent with its own statement—illogical.

For instance, while it sounds nice theoretically to say that God is doing all that he can do to save the whole world at the present time, everybody knows that this is not true; that on the contrary you or I or any other intelligent human being if possessed of the one-thousandth part of the divine power and wisdom could speedily accomplish the evangelization of the whole world. Nor will it do to say that God has committed himself to a certain mode of procedure through his church, and that if the church fails to contribute with sufficient liberality both money and evangelists the heathen will not hear of "the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved," but will go to eternal torment, etc. Neither will it do to say that God is doing all that he can do and is hampered by the lack of interest in the church; because his wisdom and foreknowledge foresaw all these conditions as they are, and he could not justly be excused from the real responsibility of the matter, since he is the Creator, and in him is vested the all-power as well as the all-wisdom. Such a claim as this would be tantamount to saying that God has erred in wisdom when he thought to leave the conversion of the world to the church, seeing that the church has not accomplished this. Such a claim would be merely excusing God from doing all that he can do, instead of showing that he is doing all that he can do.

But let us look more critically into this matter. If this view we are criticising is correct, if God is doing all that he can to save the world, and if he has been doing this during all the past ages, then without question the world's conversion is a hopeless thing, and we can never expect to see better results than at present. This theory presupposes a race or battle between the Almighty and Satan, each seeking to capture the human family, and to the discredit of the theory it shows Satan the victor thus far. Starting out with one pair, both on the Lord's side, the first 1656 years ended with a flood in which the whole world of mankind was blotted out because of wickedness, and only eight persons reckoned sufficiently righteous to be preserved. Starting again with those eight persons counted sufficiently righteous for preservation, we find that there are in the world today sixteen hundred millions, and that out of that whole number there are about one hundred millions nominal Roman Catholics and one hundred millions nominal Protestants and a very much smaller number of true "saints of God."

What would be the lesson from this if the Arminian theory be correct, that God is doing all that he can do to save the world? The lesson would be that with all his good intentions of love and mercy our God is thoroughly incapable of the work he undertook to do. And if these are the results in six thousand years, what could we hope for in the future? How many hundreds of millions of years would it be before the whole world would be converted? We answer that according to statistics it would never be, for statistics show that the natural increase of population throughout the world is far, far beyond the proportion of even nominal conversions from heathendom. Indeed, according to some good reckonings, the percentage of Christians every year is decreasing, the births of heathen lands so far outnumbering the births of Christian lands—even counting all the children born in Christendom as Christians.

Is any Christian, in view of these facts, prepared to claim that our God has been doing all that he could do for the conversion of the world? If so, that Christian may as well write upon his hopes at once the word "Ichabod." If we saw that the Calvinistic view magnifies the wisdom and power of God at the expense of his justice and love, we find on the other hand that the Arminian view magnifies the love of God at the expense of his wisdom and power. The true Gospel must show divine wisdom and power in full accord with divine justice and love: of any other we must needs be ashamed.

DISTINCTIONS WITHOUT PRACTICAL DIFFERENCE

But, my dear friends, we may as well now as at any time concede that there is comparatively little difference in the outcome of these two popular Protestant Gospels—the difference is merely a theoretical one respecting how the results are to be reached. The results themselves are the same in both cases—the eternal doom and torment of over forty-seven thousand millions of human creatures. For our Arminian friends no less than Calvinists agree that there is no salvation aside from faith in Christ, the only name given; and they admit also that of those who believe in Christ only the sanctified are of the real church; and their Gospel is also that only the real church is to be saved and that all others are to be eternally and most horribly tormented;—some claim in literal flames, others say by the torments, and gnawing of conscience and remorse, which they proceed to say will be worse than the literal flame,—and we respond, If worse, so much worse for the argument.

All surely agree as respects these two theories or Gospels held out to the world by Protestant Christendom that it would make no difference to the forty-seven thousand millions, whether they go into that awful state of hopeless woe by divine predestination and lack of love and justice, or by divine incapacity and lack of foreknowledge and proper arrangements. We believe that no true Christian will be ready after examining the subject thus far to say that he fully approves either of these theories, and that he is not ashamed of both of them.

CONSIDER NOW THE TRUE GOSPEL

Let us now proceed to examine what is the true Gospel, presented to us in the Word of God—the Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed.

The word "gospel" itself should be the clue—should save the intelligent Christian from being misled by the various theories of bad tidings of great misery for nearly all people, miscalled "gospel." He who thinks it good news that one out of a thousand of the human family is to be saved and the remaining 999 to be eternally tormented, is either not a Christian at all, or he is decidedly undeveloped in Christian character, in mercy, in love, in justice. In our opinion he is at most only a "babe in Christ" who has need first of the milk of the Word and subsequently of the "strong meat" thereof, that he may grow up into Christ in all things, and be able to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth all understanding.—Eph. 3:18, 19.

When occasionally we come across some one who gives evidence of being a Christian, and who still entertains such horribly blasphemous views respecting the Heavenly Father's character, we feel like quoting to him the Lord's words through the Prophet, "My ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts, for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans higher than your plans." (Isa. 55:8, 9) And part of our object in this discourse, dear friends, is to have those, whose eyes are anointed of the Lord, that they may see spiritual things, discern some of the Lord's higher ways and higher plans which he presents to us in his Word under the name "Gospel"—good tidings.

NOT UNIVERSAL SALVATION BUT A UNIVERSAL OPPORTUNITY FOR SALVATION

The Apostle tells us that God preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, "beforehand" signifying before it was due to begin; for the Gospel did not begin with Abraham, but with our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Apostle again declares, this salvation "began to be declared by our Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Heb. 2:3) All that ever went before our Lord's preaching was not the Gospel, but merely types and promises which foreshadowed it. Let us notice next what, according to the Apostle, constituted this forestatement of the Gospel to Abraham; he says that it was couched in the words, "In thee and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. 3:16, 29) Note this carefully: it does not say, In thy seed shall one out of a thousand out of the families of the earth be blessed, and the remainder be doomed to an indescribably horrible eternity, but that the whole Gospel is a Gospel of blessing, applicable to all the families of the earth—through Christ, the true seed of Abraham.

When our Lord Jesus was born into the world, the Heavenly Father sent a message respecting him, and the angels who bore that message declared that it was a Gospel message. Let us hearken to what the angels said about the eternal torment of the vast majority of our race. They said to the shepherds, "Behold we bring you good tidings [gospel] of great joy, which shall be unto all people." (Luke 2:10) Let it be distinctly noted that the Gospel of the angels, like the Gospel communicated to Abraham, contains no reference to the damnation and eternal misery of any of the Lord's creatures, and that consequently our friends of the Salvation Army and others who in ignorance preach damnation and call it the Gospel, are doing so in utter violation of the meaning of the word and of the uses of that word throughout the Scriptures. However well they may mean, they are in this certainly committing a wrong, a grievous wrong, and we long to see the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God shine into their hearts and relieve them of this blindness which comes not from God nor from his Word, but from the prince of darkness.—2 Cor. 4:4.

It will require all the Millennial age (which is to follow this Gospel age in which we live) to bless all the families of the earth with the joyful knowledge of divine grace in Christ. Just so surely as the forty-seven thousand millions went down into death without hearing of the Saviour, without coming to a clear knowledge of the truth, without the good tidings of great joy reaching their ears,—just so surely must they all come forth from the grave that this very Gospel message of "good tidings" may be declared to them, and that they may be tested thereby and either be accepted to eternal life or destroyed, as unworthy of life, in the second death. We say just so surely, for three reasons:

(1) The announcement of the Gospel to Abraham says, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," and all of these forty-seven thousand millions belong to this class specified, the families of the earth—and they have not yet been blessed with this knowledge of the only name wherein is the blessing.

(2) The same is true of the message by the angels,—the good tidings of great joy is for all people, and these forty-seven thousand millions of humanity are surely the great bulk of all people.

(3) We are sure that this testimony must be given to them in the future because the Scriptural declaration is that "Christ died for the ungodly;" "he tasted death for every man," and as a consequence every man must have an opportunity granted him for benefiting by that death, and of availing himself of the privilege of eternal life which was secured by our Lord's ransom sacrifice.

DID CHRIST DIE FOR THE CHURCH ONLY?

But some one would perhaps say, Christ died only for the sins of the church and not for the sins of the world, and consequently the sins of the world cannot be forgiven them. We answer, No; the Scriptural declaration most positively is that "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man," "to be testified in due time." And, additionally, the Apostle says, "He is a propitiation [satisfaction] for our [the church's] sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John 2:2.

What could be plainer than this? If the price for the sins of the whole world has been paid to Justice, we may rest well assured that Justice will furnish opportunity through the Redeemer whereby all these whose sins were atoned for may come to a knowledge of Christ, and to an opportunity of accepting divine grace through him.

But some one will say, Why should God adopt a plan which would necessitate a resurrection of the dead, and a post-resurrection trial for eternal life except for all the elect church of this Gospel age?

We answer,—(1) It is not for us to inquire why the Lord adopts certain plans which differ from those which our poor finite minds might arrange for him: rather it is for us to acknowledge that our wisdom is insufficient on such a subject and that we should come humbly to the Lord to hear from his Word whatever he may be pleased to inform us respecting his purposes. (2) As a matter of fact only those who approach the question from this standpoint need expect to see the truth or to "comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God."—Eph. 3:18; 1 Cor. 2:12.

God has been pleased, however, to reveal to us some of his reasons for arranging his plan as we see it. He assures us of his full wisdom and power to manage every feature of his own work according to his own good pleasure, assuring us that he knows the end from the beginning, and that the end will fully justify every step that he has taken. His Word, no less than observation, shows us that during all these six thousand years the world has been getting a lesson respecting the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its wages of sorrow and death. His Word assures us also that during the next age, the Millennium, the whole world will be brought to a knowledge of the way of righteousness and love and peace, and will see the divine law in practical operation, and witness its beneficent results in all those who will come into harmony with the great Mediator.

Thus mankind learns the lesson of evil and its consequences first in the present life, and the lesson of righteousness and its blessed results under divine providence, in the Millennium; and when thus fully equipped with knowledge on both sides of the question and instructed by the Royal Priesthood, (the completed and glorified elect Gospel church), mankind will be ready for the tests, that will be applied by the Lord Jesus, under which the obedient and faithful will be granted full perfection and eternal life, and the disobedient and incorrigible will "be destroyed from amongst the people."—Acts 3:22, 23.

"IF YE BE CHRIST'S, THEN ARE YE ABRAHAM'S SEED AND HEIRS"

Another matter, really the key to the whole question which we are discussing, is revealed in God's Word, viz., that in the divine purpose the promised "Seed of Abraham" that should perform the great work of blessing all the families of the earth, is to be one, in the sense of one kind, but not in the sense of one person—that is to say, that the seed of Abraham consists of Jesus Christ the Head, and of the church which is the body. Not the nominal or professing church, but the true church, "whose names are written in heaven," and who walk in the footsteps of their Lord, and are found faithful unto death, and shall be granted with their Lord the crown of life.

This Gospel age intervening between the time of the great sin offering and the time when the blessing of earth's billions will commence, God has set apart for the work of selecting or electing the body of Christ, the church, the bride, the "little flock," the "royal priesthood," the joint heirs with Christ in his kingdom. These, like their Head, are called with a "high calling," a "heavenly calling," and the salvation provided for them is higher than that which God purposes for the world in general. He is selecting this "little flock" and trying them and proving them, fitting them and polishing them for the heavenly kingdom, and it is to these, as the Apostle Peter declares, God has given "exceeding great and precious promises [far beyond any promises given to any other of his creatures] that by these [promises] we might become partakers of the divine nature," and joint-heirs with his Son. This is denominated a "heavenly calling" in contrast with the earthly salvation intended for whosoever will "in due time."

This true view of the calling and election of the church is another feature of the Gospel. If it is splendid, good news to know that ultimately all families of the earth are to be blessed with opportunities for salvation through the Christ, it is still an additional feature to the good news to know that God has invited us to become members of the Christ company, "members in particular of the body of Christ." No wonder the Apostle calls this our "high calling," our "heavenly calling": it is to the attainment of this great prize that the Apostle exhorts all the faithful to lay aside every weight and every besetment and to run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel, looking unto Jesus, the author, until he shall have become the finisher of our faith.

This is the true Gospel, dear friends, the one we find set forth in the Scriptures, set forth by Paul himself, and of which he was not ashamed. This Gospel shows the character of our Creator in a most wonderful light,—his wisdom, able to discern the end from the beginning; his power, able to accomplish that which he pleases; his justice, squaring every feature of the plan from first to last, according to the most absolute features of righteousness; his love, whose lengths and breadths and heights and depths we have not yet been able to explore; a love which sympathizes with his creatures in their fallen estate; a love which provided a Saviour, and a great one; a love which prompted that Saviour to give his life as our ransom price; a love which met all the requirements of divine justice for us; a love which still pursues mankind, and in this Gospel age calls us to joint heirship with his Son in a nature and kingdom far above angels, principalities and powers, of which the Apostle says:

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." This divine love, still pursuing its original plan for man's salvation, will use the "elect" glorified house of sons, of which Christ Jesus is the Head (Eph. 1:22), in blessing all families of the earth with full opportunity of knowledge and full assistance up the highway of holiness (Isa. 35:8) that so many as will may attain to restitution to all that was lost in

Adam by coming back into harmony with God through the great Mediator.—Acts 3:19-23.

NONE NEED BE ASHAMED OF THE TRUE GOSPEL

Verily, dear friends, of this Gospel we are not ashamed, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." It has in our hearts a transforming and renewing power, a sanctifying power which no error could possibly have, and which all the theories of eternal torment have never equaled and never will. Let us more and more "show forth the praises of our God, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," by renouncing all God-dishonoring creeds and theories, and instead hold forth the Word of life, and witness the good confession—the "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

All who will declare the true Gospel will need to be well shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace (gentleness, patience, meekness) for, strange to say, they will find bitter opposition from professed servants of the Lord who have been blinded and prejudiced by Satan's misrepresentations of the Gospel,—by which he seeks to drive from the Lord all who have a remnant of reason in their religious thinking. All who have ears to hear, and who do hear the true Gospel, will quickly distinguish it from the miserable counterfeits which for so long have passed current among God's people. Let all such remember that ability to hear is an evidence of divine favor, and let them not be ashamed, but glorify God on this behalf. Let such remember, also, that their acceptance of truth as due, in the face of unpopularity, is a part of their testing. The Lord puts his plan, his Word, as his representative, saying—He that is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with his holy angels.—Mark 8:38.

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES CONCERNING HELL?

"To the Law and to the Testimony: If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them."—Isa. 8:20.

A correct understanding of this subject has become almost a necessity to Christian steadfastness. For centuries it has been the teaching of "orthodoxy," of all shades, that God, before creating man, had created a great abyss of fire and terrors, capable of containing all the billions of the human family which he purposed to bring into being; that this abyss he had named "hell;" and that all of the promises and threatenings of the Bible were designed to deter as many as possible (a "little flock") from such wrong-doing as would make this awful place their perpetual home.

As knowledge increases and superstitions fade, this monstrous view of the divine arrangement and character is losing its force; and thinking people cannot but disbelieve the legend, which used to be illustrated on the church walls in the highest degree of art and realism, samples of which are still to be seen in Europe. Some now claim that the place is literal, but the fire symbolic, etc., etc., while others repudiate the doctrine of "hell" in every sense and degree. While glad to see superstitions fall, and truer ideas of the great, and wise, and just, and loving Creator prevail, we are alarmed to notice that the tendency with all who abandon this long revered doctrine is toward doubt, skepticism, infidelity.

Why should this be the case, when the mind is merely being delivered from an error,—do you ask? Because Christian people have so long been taught that the foundation for this awful blasphemy against God's character and government is deep-laid, and firmly fixed, in the Word of God—the Bible—and, consequently, to whatever degree that belief in "hell" is shaken, to that extent their faith in the Bible, as the revelation of the true God, is shaken also;—so that those who have dropped their belief in a "hell," of some kind of endless torment, are often open infidels, and scoffers at God's Word.

Guided by the Lord's providence to a realization that the Bible has been slandered, as well as its divine Author, and that, rightly understood, it teaches nothing on this subject derogatory to God's character nor to an intelligent reason, we will attempt to lay bare the Scripture teaching on this subject, that thereby faith in God and his Word may be reestablished, in the hearts of his people, on a better, a reasonable foundation. Indeed, it is our opinion that whoever shall hereby find that his false view rested upon human misconceptions and misinterpretations, will, at the same time, learn to trust hereafter less to his own and other men's imaginings, and, by faith, to grasp more firmly the Word of God, which is able to make wise unto salvation.

That the advocates of the doctrine of eternal torment have little or no faith in it is very manifest from the fact that it has no power over their course of action. While all the denominations of Christendom sustain the doctrine that eternal torment and endless, hopeless despair will constitute the punishment of the wicked, they are mostly quite at ease in allowing the wicked to take their course, while they pursue the even tenor of their way. Chiming bells and pealing organs, artistic choirs, and costly edifices, and upholstered pews, and polished oratory which more and more avoids any reference to this alarming theme, afford rest and entertainment to fashionable congregations that gather on the Lord's day and are known to the world as churches of Christ and representatives of his doctrines. But they seem little concerned about the eternal welfare of the multitudes, or even of themselves and their own families, though one would naturally presume that with such awful *possibilities* in view they would be almost frantic in their efforts to rescue the perishing.

The plain inference is that they do not believe it. The only class of people that to any degree show their faith in it by their works is the Salvation Army; and these are the subjects of ridicule from almost all other Christians, because they are somewhat consistent with their belief. Yet their peculiar, and often absurd, methods, so strikingly in contrast with those of the Lord of whom it was written, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street" (Isa. 42:2), are very mild compared with what might be expected if they were fully convinced of the doctrine. We cannot imagine how sincere believers of this terrible doctrine go from day to day about the ordinary affairs of life, or meet quietly in elegance every Sunday to hear an essay from the pulpit on the peculiar subjects often advertised. Could they do so while really believing all the time that fellow mortals are dying at the rate of one hundred a minute, and entering

"That lone land of deep despair," where
"No God regards their bitter prayer"?

If they really *believed* this few saints could compacently sit there and think of those hurrying every moment into that awful state described by that good, well-meaning, but greatly deluded man, Isaac Watts (whose own heart was immeasurably warmer and larger than that he ascribed to the great Jehovah), when he wrote the hymn—

"Tempests of angry fire shall roll
To blast the rebel worm.
And beat upon the naked soul
In one eternal storm."

People often become frantic with grief when friends have been caught in some terrible catastrophe, as a fire, or a wreck, though they know they will soon be relieved by death; yet they pretend to believe that God is less loving than themselves, and that he can look with indifference, if not with delight, at billions of his creatures enduring an eternity of torture far more terrible, which he prepares for them and prevents any escape from forever. Not only so, but they expect that they will get literally into Abraham's bosom, and will then look across the gulf and see and hear the agonies of the multitudes (some of whom they now love and weep over); and they imagine that they will be so changed, and become so like their present idea of God, so hardened against all pity, and so barren of love and sympathy, that they will delight in such a God and in such a plan.

It is wonderful that otherwise sensible men and women, who love their fellows, and who establish hospitals, orphanages, asylums, and societies for the prevention of cruelty even to the brute creation, are so unbalanced mentally that they can believe and subscribe to such a doctrine, and yet be so indifferent about investigating its authority!

Only one exception can we think of—those who hold the ultra-Calvinistic doctrine; who believe that God has *decreed it thus*, that all the efforts they could put forth could not alter the result with a single person; and that all the prayers they could offer would not change one iota of the awful plan they believe God has marked out for his and their eternal pleasure. These indeed could sit still, so far as effort for their fellows is concerned: but why sing the praises of such a scheme for the damnation of their neighbors whom God has told them to love as themselves?

Why not rather begin to doubt this "doctrine of devils," this blasphemy against the great God, hatched in the "dark ages," when a crafty priesthood taught that it is right to do evil that good may result?

The doctrine of eternal torment was undoubtedly introduced by Papacy to induce pagans to join her and support her system. It flourished at the same time that "bull fights" and gladiatorial contests were the public amusements most enjoyed; when the Crusades were called "holy wars," and when men and women were called "heretics" and were often slaughtered for thinking or speaking contrary to the teachings of the Papacy; at a time when the sun of gospel truth was obscure; when the Word of God had fallen into disuse and was prohibited to be read by any but the clergy, whose love of their neighbors was often shown in torturing "heretics" to induce them to recant and deny their faith and their Bibles —to save them, if possible, they explained, from the more awful future of "heretics,"—eternal torture. They did not borrow this doctrine from the heathen, for no heathen people in the world have a doctrine so cruel, so fiendish and so unjust. Find it, whoever can, and show it up in all its blackness, that, if possible, it may be shown that the essence of barbarism, malice, hate and ungodliness has not been exclusively appreciated by those whom God has most highly favored with light from every quarter, and to whom he has committed the only oracle—his Word. Oh! the shame and confusion that will cover the faces of many, even good men, who verily thought that they did God service while propagating this blasphemous doctrine, when they awake in the resurrection, to learn of the love and justice of God, and when they come to know that the Bible does not teach this God-dishonoring, love-extinguishing, truth-beclouding, saint-hindering, sinner-hardening, "damnable heresy" of eternal torment.—2 Pet. 2:1.

But we repeat that, in the light and moral development of this day, sensible people do not believe this doctrine. However, since they think that the Bible teaches it, every step they progress in real intelligence and brotherly kindness, which hinders belief in eternal torment, is in most cases a step away from God's word, which is falsely accused of being the authority for this teaching. Hence the second crop of evil fruit, which the devil's engraftment of this error is producing, is skepticism. The intelligent, honest thinkers are thus driven from the Bible into vain philosophies and sciences, falsely so-called, and into infidelity. Nor do the "worldly" really believe this doctrine, nor is it a restraint to crime, for convicts and the lower classes are the firmest believers in it.

But, says one, Has not the error done some good? Have not many been brought into the churches by the preaching of this doctrine in the past?

No error, we answer, ever did real good, but always harm. Those whom error brings into a church, and whom the truth would not move, are an injury to the church. The thousands terrorized, but not at heart converted, which this doctrine forced into Papacy, and which swelled her numbers and her wealth, diluted what little truth was held before, and mingled it with their unholy sentiments, and errors so that, to meet the changed condition of things, the "clergy" found it needful to add error to error, and resorted to methods, forms, etc., not taught in the Scriptures and useless to the truly converted whom the truth controls. Among these were pictures, images, beads, vestments, candles, grand cathedrals, altars, etc., to help the unconverted heathen to a form of godliness more nearly corresponding to their former heathen worship, but lacking all the power of vital godliness.

The heathen were not benefited, for they were still heathen in God's sight, but deluded into aping what they did not understand or do from the heart. They were added "tares" to choke the "wheat," without being profited themselves. The Lord tells who sowed the seed of this enormous crop. (Matt. 13:39). The same is true of those who assume the name "Christian" today, who are not really at heart converted by the truth, but merely frightened by the error, or allured by promised earthly advantages of a social or business kind. Such add nothing to the true church: by their ideas and manners they become stumbling blocks to the truly consecrated, and by their inability to digest the truth, the real food of the saints, they lead even the few true pastors to defraud the true "sheep" in order to satisfy the demands of these "goats" for something pleasing to their unconverted tastes. No: in no way has this error accomplished good except in the sense that God is able to make even the wrath of man to praise him. So also he will overrule this evil thing eventually to serve his purposes. When by and by all men (during the Millennium) shall come to see through this great deception by which Satan has blinded the world to God's true character, it will perhaps awaken in them a warmer, stronger love for God.

Seeing, then, the unreasonableness of man's view, let us lay aside human opinions and theories and come to the Word of God, the only authority on the subject, remembering that "God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

"HELL," AS AN ENGLISH WORD

In the first place bear in mind that the Old Testament Scriptures were written in the Hebrew language, and the New Testament in the Greek. The word "hell" is an English word sometimes selected by the translators of the English Bible to express the sense of the Hebrew word *sheol* and the Greek words, *hades*, *tartaroo* and *gehenna*,—sometimes rendered "grave" and "pit."

The word "hell" in old English usage, before Papal theologians picked it up and gave it a new and special significance to suit their own purposes, simply meant to *conceal*, to *hide*, to *cover;* hence the *concealed*, *hidden* or *covered place.* In old English literature records may be found of the *helling* of potatoes—putting potatoes into pits; and of the *helling* of a house—covering or thatching it. The word *hell* was therefore properly used synonymously with the words "grave" and "pit," to translate the words *sheol* and *hades* as signifying the secret or hidden condition of death. However, the same spirit which was willing to twist the word to terrorize the ignorant is willing still to perpetuate the error;—presumably saying—"Let us do evil that good may follow."

If the translators of the Revised Version Bible had been thoroughly disentangled from the Papal error, and thoroughly honest, they would have done more to help the English student than merely to substitute the Hebrew word *sheol* and the Greek word *hades* as they have done. They should have translated the words. But they were evidently afraid to tell the truth, and ashamed to tell the lie; and so gave us *sheol* and *hades* untranslated, and permitted the inference that these words mean the same as the word "hell" has become perverted to mean. Their course, while it for a time shields themselves, dishonors God and the Bible, which the common people still suppose teaches a "hell" of torment in the words *sheol* and *hades.* Yet anyone can see that if it was proper to translate the word *sheol* thirty-one times "grave" and three times "pit," it could not have been improper to have so translated it in every other instance.

A peculiarity to be observed in comparing these cases, as we will do shortly, is that in those texts where the torment idea would be an absurdity the translators of the King James version have used the words "grave" or "pit"; while in all other cases they have used the word "hell;" and the reader, long schooled in the Papal idea of torment, reads the word "hell" and thinks of it as signifying a place of torment, instead of the grave, the hidden or covered place or condition. For example, compare Job 14:13 with Psa. 86:13. The former reads,—"Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave [sheol], etc.," while the latter reads,—"Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest *hell* [sheol]." The Hebrew word being the same in both cases, there is no reason why the same word "grave" should not be used in both. But how absurd it would have been for Job to have prayed to God to hide him in a hell of eternal torture! The English reader would have asked questions and the secret would have gotten out speedily.

While the translators of the Reformation times are somewhat excusable for their mental bias in this matter, as they were just breaking away from the old Papal system, our modern translators, specially those of the recent Revised Version, are not entitled to any such consideration. Theological professors and pastors of congregations consider that they are justified in following the course of the revisers in not explaining the meaning of either the Hebrew or Greek words *sheol* or *hades* and by their use of the words they also give their confiding flocks to understand that a place of torture, a lake of fire, is meant. While attributing to the ignorant only the best of motives, it is manifestly only duplicity and cowardice which induces educated men, who know the truth on this subject, to prefer to continue to teach the error inferentially.

But not all ministers know of the errors of the translators and deliberately cover and hide those errors from the people. Many, indeed, do not know of them, having merely accepted, without investigation, the theories of their seminary professors. It is the professors and learned ones who are most blameworthy. These have kept back the truth about "hell" for several reasons. First, there is evidently a sort of understanding or etiquette among them, that if they wish to maintain their standing in the "profession" they "must not tell tales out of school;" *i. e.*, they must not divulge professional secrets to the "common people," the "laity." Second, they all fear that to let it be known that they have been teaching an unscriptural doctrine for years would break down the popular respect and reverence for the "clergy," the denominations and the theological schools, and unsettle confidence in their wisdom. And, oh, how much depends upon confidence and reverence for men, when God's Word is so generally ignored! Third, they know that many of the members of their sects are not constrained by "the love of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:14), but merely by the fear of hell, and they see clearly, therefore, that to let the truth be known now would soon cut loose the names and the dollars of many in their flocks; and this, to those who "desire to make a fair show in the flesh" (Gal. 6:12) would seem to be a great calamity.

But what will be the judgment of God, whose character and plan are traduced by the blasphemous doctrine which these untranslated words help to support? Will he commend these unfaithful servants? Will he justify their course? Will the Chief Shepherd call these his beloved friends, and make known to them his further plans (John 15:15) that they may misrepresent them also to preserve their own dignity and reverence? Will he continue to send forth "things new and old," "meat in due season," to the household of faith, by the hand of the unfaithful servants? No, such shall not continue to be his mouthpiece or to shepherd his flock. (Ezek. 34:9, 10) He will choose instead, as at the first advent, from among the laity—"the common people"—mouthpieces, and will give them words which none of the chief priests shall be able to gainsay or resist. (Luke 21:15) And, as foretold, "the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."—Isa. 29:9-19.

"HELL" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The word "hell" occurs thirty-one times in the Old Testament, and in every instance it is *sheol* in the Hebrew. It does not mean a lake of fire and brimstone, nor anything at all resembling that thought: *not in the slightest degree!* Quite the reverse: instead of a place of blazing fire it is described in the context as a state of "darkness" (Job. 10:21); instead of a place where shrieks and groans are heard, it is described in the context as a place of "silence" (Psa. 115:17); instead of representing in any sense pain and suffering, or remorse, the context describes it as a place or condition of forgetfulness. (Psa. 88:11, 12) "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, in the *grave* [*sheol*] whither thou goest."—Eccles. 9:10.

The meaning of *sheol* is *"the hidden state,"* as applied to man's condition in death, in and beyond which all is hidden, except to the eye of faith; hence, by proper and close association, the word was often used in the sense of *grave*—the *tomb*, the hidden place, or place beyond which only those who have the enlightened eye of the understanding can see resurrection, restitution of being. And be it particularly noted that this identical word *sheol* is translated "grave" thirty-one times and "pit" three times in our common version by the *same translators*—more times than it is translated "hell"; and twice, where it is translated "hell," it seemed so absurd, according to the present accepted meaning of the English word "hell," that scholars have felt it necessary to explain in the margin of modern Bibles, that it means *grave*. (Isa. 14:9) and Jonah 2:2.) In the latter case, the hidden state, or grave, was the belly of the fish in which Jonah was buried alive, and from which he cried to God.

ALL TEXTS IN WHICH "SHEOL" IS TRANSLATED "HELL"

(1) Amos 9:2—"Though they dig into *hell*, thence shall mine hand take them." [A figurative expression; but certainly pits of the earth are the only hells men can *dig* into.]

(2) Psa. 16:10—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell*; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." [This refers to our Lord's three days in the tomb.—Acts. 2:31; 3:15.]

(3, 4) Psa. 18:5 and 2 Sam. 22:6—margin.—"The cords of *hell* compassed me about." [A figure in which trouble is represented as hastening one to the tomb.]

(5) Psa. 55:15.—"Let them go down quick into *hell*"—margin, "the grave."

(6) Psa. 9:17.—"The wicked shall be turned into *hell*, and all the nations that forget God." This text will be treated later, under a separate heading.

(7) Psa. 86:13.—"Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest *hell*"—margin, "the grave."

(8) Psa. 116:3.—"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of *hell* gat hold upon me." [Sickness and trouble are the figurative hands of the grave to grasp us.]

(9) Psa. 139:8.—"If I make my bed in *hell*, behold, thou art there." [God's power is unlimited: even over those in the tomb he can and will exert it and bring forth all that are in the graves.—John 5:28.]

(10) Deut. 32:22.—"For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn into the lowest *hell*." [A figurative representation of the destruction, the utter ruin, of Israel as a nation—"wrath to the uttermost," as the Apostle called it, God's anger burning that nation to the "lowest *deep*," as Leeser here translates the word *sheol*.—1 Thes. 2:16.]

(11) Job 11:8.—"It [God's wisdom] is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than *hell* [than any pit]; what canst thou know?"

(12) Job 26:6.—"*Hell* [the tomb] is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering."

(13) Prov. 5:5.—"Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on *hell* [*i. e.*, lead to the grave]."

(14) Prov. 7:27.—"Her house is the way to *hell* [the grave], going down to the chambers of death."

(15) Prov. 9:18.—"He knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of *hell*." [Here the harlot's guests are represented as dead, diseased or dying, and many of the victims of sensuality in premature graves from diseases which also hurry off their posterity to the tomb.]

(16) Prov. 15:11.—"*Hell* and destruction are before the Lord." [Here the *grave* is associated with *destruction* and not with a life of torment.]

(17) Prov. 15:24.—"The path of life (leadeth) upward for the wise, that he may depart from *hell* beneath." [This illustrates the hope of resurrection from the tomb.]

(18) Prov. 23:14.—"Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from *hell*" [*i. e.*, wise correction will save a child from vicious ways which lead to premature death, and may also possibly prepare him to escape the "*second death*"].

(19) Prov. 27:20.—"*Hell* [the grave] and destruction are never full: so the eyes of man are never satisfied."

(20) Isa. 5:14.—"Therefore *hell* hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure." [Here the *grave* is a symbol of *destruction*.]

(21, 22) Isa. 14:9, 15.—"*Hell* [margin, grave] from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming." . . . . "Thou shalt be brought down to *hell*" [the grave—so rendered in verse 11].

(23) Isa. 57:9.—"And didst debase thyself even unto *hell*." [Here figuratively of *deep* degradation.]

(24, 25) Ezek. 31:15-17.—"In the day when he went down to the grave, ... I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to *hell* with them that descend into the pit. . . . They also went down into *hell* with him, unto them that be slain with the sword." [Figurative and prophetic description of the fall of Babylon into destruction, silence, the grave.]

(26) Ezek. 32:21.—"The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of *hell* with them that help him." [A continuation of the same figure representing Egypt's overthrow as a nation to join Babylon in *destruction*—buried.]

(27) Ezek. 32:27.—"And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to *hell* with their weapons of war: and they have laid their swords under their heads; but their iniquities shall be upon their bones, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living." [The grave is the only "hell" where fallen ones are buried and lie with their weapons of war under their heads.]

(28) Hab. 2:5.—"Who enlargeth his desire as *hell* [the grave] and as death, and cannot be satisfied."

(29) Jonah 2:1, 2.—"Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God, out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of *hell* cried I, and thou heardest my voice." [The belly of the fish was for a time his *grave*—see margin.]

(30, 31) Isa. 28:15-18.—"Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell [the grave] are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore, saith the Lord, ... Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with *hell* [the grave] shall not stand." [God thus declares that the present prevalent idea, by which death and the grave are represented as friends, rather than enemies, shall cease; and men shall learn that death is the *wages of sin*, now and that is in Satan's power (Rom. 6:23; Heb. 2:14) and not an angel sent by God.]

ALL OTHER TEXTS WHERE "SHEOL" OCCURS—RENDERED "GRAVE" AND "PIT"

Gen. 37:35.—"I will go down into the *grave* unto my son."

Gen. 42:38.—"Then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the *grave*." [See also the same expression in

44:29, 31. The translators did not like to send God's servant, Jacob, to *hell* simply because his sons were evil.]

1 Sam. 2:6.—"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the *grave*, and bringeth up."

1 Kings 2:6, 9.—"Let not his hoar head go down to the *grave* with peace. . . . His hoar head bring thou down to the *grave* with blood."

Job 7:9.—"He that goeth down to the *grave*."

Job 14:13.—"Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the *grave*, that thou wouldst keep me secret until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me [resurrect me]!"

Job 17:13.—"If I wait, the *grave* is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness." [Job waits for resurrection—"in the morning."]

Job 17:16.—"They shall go down to the bars of the *pit* [grave], when our rest together is in the dust."

Job 21:13.—"They spend their days in mirth, and in a moment go down to the *grave*."

Job 24:19, 20.—"Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the *grave* those which have sinned." [All have sinned, hence "Death passed upon all men," and all go down to the *grave*. But all have been redeemed by "the precious blood of Christ"; hence all shall be awakened and come forth again in God's due time—"in the morning," Rom. 5:12, 18, 19.]

Psa. 6:5.—"In death there is no remembrance of thee; in the *grave* who shall give thee thanks?"

Psa. 30:3.—"O Lord thou hast brought up my soul from the *grave:* thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." [This passage expresses gratitude for recovery from danger of death.]

Psa. 31:17.—"Let the wicked be ashamed; let them be silent in the *grave*."

Psa. 49:14, 15, margin.—"Like sheep they are laid in the *grave:* death shall feed on them; and the upright [the saints—Dan. 7:27] shall have dominion over them in the morning [the Millennial morning]; and their beauty shall consume, the *grave* being an habitation to every one of them. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the *grave*."

Psa. 88:3.—"My life draweth nigh unto the *grave*."

Psa. 89:48.—"Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the *grave?*"

Psa. 141:7.—"Our bones are scattered at the *grave's* mouth."

Prov. 1:12.—"Let us swallow them up alive as the *grave:* and whole, as those that go down into the pit" [*i. e.*, as of an earthquake, as in Num. 16:30-33].

Prov. 30:15, 16.—"Four things say not, It is enough: the *grave*," etc.

Eccl. 9:10.—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the *grave*, whither thou goest."

Song of Solomon 8:6.—"Jealousy is cruel as the *grave*."

Isa. 14:11.—"Thy pomp is brought down to the *grave*."

Isa. 38:10.—"I shall go to the gates of the *grave:* I am deprived of the residue of my years."

Isa. 38:18.—"The *grave* cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth."

Num. 16:30-33.—"If . . . . they go down quick into the *pit*, then shall ye understand. . . . The ground clave asunder that was under them, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They and all that appertained to them went down alive into the *pit*, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation."

Ezek. 31:15.—"In the day when he went down to the *grave*."

Hosea 13:14.—"I will ransom them from the power of the *grave;* I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues: O *grave*, I will be thy destruction. Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." (The Lord did not ransom any from a place of fire and torment, for there is no such place; but he did ransom all mankind from the *grave*, from *death*, the penalty brought upon all by Adam's sin, as this verse declares.]

The above list includes every instance of the use of the English word "hell" and the Hebrew word *sheol* in the Old Testament. From this examination it must be evident to all readers that God's revelations for four thousand years contain not a single hint of a "hell," such as the word is now understood to signify.

"HELL" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament the Greek word *hades* corresponds exactly to the Hebrew word *sheol*. As proof see the quotations of the Apostles from the Old Testament, in which they render it *hades*. For instance, Acts 2:27, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hades*," is a quotation from Psa. 16:10, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *sheol*." And in 1 Cor. 15:54, 55, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave [*hades*], where is thy victory?" is an allusion to Isa. 25:8, "He will swallow up death in victory," and to Hos. 13:14, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O *sheol*, I will be thy destruction."

"HELL" FROM THE GREEK WORD "HADES"

Matt. 11:23.—"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to *hell;*" Luke 10:15: "Shall be thrust down to *hell*." [In privileges of knowledge and opportunity the city was highly favored, or, figuratively, "exalted unto heaven;" but because of misuse of God's favors, it would be debased, or, figuratively, cast down to *hades*, overthrown, destroyed. It is now so thoroughly *buried* in oblivion, that even the site where it stood is a matter of dispute. Capernaum is certainly *destroyed*, thrust down to *hades*.]

Luke 16:23.—"In *hell* he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." [A parabolic figure explained further along, under a separate heading.]

Rev. 6:8.—"And behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and *Hell* followed with him." [Symbol of destruction or the *grave*.]

Matt. 16:18.—"Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of *hell* shall not prevail against it." [Although bitter and relentless persecution, even unto death, should afflict the church during the Gospel age, it should never prevail to her utter extermination; and eventually, by her resurrection accomplished by her Lord, the church will prevail over *hades*—the *tomb*.]

CHRIST IN "HELL" (HADES) AND RESURRECTED FROM "HELL" (HADES"—Acts 2:1, 14, 22-31

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, ... Peter . . . . lifted up his voice and said, ... Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, ... being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ['He was delivered for our offenses'], ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains [or bands] of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it [for the Word of Jehovah had previously declared his resurrection]; for David speaketh concerning him [personating or speaking for him], 'I [Christ] foresaw the Lord [Jehovah] always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope, because thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell* [*hades*, the tomb, the state of death], neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou [Jehovah] hast made known to me [Christ] the ways of life.'" Here our Lord, as personified by the prophet David, expresses his faith in Jehovah's promise of a resurrection and in the full and glorious accomplishment of Jehovah's plan through him, and rejoices in the prospect.

Peter then proceeds, saying—"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day [so that this prophecy could not have referred to himself personally; for David's soul was left in "hell"—*hades*, the tomb, the state of death—and his flesh did see corruption]: Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before [prophetically], spake of the resurrection of Christ [out of "hell"—*hades*, the tomb—to which he must go for our offenses], that his soul was *not left in hell* [*hades*—the death state], neither his flesh did see corruption." Thus Peter presents a strong, logical argument, based on the words of the prophet David—showing first, that Christ, who was delivered by God for our offenses, went to "hell," the grave, the condition of death, destruction (Psa. 16:10) and, second, that according to promise he had been delivered from *hell*, the grave, death, destruction, by a *resurrection*—a raising up to life; being created again, the same identical being, yet more glorious, and exalted even to "the express image of the Father's person." (Heb. 1:3) And now "this same Jesus" (Acts 2:36), in his subsequent revelation to the Church, declares—

Rev. 1:18.—"I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of *hell* [*hades*, the grave] and of death."

Amen! Amen! our hearts respond; for in his resurrection we see the glorious outcome of the whole plan of Jehovah to be accomplished through the power of the Resurrected One who now holds the keys of the tomb and of death and in due time will release all the prisoners who are, therefore, called the "prisoners of hope." (Zech. 9:12; Luke 4:18) No craft or cunning can by any possible device wrest these Scriptures *entire* and pervert them to the support of that monstrous and blasphemous Papal tradition of eternal torment. Had that been our penalty, Christ, to be our vicarious sacrifice, must still, and to all eternity, endure such torment, which no one will claim. But death was our penalty, and "Christ died for our sins," and "also for the sins of the whole world."—1 Cor. 15:3; 1 John 2:2.

Rev. 20:13, 14.—"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell [the grave] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged, every man, according to their works. And death and *hell* [the grave] were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death." [The lake of fire is the *symbol* of final and everlasting destruction. Death and *hell* [the grave] both go into it. There shall be no more death; "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." —1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:4.]

OTHER OCCURRENCES OF THE WORD "HELL"

Having examined the word *sheol*, the only word in the Old Testament rendered "hell," and the word *hades*, most frequently in the New Testament rendered "hell" we now notice every remaining instance in Scripture of the English word "hell." In the New Testament two other words are rendered "hell;" namely, *gehenna* and *tartaroo*, which we will consider in the order named.

"GEHENNA" RENDERED "HELL"

This word occurs in the following passages—in all twelve times:—Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43-47; Luke 12:5; Jas. 3:6. It is the Grecian mode of spelling the Hebrew words which are translated "Valley of Hinnom." This valley lay just outside the city of Jerusalem, and served the purpose of sewer and garbage burner to that city. The offal, garbage, etc., were emptied there, and fires were kept continually burning to *consume* utterly all things deposited therein, brimstone being added to assist combustion and insure complete destruction. But no living thing was ever permitted to be cast into *Gehenna*. The Jews were not allowed to *torture* any creature.

When we consider that in the people of Israel God was giving us object lessons illustrating his dealings and plans, present and future, we should expect that this Valley of Hinnom, or *Gehenna*, would also play its part in illustrating things future. We know that Israel's priesthood and temple illustrated the royal priesthood, the Christian church as it will be, the true temple of God; and we know that their chief city was a figure of the New Jerusalem, the seat of kingdom power and center of authority—the city (government) of the Great King, Immanuel. We remember, too, that Christ's government is represented in the book of Revelation (Rev. 21: 10-27) under the figure of a city—the New Jerusalem. There, after describing the class permitted to enter the privileges and blessings of that kingdom—the honorable and glorious, and all who have right to the trees of life—we find it also declared that there shall *not enter into it* anything that defileth, or that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but only such as the Lamb shall write as worthy of life. This city, which thus will represent the entire saved world in the end of the Millennium, was typified in the earthly city, Jerusalem; and the defiling, the abominable, etc., the class unworthy of life everlasting, who do not enter in, were represented by the refuse and the filthy, lifeless carcasses cast into *Gehenna* outside the city,—whose utter destruction was thus symbolized—the second death. Accordingly, we find it stated that those not found worthy of life are to be cast into the "lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15)—fire here, as everywhere, being used as a symbol of *destruction*, and the symbol, lake of fire, being drawn from this same *Gehenna*, or Valley of Hinnom.

Therefore, while *Gehenna* served a useful purpose to the city of Jerusalem as a place for garbage burning, it, like the city itself, was typical, and illustrated the future dealings of God in refusing and committing to destruction all the impure elements, thus preventing them from defiling the holy city, the New Jerusalem, after the trial of the Millennial age of judgment shall have fully proved them and separated with unerring accuracy the "sheep" from the "goats."

So, then, *Gehenna* was a type or illustration of the second death—final and complete destruction, from which there can be no recovery; for after that, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," but only "fiery indignation which shall *devour* the adversaries."—Heb. 10:26.

Let us remember that Israel, for the purpose of being used as types of God's future dealing with the race, was typically treated as though the ransom had been given before they left Egypt, though only a typical lamb had been slain. When Jerusalem was built, and the Temple—representative of the true temple, the church, and the true kingdom as it will be established by Christ in the Millennium—that people typified the world in the Millennial age. Their priests represented the glorified royal priesthood, and their law and its demands of perfect obedience represented the law and conditions under the New Covenant, to be brought into operation for the blessing of all the obedient, and for the condemnation of all who, when granted fullest opportunity, will not heartily submit to the righteous ruling and laws of the Great King.

Seeing then, that Israel's polity, condition, etc., prefigured those of the world in the coming age, how appropriate that we should find the valley or abyss, *Gehenna*, a figure of the second death, the utter destruction in the coming age of all that is unworthy of preservation; and how aptly, too, is the symbol, "lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. 19:20), drawn from this same *Gehenna*, or Valley of Hinnom, burning continually with brimstone. The expression, "burning with brimstone," adds force to the symbol, "fire," to express the utter and irrevocable destructiveness of the second death; for burning brimstone is the most deadly agent known. How reasonable, too, to expect that Israel would have courts and judges resembling or prefiguring the judgments of the next age; and that the sentence of those (figurative) courts of that (figurative) people under those (figurative) laws to that (figurative) abyss, outside that (figurative) city, would largely correspond to the (real) sentences of the (real) court and judges in the next age. If these points are kept in mind, they will greatly assist us in understanding the words of our Lord in reference to *Gehenna;* for though the literal valley just at hand was named and referred to, yet his words carry with them lessons concerning the future age and the antitypical *Gehenna*—the second death.

SHALL BE IN DANGER OF GEHENNA—Matthew 5:21, 22

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, 'Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be amenable to the judges:' but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause *shall* [future—under the regulations of the real kingdom] be amenable to the judges; and whosoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca' [villain], shall be in danger of the high council; but whosoever shall say, 'Thou fool,' shall be in danger of *hell* [*Gehenna*] *fire*."

To understand these references to council and judges and *Gehenna*, all should know something of Jewish regulations. The "Court of Judges" consisted of seven men (or twenty-three,—the number is in dispute), and had power to judge some classes of crimes. The High Council, or Sanhedrin, consisted of seventy-one men of recognized learning and ability. This constituted the highest court of the Jews, and its supervision was over the gravest offenses. The most serious sentence was *death;* but certain very obnoxious criminals were subjected to an indignity after death, being refused burial and cast with the carcasses of dogs, the city refuse, etc., into *Gehenna*, there to be consumed. The object of this burning in *Gehenna* was to make the crime and the criminal detestable in the eyes of the people, and signified that the culprit was a hopeless case. It must be remembered that Israel hoped for a resurrection from the tomb, and hence they were particular in caring for the corpses of their dead. Not realizing fully God's power, they apparently thought he needed their assistance to that extent. (Exod. 13:19; Heb. 11:22; Acts 7:15, 16) Hence the destruction of the body in *Gehenna* after death (figuratively) implied the loss of hope of future life by a resurrection. Thus to such *Gehenna* represented the second death in the same figurative way that they as a people represented or illustrated a future order of things under the New Covenant.

Notice that our Lord, in the above words, pointed out to them that their construction of the Law, severe though it was, was far below the real import of that Law, as it shall be interpreted under the real kingdom and judges, which theirs only typified. He shows that the command of their law, "Thou shalt not kill," reached much farther than they supposed; that *malicious anger* and vituperation "shall be" considered a violation of God's law, under the New Covenant; and that such as, under the favorable conditions of that new age, will not reform so thoroughly as to fully observe God's law will be counted worthy of that which the *Gehenna* near them typified—the second death. However, the strict severity of that law will be enforced only in proportion as the discipline, advantages and assistance of that age, enabling each to comply with its laws, shall be disregarded.

The same thought is continued in

Matthew 5:22-30

"Ye have heard," etc., "but I say unto you . . . . it is better for thee to lose one of thy members, than that thy whole body should be cast into *Gehenna.*"

Here again the operation of God's law under the New Covenant is contrasted with its operation under the Old or Jewish Covenant, and the lesson of self-control is urged by the statement that it is far more profitable that men should refuse to gratify depraved desires (though they be dear to them as a right eye, and apparently indispensable as a right hand) than that they should gratify these, and lose, in the second death, the future life provided through the atonement for all who will return to perfection, holiness and God.

These expressions of our Lord not only serve to show us the *perfection* (Rom. 7:12) of God's law, and how fully it will be defined and enforced in the Millennium, but they served as a lesson to the Jews also, who previously saw through Moses' commands only the crude exterior of the law of God. Since they found it difficult in their fallen state to keep inviolate even the surface significance of the law, they must now see the impossibility of their keeping the finer meaning of the law revealed by Christ. Had they understood and received his teaching fully, they would have cried out, Alas! if God judges us thus, by the very thoughts and intents of the heart, we are all unclean, all undone, and can hope for naught but condemnation to *Gehenna* (to *utter destruction*, as brute beasts). They would have cried, "Show us a greater priesthood than that of Aaron, a High Priest and Teacher able fully to appreciate the law, and able fully to appreciate and sympathize with our fallen state and inherited weaknesses, and let him offer us 'better sacrifices,' and apply to us the needed greater forgiveness of sin, and let him as a great physician heal us and restore us, so that we *can* obey the perfect Law of God from our hearts." Then they would have found Christ.

But this lesson they did not learn, for the ears of their understanding were "dull of hearing;" hence they knew not that God had already prepared the very priest and sacrifice and teacher and physician they needed, who in due time redeemed those under the typical law, as well as all not under it, and who also "in due time," shortly, will begin his restoring work—restoring sight to the blind eyes of their understanding, and hearing to their deaf ears. Then the "vail shall be taken away"—the vail of ignorance, pride and human wisdom which Satan now uses to blind the world to God's true law and true plan of salvation in Christ.

And not only did our Lord's teaching here show the Law of the New Covenant, and teach the Jew a lesson, but it is of benefit to the Gospel church also. In proportion as we learn the exactness of God's Law, and what would constitute perfection under its requirements, we see that our Redeemer was perfect, and that we, totally unable to commend ourselves to God as keepers of that law, can find acceptance with the Father only in the merit of our Redeemer, while none can be of that "body," covered by the robe of his righteousness, except the consecrated who endeavor to do only those things well pleasing to God, which includes the avoidance of sin to the extent of ability. Yet their acceptability with God rests not in their perfection, but upon the perfection of Christ, so long as they abide in him. These, nevertheless, are benefited by a clear insight into the perfect law of God, even though they are not dependent on the perfect keeping of it. They delight to do God's will to the extent of their ability, and the better they know his perfect law, the better they are able to rule themselves and to conform to it. So, then, to us also the Lord's words have a lesson of value.

The point, however, to be specially noticed here is that *Gehenna* which the Jews knew, and of which our Lord spoke to them, was not a lake of fire to be kept burning to all eternity, into which all would be cast who get "angry with a brother" and call him a "fool." No; the Jews gathered no such extreme idea from the Lord's words. The eternal torment theory was unknown to them. It had no place in their theology, as will be shown. It is a comparatively modern invention, coming down, as we have shown, from Papacy—the great apostasy. The point is that *Gehenna* symbolizes the second death—utter, complete and everlasting destruction. This is clearly shown by its being contrasted with *life* as its opposite. "It is better for thee to enter into *life* halt, or maimed, than otherwise to be cast into *Gehenna.*" It is better that you should deny yourselves sinful gratifications than that you should lose all future life, and perish in the second death.

ABLE TO DESTROY BOTH SOUL AND BODY IN GEHENNA
Matthew 10:28; Luke 12.5

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to *destroy* both soul and body in *hell* [*Gehenna*]." See also another account of the same discourse by Luke—12:4, 5.

Here our Lord pointed out to his followers the great cause they had for courage and bravery under the most trying circumstances. They were to expect persecution, and to have all manner of evil spoken against them falsely, for his sake, and for the sake of the "good tidings" of which he made them the ministers and heralds: yea, the time would come, that whosoever would kill them would think that he did God a service. Their consolation or reward for this was to be received, not in the present life, but in the life to come. They were assured, and they believed, that he had come to give his life a ransom for many, and that all in their graves must in consequence, in due time, hear the Deliverer's voice and come forth, either to reward (if their trial had been passed in this life successfully), future trial, or judgment, as must be the case with the great majority who do not, in this present life, come to the necessary knowledge and opportunity essential to a complete trial.

Under present conditions men are able to kill our bodies, but nothing that they can do will affect our future being (soul),* which God has promised shall be revived or restored by his power in the resurrection day—the Millennial age. Our revived souls will have new bodies (spiritual or natural —"to each 'seed' his own [kind of] body"), and these none will have liberty to kill. God alone has power to destroy *utterly*—soul and body. He alone, therefore, should be feared, and the opposition of men even to the death is not to be feared, if thereby we gain divine approval. Our Lord's bidding then is, Fear not them which can terminate the present (dying) life in these poor dying bodies. Care little for it, its food, its clothing, its pleasures, in comparison with that future existence or being which God has provided for you, and which, if secured, may be your portion forever. Fear not the threats, or looks, or acts of men, whose power can extend no farther than the present existence; who can harm and kill these bodies, but can do no more. Rather have respect and deference to God, with whom are the issues of *life everlasting*—fear him who is able to *destroy* in *Gehenna*, the second death, both the present dying existence and all hope of future existence.

UNDYING WORMS AND QUENCHLESS FIRES—Matthew 18:8, 9; Mark 9:43-48

Here it is conclusively shown that *Gehenna* as a figure represented the second death—the utter destruction which must ensue in the case of all who, after having fully received the opportunities of a future being or existence through our Lord's sacrifice, prove themselves unworthy of God's gift, and refuse to accept it, by refusing obedience to his just requirements. For it does not say that God will preserve soul or body in *Gehenna*, but that in it he can and will "destroy" both. Thus we are taught that any who are condemned to the second death are hopelessly and forever blotted out of existence.

[Since these two passages refer to the same discourse, we quote from Mark—remarking that verses 44 and 46, and part of 45, are not found in the oldest Greek MSS., though verse 48, which reads the same, is in all manuscripts. We quote the text as found in these ancient and reliable MSS.] "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into *Gehenna*, into the fire that never shall be quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into *Gehenna.* And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into *Gehenna*, where the worm dies not and the fire is not quenched."

After reading the above, all must agree with the prophet that our Lord opened his mouth in figures and obscure sayings. (Psa. 78:2; Matt. 13:35) No one for a moment supposes that our Lord advised the people to mutilate their bodies by cutting off their limbs, or gouging out their eyes. Nor does he mean us to understand that the injuries and disfigurements of the present life will continue beyond the grave, when we shall "enter into life." The Jews, whom the Lord addressed, having no conception of a place of everlasting torment, and who knew the word *Gehenna* to refer to the valley outside their city, which was not a place of torment, nor a place where any living thing was cast, but a place for the utter destruction of whatever might be cast into it, recognizing the Lord's expression regarding limbs and eyes to be figurative, knew that Gehenna also was used in the same figurative sense, to symbolize utter destruction.

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* We will supply free on application a tract on *"What is the Soul?"*

The Lord meant simply this: The future life, which God has provided for redeemed man, is of inestimable value, and it will richly pay you to make any sacrifice to receive and enjoy that life. Should it even cost an eye, a hand or a foot, so that to all eternity you would be obliged to endure the loss of these, yet life would be cheap at even such a cost. That would be better far than to retain your members and lose all in *Gehenna*. Doubtless, too, the hearers drew the lesson as applicable to all the affairs of life, and understood the Master to mean that it would richly repay them to deny themselves many comforts, pleasures and tastes, dear to them as a right hand, precious as an eye, and serviceable as a foot, rather than by gratification to forfeit the life to come and be utterly destroyed in *Gehenna*—the second death.

But what about the undying worms and the unquenchable fire?

We answer, In the literal *Gehenna*, which is the basis of our Lord's illustration, the bodies of animals, etc., frequently fell upon ledges of rocks and not into the fire kept burning below. Thus exposed, these would breed worms and be destroyed by them, as completely and as surely as those which burned. No one was allowed to disturb the contents of this valley; hence the worm and the fire together completed the work of *destruction*—the fire was not quenched and the worms died not. This would not imply a neverending fire, nor everlasting worms. The thought is that the worms did not die off and leave the carcasses there, but continued and completed the work of destruction. So with the fire: it was not quenched, it burned on until all was consumed. Just so if a house were ablaze and the fire could not be controlled or quenched, but burned until the building was destroyed, we might properly call such an "unquenchable fire."

Our Lord wished to impress the thought of the completeness and finality of the second death, symbolized in *Gehenna*. All who go into the second death will be thoroughly and completely and forever destroyed; no ransom will ever again be given for any (Rom. 6:9); for none worthy of life will be cast into the second death, or lake of fire, but only those who *love* unrighteousness after coming to the knowledge of the truth.

Not only in the above instances is the second death pointedly illustrated by *Gehenna*, but it is evident that the same Teacher used the same figure to represent the same thing in the symbols of Revelation,—though there it is not called *Gehenna*, but a "lake of fire."

The same valley was once before used as the basis of a discourse by the Prophet Isaiah. (Isa. 66:24) Though he gives it no name, he describes it; and all should notice that he speaks, not as some with false ideas might expect, of billions alive in flames and torture, but of the *carcasses* of those who transgressed against the Lord, who are thus represented as utterly destroyed in the second death.

The two preceding verses show the time when this prophecy will be fulfilled, and it is in perfect harmony with the symbols of Revelation: it appertains to the new dispensation, the Millennium, the "new heavens and new earth" condition of things. Then all the righteous will see the justice as well as the wisdom of the utter destruction of the incorrigible, wilful enemies of righteousness, as it is written: "They shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

Matthew 23:15, 33

The class here addressed was not the heathen who had no knowledge of the truth, nor the lowest and most ignorant of the Jewish nation, but the Scribes and Pharisees, outwardly the most religious, and the leaders and teachers of the people. To these our Lord said, "How can ye escape the judgment of *Gehenna?*" These men were hypocritical: they were not true to their convictions. Abundant testimony of the truth had been borne to them, but they refused to accept it, and endeavored to counteract its influence and to discourage the people from accepting it. And in thus resisting the holy spirit of light and truth, they were hardening their hearts against the very agency which God designed for their blessing. Hence they were wickedly resisting his grace, and such a course, if pursued, must eventually end in condemnation to the second death, *Gehenna*. Every step in the direction of wilful blindness and opposition to the truth makes return more difficult, and makes the wrongdoer more and more of the character which God abhors, and which the second death is intended to utterly destroy. The Scribes and Pharisees were progressing rapidly in that course: hence the warning inquiry of our Lord, "How can ye escape?" etc. The sense is this,—Although you boast of your piety, you will surely be destroyed in *Gehenna*, unless you change your course.

SET ON FIRE OF GEHENNA—James 3:6

"So [important] is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and [or when] it is set on fire of *Gehenna*."

Here, in strong, symbolic language, the Apostle points out the great and bad influence of an evil tongue—a tongue set on fire (figuratively) by *Gehenna* (figuratively). For a tongue to be set on fire of *Gehenna* signifies that it is set going in evil by a perverse disposition, self-willed, selfish, hateful, malicious, the sort of disposition which, in spite of knowledge and opportunity, unless controlled and reformed, will be counted worthy to be *destroyed*—the class for whom the "second death," the real "lake of fire," the real *Gehenna*, is intended. One in that attitude may by his tongue kindle a great fire, a destructive disturbance, which, wherever it has contact, will work evil in the entire course of nature. A few malicious words often arouse all the evil passions of the speaker, engender the same in others and react upon the first. And continuance in such an evil course finally corrupts the entire man, and brings him under sentence as utterly unworthy of life.

"TARTAROO" RENDERED "HELL"

The Greek word *tartaroo* occurs but once in the Scriptures, and is translated *hell*. It is found in 2 Pet. 2:4, which reads thus:

"God spared not the angels who sinned, but *cast* [*them*] *down to hell* [*tartaroo*], *and* delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

Having examined all other words rendered "hell," in the Bible, and all the texts in which they occur, we conclude the examination with this text, which is the only one in which the word *tartaroo* occurs. In the above quotation, all the words shown in *Italic* type are translated from the one Greek word *tartaroo*. Evidently the translators were at a loss to know how to translate the word, but concluded they knew where the evil angels ought to be, and so they made bold to put them into "hell," though it took six words to twist the idea into the shape they had pre-determined it must take.

The word *tartaroo*, used by Peter, very closely resembles *tartarus*, a word used in Grecian mythology as the name for *a dark abyss or prison*. But *tartaroo* seems to refer more to an act than to a place. The fall of the angels who sinned was from honor and dignity, into dishonor and condemnation, and the thought seems to be—"God spared not the angels who sinned, but *degraded* them, and delivered them into chains of darkness."

This certainly agrees with the facts known to us through other Scriptures; for these fallen spirits frequented the earth in the days of our Lord and the apostles. Hence they were not down in some place, but "down" in the sense of being degraded from former honor and liberty, and restrained under darkness, as by a chain. Whenever these fallen spirits, in spiritualistic seances, manifest their powers through mediums, pretending to be certain dead human beings, they must always do their work in the dark, because darkness is the chain by which they are bound until the great Millennial day of judgment. Whether this implies that in the immediate future they will be able to materialize in daylight is difficult to determine. If so, it would greatly increase Satan's power to blind and deceive for a short season—until the Sun of Righteousness has fully risen and Satan is fully bound.

Thus we close our investigation of the Bible use of the word "hell." Thank God, we find no such place of everlasting torture as the creeds and hymn-books, and many pulpits, erroneously teach. Yet we have found a "hell," *sheol*, *hades*, to which all our race were condemned on account of Adam's sin, and from which all are redeemed by our Lord's death; and that "hell" is the tomb—the death condition. And we find another "hell" (*Gehenna*—the second *death*—utter destruction) brought to our attention as the final penalty upon all who, after being redeemed and brought to the full knowledge of the truth, and to *full* ability to obey it, shall yet choose death by choosing a course of opposition to God and righteousness. And our hearts say, Amen! True and righteous are thy ways, thou King of nations! Who shall not venerate thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou art entirely holy. And all nations shall come and worship before thee, because thy righteous dealings are made manifest.—Rev. 15:3, 4.

PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS—Luke 16:19-31

The great difficulty with many in reading this scripture is that, though they regard it as a parable, they reason on it and draw conclusions from it as though it were a literal statement. To regard it as a literal statement involves several absurdities; for instance, that the rich man went to "hell" because he had enjoyed many earthly blessings and gave nothing but crumbs to Lazarus. Not a word is said about his wickedness. Again, Lazarus was blessed, not because he was a sincere child of God, full of faith and trust, not because he was good, but simply because he was poor and sick. If this be interpreted literally, the only logical lesson to be drawn from it is, that unless we are poor beggars full of sores, we will never enter into future bliss; and that if now we wear any fine linen and purple, and have plenty to eat every day, we are sure of future torment. Again, the coveted place of favor is "Abraham's bosom;" and if the whole statement be literal, the bosom must also be literal, and it surely would not hold very many of earth's millions of sick and poor.

But why consider absurdities? As a parable, it is easy of interpretation. In a parable the thing said is never the thing meant. We know this from our Lord's own explanations of his parables. When he said "wheat," he meant "children of the kingdom;" when he said "tares," he meant "the children of the devil;" when he said "reapers" his servants were to be understood, etc. (Matt. 13) The same classes were represented by different symbols in different parables. Thus the "wheat" of one parable correspond to the "faithful servants," and the "wise virgins" of others. So, in this parable, the "rich man" represents a *class* and "Lazarus" represents another *class.*

In attempting to expound a parable such as this, an explanation of which the Lord does not furnish us, modesty in expressing our opinion regarding it is certainly appropriate. We therefore offer the following explanation without any attempt to force our views upon the reader, except so far as his own truth-enlightened judgment may commend them as in accord with God's Word and plan. To our understanding, Abraham represented God, and the "rich man" represented the Jewish nation. At the time of the utterance of the parable, and for a long time previous, the Jews had "fared sumptuously every day"—being the especial recipients of God's favors. As Paul says: "What advantage, then, hath the Jew? Much every way: chiefly, because to them were committed the oracles of God [Law and Prophecy]." The promises to Abraham and David and their organization as a typical kingdom of God invested that people with royalty, as represented by the rich man's "purple." The typical sacrifices of the law constituted them, in a typical sense, a holy (righteous) nation, represented by the rich man's "fine linen,"—symbolic of righteousness.—Rev. 19:8.

Lazarus represented the outcasts from divine favor under the law, who, sin-sick, hungered and thirsted after righteousness. "Publicans and sinners" of Israel, seeking a better life, and truth-hungry Gentiles who were "feeling after God" constituted the Lazarus class. These, at the time of the utterance of this parable, were entirely destitute of those special divine blessings which Israel enjoyed. They lay at the gate of the rich man. No rich promises of royalty were theirs; not even typically were they cleansed; but, in moral sickness, pollution and sin, they were companions of "dogs." Dogs were regarded as detestable creatures in those days, and the typically clean Jew called the outsiders "heathen" and "dogs," and would never eat with them, nor marry, nor have any dealings with them.—John 4:9.

As to how these ate of the "crumbs" of divine favor which fell from Israel's table of bounties, the Lord's words to the Syro-Phœnician woman give us a key. He said to this Gentile woman—"It is not meet [proper] to take the children's [Israelites'] bread and to cast it to dogs [Gentiles];" and she answered, "Truth, Lord, but the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." (Matt. 15:26, 27) Jesus healed her daughter, thus giving the desired crumb of favor.

But there came a great dispensational change in Israel's history when as a nation they rejected and crucified the Son of God. Then their typical righteousness ceased—then the promise of royalty ceased to be theirs, and the kingdom was taken from them to be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof—the Gospel Church, "a holy nation, a peculiar people." (Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:7, 9; Matt. 21:43) Thus the "rich man" *died* to all these special advantages, and soon he (the Jewish nation) found himself in a cast-off condition,—in tribulation and affliction. In such condition that nation has suffered from that day to this.

Lazarus also died: the condition of the humble Gentiles and the God-seeking "outcasts" of Israel underwent a great change, being carried by the angels (messengers—apostles, etc.) to Abraham's bosom. Abraham is represented as the father of the faithful, and receives all the children of faith, who are thus recognized as the heirs of all the promises made to Abraham; for the children of the flesh are not the children of God, "but the children of the promise are counted for the *seed*" (children of Abraham); "which seed is Christ;"—and "if ye be Christ's, then are ye [believers] Abraham's seed [children], and heirs according to the [Abrahamic] promise."—Gal 3:29.

Yes, the termination of the condition of things then existing was well illustrated by the figure, death—the dissolution of the Jewish polity and the withdrawal of the favors which Israel had so long enjoyed. There they were cast off and have since been shown "no favor," while the poor Gentiles, who before had been "aliens from the commonwealth [the polity] of Israel and strangers from the covenant of promise [up to this time given to Israel only] having no hope and without God in the world," were then "made nigh by the blood of Christ" and reconciled to God.—Eph. 2:12, 13.

To the symbolisms of death and burial used to illustrate the dissolution of Israel and their burial or hiding among the other nations, our Lord added a further figure—"In hell [*hades,* the grave] he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off," etc. The dead cannot lift up their eyes, nor see either near or far, nor converse; for it is distinctly stated, "There is no work, nor device, nor *knowledge,* nor wisdom, in the grave;" and the dead are described as those who "go down into *silence.*" (Eccl. 9:10; Psa. 115:17) But the Lord wished to show that great sufferings or "torments" would be added to the Jews as a nation *after* their national dissolution and burial amongst the other peoples dead in trespasses and sins; and that they would plead in vain for release and comfort at the hand of the formerly despised Lazarus class.

And history has borne out this parabolic prophecy. For eighteen hundred years the Jews have not only been in distress of mind over their casting out from the favor of God and the loss of their temple and other necessaries to the offering of their sacrifices, but they have been relentlessly persecuted by all classes, including professed Christians. It was from the latter that the Jews have expected mercy, as expressed in the parable—"Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue;" but the great gulf fixed between them hinders that. Nevertheless, God still recognize the relationship established in his covenant with them, and addresses them as children of the covenant. (Verse 25) These "torments" have been the penalties attached to the violation of their covenant, and were as certain to be visited upon them as the blessings promised for obedience.—See Lev. 26.

The "great gulf fixed" represents the wide difference between the Gospel church and the Jew—the former enjoying free grace, joy, comfort, and peace, as true sons of God, and the latter holding to the law, which condemns and torments. Prejudice, pride and error, from the Jewish side, form the bulwarks of this gulf which hinder the Jew from coming into the condition of true sons of God by accepting Christ and the gospel of his grace. The bulwark of this gulf which hinders true sons of God from going to the Jew—under the bondage of the law—is their knowledge that by the deeds of the law none can be justified before God, and that if any man keep the law (put himself under it to try to commend himself to God by reason of obedience to it), Christ shall profit him nothing. (Gal. 5:2-4) So, then, we who are of the Lazarus class should not attempt to mix the Law and the Gospel, knowing that they cannot be mixed, and that we can do no good to those who still cling to the law and reject the sacrifice for sins given by our Lord. And they, not seeing the change of dispensation which took place, argue that to deny the Law as the power to save would be to deny all the past history of their race, and to deny all of God's special dealings with the "fathers," (promises and dealings which through pride and selfishness they failed rightly to apprehend and use); hence they cannot come over to the bosom of Abraham, into the true rest and peace—the portion of all the true children of faith,—John 8:39; Rom. 4:16; Gal. 3:29.

True, a few Jews probably came into the Christian faith all the way down the Gospel age, but so few as to be ignored in a parable which represented the Jewish people as a whole. As at the first, Dives represented the orthodox Jews, and not the "outcasts of Israel," so down to the close of the parable he continues to represent a similar class, and hence does not represent such Jews as have renounced the Law Covenant and embraced the *New Covenant, or such as have become infidels.

The plea of the "rich man" for the sending of "Lazarus" to his five brethren we interpret as follows:

The people of Judea, at the time of our Lord's utterance of this parable, were repeatedly referred to as "Israel," "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," "cities of Israel," etc., because all of the tribes were represented there: but actually the majority of the people were of the tribes, Judah and Benjamin, but few of the ten tribes having returned from Babylon under Cyrus' general permission. If the nation of the Jews (chiefly *two* tribes) were represented in the *one* "rich man," it would be a harmony of numbers to understand the "five brethren" to represent the *ten* tribes chiefly scattered abroad. The request relative to them was doubtless introduced to show that all *special* favor of God ceased to all Israel (the ten tribes, as well as to the two more directly addressed). It seems to us evident that Israel only was meant for no other nation than Israel had "Moses and the prophets" as instructors. (Verse 29) The majority of the ten tribes had so far disregarded Moses and the prophets that they did not return to the land of promise, but preferred to dwell among idolators: and hence it would be useless to attempt further communication with them, even by one from the dead—the figuratively dead, but now figuratively risen Lazarus class.—Eph. 2:5.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue, for critical examination of Covenants.

Though the parable mentions no bridging of this "great gulf," other portions of Scripture indicate that it was to be "fixed" only throughout the Gospel age, and that at its close the "rich man," having received the measurement of punishment for his sins,* will walk out of his fiery troubles over the bridge of God's promises yet unfulfilled to that nation.

Though for centuries the Jews have been bitterly persecuted by pagans, Mohammedans and professed Christians, they are now gradually rising to political freedom and influence; and although much of "Jacob's trouble" is just at hand, yet as a people they will be very prominent among the nations in the beginning of the Millennium. The "vail" (2 Cor. 3:13-16) of prejudice still exists, but it will be gradually taken away as the light of the Millennial morning dawns; nor should we be surprised to hear of great awakenings among the Jews, and many coming to acknowledge Christ. They will thus leave their *hadean* state (nationas death) and torment, and come, the first of the nations, to be blessed by the true seed of Abraham, which is Christ, Head and body. Their bulwark of race prejudice and pride is falling in some places and the humble, the poor in spirit, are beginning already to look upon him whom they have pierced, and to inquire, Is not this the Christ? And as they look the Lord pours upon them the spirit of favor and supplication. (Zech. 12:10) Therefore, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her appointed time is accomplished."—Isa. 40:1, 2, margin.

In a word, this parable seems to teach precisely what Paul explained in Rom. 11:19-32. Because of unbelief the natural branches were broken off and the wild branches grafted into the Abrahamic root-promise. The parable leaves the Jews in their trouble and does not refer to their final restoration to favor—doubtless because it was not pertinent to the feature of the subject treated; but Paul assures us that when the fulness of the Gentiles—the full number from among the Gentiles necessary to make up the bride of Christ—is come in, "they [natural Israel] shall obtain mercy through your [the Church's] mercy." He assures us that this is God's covenant with fleshly Israel (who lost his higher, spiritual promises, but are still the possessers of certain earthly promises, to become the chief nation of earth, etc. In proof of this statement, he quotes from the prophet, saying: "The deliverer shall come out of Zion [the glorified church], and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob [the fleshly seed]." "As concerning the Gospel [high calling], they are enemies [cast off] for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes." "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"—Rom. 11:26-33.

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* See Isa. 40:1, 2, margin; Rom. 11:27-31, and MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, page 227.

FAITHFUL CO-LABORERS HEARD FROM

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I have just been reading again in the TOWER of March 1st the article entitled "Mark the Perfect Man," etc., and want you to know how much I have enjoyed it and profited by it. After thanking the Giver of every good and perfect gift I thank you, and continually pray that the favor of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you in all your work, and that you may ever be defended from the assaults of the adversary. Putting myself for a moment in your place, I was able to see that you would rejoice to know that the household were appreciating the things "new and old," and I wanted by this little note to help "hold up" your hands. Please do not trouble to acknowledge this, but believe me,

Yours in the Lord, ELLIOTT H. THOMPSON,—*Wash.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I wish I could tell the two dear sisters who arranged the Index how much I appreciate it. It is exactly what I have needed. It certainly required a good deal of patient work to produce it and I hope all of the TOWER readers will appreciate it.

How much I would like to be at Allegheny at the great Memorial and enjoy the sacred season with you all. Not that I would be willing to be absent from Scranton at that time, but the remembrance of five years ago when I was there and the rich blessings I received at that time makes me long for one more such precious season. O what a blessed five years it has been! Every day has been full of a consciousness of the dear Lord's favor, and tho I cannot say that I have always done the very best I might have done, still it has been one continual effort to follow our blessed Leader and Guide on the narrow way. All of the time I have been conscious of his tender love, and his favors have been more numerous than the hairs of my head. And you, Brother Russell, you have been a true and faithful under-shepherd and kind and loving pastor to us all and I hope that all have had a keen appreciation of this. Some I know have, for many time have I heard prayers go up from consecrated hearts for you.

Brothers Woodworth and Hodges are both growing young men, and are indeed getting to be "able ministers of the Word." They are capable of standing for its defence anywhere. Hoping this may find you all well and happy at Allegheny, I send greetings to the Church there in the name of the little company at Scranton. Lovingly your brother in Christ, HAYDEN SAMSON,—*Pennsylvania.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I have the pleasure at this time of writing to you, and I assure you that it is a pleasure indeed. You are burdened no doubt with letters from the friends of the faith, but your kind patience seems so prominent in your writings that I am quite sure you will appreciate a letter, even from me.

The faith in the coming Kingdom has grown at this place under my care until we have a few—a little band of followers of the Lord—who, I trust, are presenting living sacrifices unto him who bought them. The work is necessarily slow, and the path not very smooth so far as this world is concerned. We meet with a good many obstacles, as so many have been prejudiced by the blind that are leading them; still we are in hopes that some will see the light even in such darkness as here prevails.

I thought it might be proper to mention that we have great desires for another "Pilgrim" visit. We hope that one is headed this way, and can stop with us for a few days. All profited so much by the visit of Brother Draper in November, and our love and prayers have followed him all these days. As the clouds grow dark upon this benighted world may God's dear ones—for he knows who are his—be faithful to their calling and "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light," is the prayer of one who is the least to be called a son. Yours in His service, E. L. BROWN,—*Ind. Ter.*

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY,

KIND SIRS:—Coming out of our little chapel last Lord's Day night I was handed a little book, *"The Bible vs. the Evolution Theory."* After careful reading I was wonderfully blessed and thank God it was thrown in my way as I was hungry for such truths. I am an old lady in a home of faith and prayer and cannot buy such things. I was so happy after careful reading to find on the back of the little book that you would contribute a paper to any of the Lord's aged who could not buy the same. I am anxious to read something edited by the author of MILLENNIAL DAWN, for I scarcely expect to be able to get hold of the three volumes of that wonderful message and will be so thankful for anything you can send me free. Perhaps through me it will reach some one and do great good. God will bless the beautiful truths sent out from your house. Anything that one of his aged saints can do, to assist will be done by **MRS. CARRIE MCBRIDE**,—*St. Louis.*

PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

"These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."—Matt. 25:31-46.

While the Scriptures, as we have shown, do not teach the blasphemous doctrines of everlasting *torment*, they do most emphatically teach the everlasting *punishment* of the wicked, the class represented in the parable as "goats." Let us examine the parable, and then the sentence pronounced at its close.

It has been truly said that "Order is Heaven's first law;" yet few, we think, have realized how emphatically this is true. In glancing back over the plan of the ages, there is nothing which gives such conclusive evidence of a Divine Director as the order observed in all its parts.

God has had definite and stated times and seasons for every part of his work; and in the end of each of these seasons there has been a finishing up of its work and a clearing off of the rubbish, preparatory to the beginning of the new work of the dispensation to follow. Thus in the end of the Jewish age order is observed—a harvesting and complete separation of the "wheat" class from the "chaff," and an entire rejection of the latter class from God's favor. With the few judged worthy in the end of that age, a new age—the Gospel age—began. And now we find ourselves amid the closing scenes, the "harvest," of this age: the "wheat" and the "tares" which have grown together during this age are being separated. With the former class, of which our Lord Jesus is the Head, a new age is about to be inaugurated, and these "wheat" are to reign as kings and priests in that new dispensation, while the "tare" element is judged as utterly unworthy of that favor.

While observing this order with reference to the Jewish age and the one just closing, our Lord informs us through the parable under consideration that the same order will be observed with reference to the age to follow this Gospel age.

The harvest of the Jewish age was likened to the separation of wheat from chaff; the harvest of this age to the separation of wheat from tares; and the harvest of the Millennial age to the separation of sheep from goats.

That the parable of the sheep and the goats refers to the Millennial age is clearly indicated in verses 31 and 32—"*When the son of man shall come in his glory,* and all the holy angels with him, *then* shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." As in the present age every act of those on trial (the church) goes to make a part of that character which, in due time, will determine the final decision of the Judge in our case, so will it be with the world (the "nations") in the age to come. As in the present age the trial of the majority of the individual members of the church ends, and the decision of their case is reached, long before the end of the age (2 Tim. 4:7-8), so under the Millennial reign the decision of some individual cases will be reached long before the end of the age (Isa. 65:20); but in each age there is a "harvest" or general separating time in the end of the age.

In the dawn of the Millennial age, after the "time of trouble," there will be a gathering of the living nations before Christ, and, in their appointed time and order, the dead of all nations shall be called to appear before the judgment seat of Christ—not to receive an immediate sentence, but to receive a fair and impartial, individual trial (Ezek. 18:2-4, 19, 20) under the most favorable circumstances, the result of which trial will be a final sentence, as worthy or unworthy of everlasting life.*

The scene of this parable, therefore, is laid after the time of trouble, when the nations shall have been subdued, Satan bound (Rev. 20:1, 2) and the authority of Christ's kingdom established. Ere this, the bride of Christ (the overcoming church) will have been seated with him in his throne of spiritual power and will have taken part in executing the judgments of the great day of wrath. Then the Son of man and his bride, the glorified church, will be revealed and be seen by men, with the eyes of their understanding and shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matt. 13:43.

Here is the New Jerusalem as John saw it (Rev. 21), "that holy city [*symbol of government*] . . . coming down from God out of heaven." During the time of trouble it will be coming down, and before the end of it, it will have touched the earth. This is the stone cut out of the mountains without hands (but by the power of God), and it will then have become a great mountain (kingdom), filling the whole earth (Dan. 2:35), its *coming* having broken to pieces the evil kingdoms of the prince of darkness.—Dan. 2:34, 35.

Here is that glorious city (government), prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2), and early in the dawn of the Millennium the nations will begin to walk in the light of it. (Verse 24) These may bring their glory and honor into it, but "there shall in no wise enter into it [or become a part of it] anything that defileth," etc. (Verse 27) Here, from the midst of the throne, proceeds a pure river of water of life (truth unmixed with error), and the Spirit and the bride say, Come, and take it freely. (Rev. 22:17) Here begins the world's probation, the world's great judgment day—a thousand years.*

But even in this favored time of blessing and healing of the nations, when Satan is bound, evil restrained, mankind in process of release from the grasp of death, and when the knowledge of the Lord fills the earth, two classes will be developed, which our Lord here likens to sheep and goats. These, he tells us, he will separate. The sheep class—those who are meek, teachable and willing to be led, shall, during the Millennial age, be gathered at the Judge's right hand—symbol of his approval and favor; but the goat class, self-willed and stubborn, always climbing on the rocks—seeking prominence and approval among men—and feeding on miserable refuse, while the sheep graze in the rich pastures of the truth furnished by the Good Shepherd—these are gathered to the Judge's left hand, the opposite of the position of favor—as subjects of his disfavor and condemnation.

This work of separating sheep and goats will require all of the Millennial age for its accomplishment. During that age, each individual, as he comes gradually to a knowledge of God and his will, takes his place at the right hand of favor or the left hand of disfavor, according as he improves or misimproves the opportunities of that golden age. By the end of that age, all *the world* of mankind will have arranged themselves, as shown in the parable, into two classes.

The end of that age will be the end of the world's trial or judgment, and then final disposition will be made of the two classes. The reward of this "sheep" class will be granted them because, during the age of trial and discipline, they cultivated and manifested the beautiful character of love, which Paul describes as the fulfilling of the law of God. (Rom. 13:10) They will have manifested it to each other in their time of sorest need; and what they will have done for one another the Lord will count as done unto him, counting them all his brethren—children of God, though they will be of the human nature, while he is of the divine.

The condemnation of the "goat" class is shown to be for the lack of this spirit of love. Under the same favorable circumstances as the "sheep," they wilfully resist the moulding influence of the Lord's discipline, and harden their hearts. The goodness of God does not lead them to true repentance; but, like Pharaoh, they take advantage of his goodness and do evil. The "goats," who will not have developed the element of *love*, the law of God's being and kingdom, will be counted unworthy of everlasting life, and will be destroyed; while the "sheep," who will have developed God-likeness (love), and who will have exhibited it in their characters, are to be installed as the subordinate rulers of earth for future ages.

In the end of the Millennial age, in the final adjustment of human affairs, Christ thus addresses his sheep: "Come, ye blessed, ... inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

It is manifest the "sheep" here addressed, at the close of the Millennium, are not the sheep of the Gospel age, the Gospel church, but those "other sheep" to whom the Lord referred in John 10:16. And the kingdom prepared for them in the divine plan, from the foundation of the world, is not the kingdom prepared for the Gospel church. The church will receive her kingdom at the beginning of the Millennium; but this is the kingdom prepared for the "sheep" of the Millennial age. Their kingdom will be the dominion of earth which was originally given to Adam, but which was lost through sin, and which is again to be restored when man is brought to perfection, and so made fit to receive and enjoy it. That dominion will not be a dominion of some of the race over others, but a joint dominion, in which every man will be a king, and all will have equal rights and privileges in appropriating and enjoying every earthly good. It will be a sovereign people—a great and grand republic on a basis of perfect righteousness, wherein the rights of every man will be conserved; because the golden rule will be inscribed on every heart, and every man will love his neighbor as himself. The dominion of all will be over the whole earth, and all its rich and bountiful stores of blessing. (Gen. 1:28; Psa. 8:5-8) The kingdom of the world, to be given to the perfected and worthy ones of the redeemed race at the close of the Millennium, is clearly distinguished from all others by being called the kingdom prepared for them "from the foundation of the world," the earth having been made to be the everlasting home and kingdom of perfect men. But the kingdom bestowed upon Christ, of which the church, his "bride," becomes joint-heir, is a spiritual kingdom, "far above angels, principalities and powers," and it also shall "have no end"—Christ's Millennial kingdom, which *will end* being merely a beginning of Christ's power and rule. (1 Cor. 15:25-28) This endless heavenly, spiritual kingdom was prepared long before the earth was founded—its inception being recognized in Christ, "the beginning of the creation of God." It was intended for Christ Jesus, the First Begotten; but even the church, his bride and joint-heir, was chosen or designed also, in him, *before* the foundation of the world.—Eph. 1:4.

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* See The Plan of the Ages, Chapter 8.

* See The Plan of the Ages, Chap. 8, The Day of Judgment.

The kingdom or rule of earth, is the kingdom that has been in preparation for *mankind* from the *foundation of the world.* It was expedient that man should suffer six thousand years under the dominion of evil, to learn its inevitable results of misery and death, in order by contrast to prove the justice, wisdom and goodness of God's law of love. Then it will require the seventh thousand-years, under the reign of Christ, to restore him from ruin and death, to the perfect condition, thereby fitting him to "inherit the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world."

That kingdom, in which all will be kings, will be one grand, universal republic, whose stability, and blessed influence will be assured by the perfection of its every citizen, a result now much desired, but an impossibility because of sin. The kingdom of Christ during the Millennium will be, on the contrary, a theocracy, which will rule the world (during the period of its imperfection and restoration) without regard to its consent or approval.

The brethren of the Gospel church are not the only "brethren" of Christ. All who at that time will have been restored to perfection will be recognized as sons of God—sons in the same sense that Adam was a son of God (Luke 3:38) —*human sons.* And all of God's sons, whether on the human, the angelic or the divine plan, are *brethren.* Our Lord's love for these, his human brethren, is here expressed. As the world now has the opportunity to minister to those who are shortly to be the divine sons of God, and brethren of Christ, so they will have abundant opportunity during the age to come to minister to (each other) the human brethren.

The dead nations when again brought into existence will need food, raiment and shelter. However great may have been their possessions in this life, death will have brought all to a common level: the infant and the man of mature years, the millionaire and the pauper, the learned and the unlearned, the cultured and the ignorant and degraded: all will have an abundant opportunity for the exercise of benevolence, and thus they will be privileged to be co-workers with God. We are here reminded of the illustration given in the case of Lazarus: Jesus only awakened him from death, and then were the rejoicing friends permitted to loose him from his grave clothes and to clothe and feed him.

Further, these are said to be "sick and in prison" (more properly, under ward or watch). The grave is the great prison where the millions of humanity have been held in unconscious captivity; but when released from the grave, the restoration to perfection is not to be an instantaneous work. Being not yet perfect, they may properly be termed *sick,* and *under ward:* not dead, neither are they yet perfected in life: and any condition between those two may be properly symbolized by sickness. And they will continue to be under watch or ward until made well—physically, mentally and morally perfect. During that time there will be abundant opportunity for mutual helpfulness, sympathy, instruction and encouragement, and any failure to assist will mark a lack of the Lord's spirit of love.

Since all mankind will not be raised at once, but gradually, during the thousand years, each new group will find an army of helpers in those who will have preceded it. The love and benevolence which men will then show to each other (the brethren of Christ) the King will count as shown to him. No great deeds are assigned as the ground for the honors and favors conferred upon the righteous: they will have simply come into harmony with God's law of love and proved it by their works. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10), and "God is love." So, when man is restored again to *the image of God*—"very good"—man also will be a living expression of love.

"Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," does not signify a rule independent of the divine law and supremacy: for although God gave earth's dominion to man at first, and designs restoring it to him when he has prepared him for the great trust, we are not to suppose that God intends man to rule it, otherwise than as under, or in harmony with, his supreme law. "Thy will be done in earth as in heaven," must forever be the principle of government. Man thenceforth will rule his dominion in harmony with the law of heaven—delighting continually to do his will in whose favor is life, and at whose "right hand [condition of favor] there are pleasures forevermore." (Psa. 16:11) Oh! who would not say, "Haste ye along, ages of glory!" and give glory and honor to him whose loving plans are blossoming into such fulness of blessing?

Let us now examine the message to those on the left—"Depart from me, ye cursed" (condemned)—condemned as unfit vessels for the glory and honor of life, who would not yield to the moulding and shaping influences of divine love. When these, "brethren," were hungry and thirsty, or naked, sick, and in prison, ye ministered not to their necessities, thus continually proving yourselves out of harmony with the heavenly city (kingdom); for "there shall in no case enter into it anything that defileth." The decision or sentence regarding this class is—"Depart from me into everlasting *fire* [symbol of *destruction*], prepared for the devil and his angels." Elsewhere (Heb. 2:14) we read without symbol that Christ "will *destroy* . . . . him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

"And these [the "goats"] shall go away into everlasting [Greek, *aionios*—lasting] punishment, but the righteous into life eternal [Greek, *aionios*—lasting.]" The punishment will be as lasting as the reward. Both will be everlasting.

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

The everlastingness of the punishment being thus established, only one point is left open for discussion; namely, the nature of the punishment. Take your Concordance and search out what saith the great Judge regarding the punishment of wilful sinners who despise and reject all his blessed provisions for them through Christ. What do you find? Does God there say—All sinners shall live in torture forever? No: we find not a single text where life in any condition is promised to that class.

God's declarations assure us that ultimately he will have a clean universe, free from the blight of sin and sinners,—because "All the wicked will he destroy."—Psa. 145:20.

But while we do not find one verse of the Bible saying that this class can have *life* in torment, or in any other condition, we do find numerous passages teaching the reverse. Of these we give a few merely as samples—"The wages of sin is *death*" (Rom. 6:23) "The soul that sinneth, *it shall die.*" (Ezek. 18:4, 20) "The wicked shall perish." (Psa. 37:20) "Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be." (Psa. 37:10) Thus God has told us plainly the nature of the everlasting punishment of the wicked—that it will be death, destruction.

The false ideas of God's plan of dealing with the incorrigible, taught ever since the great "falling away," which culminated in Papacy, and instilled into our minds from childhood, are alone responsible for the view generally held, that the everlasting *punishment* provided for wilful sinners is a life of torment. This view is held, notwithstanding the many clear statements of God's Word that their punishment is to be *death.* Hear Paul state very explicitly what the punishment is to be. Speaking of the same Millennial Day, and of the same class, who, despite all the favorable opportunities and the fulness of knowledge then, will not come into harmony with Christ, and hence will "know not God," in the true sense and "obey not," he says—"who *shall be punished.*" Ah, yes! but *how* punished? He tells us how: They "shall be punished with *everlasting destruction*" [a destruction from which there shall be no recovery, no redemption or resurrection—Heb. 10:26-29] from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." (2 Thes. 1:9) This destruction is represented in the parable as the everlasting "*fire*" prepared for the devil and his angels: it is "the lake of fire and brimstone," which is the second death (Rev. 20:14), into which the "goat" class of this parable are sent.—Matt. 25:41.

Thus the meaning and reasonableness of this statement concerning everlasting punishment are readily seen when looked at from the correct standpoint. The fire of the parable, by which the punishment (destruction) is to be accomplished, will not be literal fire, for the "fire" is as much a symbol as the "sheep" and "goats" are symbols. Fire here, as elsewhere, symbolizes destruction, and not in any sense preservation.

We might well leave this subject here, and consider that we have fully shown that the everlasting punishment of the "goat" class will be destruction; but we direct attention to one other point which clinches the truth upon this subject. We refer to the Greek word *kolasin*, translated "punishment," in verse 46. This word has not in it the remotest idea of torment. Its primary signification is *to cut off*, or prune, or lop off, as in the pruning of trees; and a secondary meaning is *to restrain.* The wicked will be everlastingly restrained, cut off from life in the second death. Illustration of the use of *kolasin* can easily be had from Greek classical writings. The Greek word for "torment" is *basinos*, a word totally unrelated to the word *kolasin.*

Kolasin, the word used in Matt. 25:46, occurs in but one other place in the Bible, viz., 1 John 4:18, where it is improperly rendered "torment" in the common version, whereas it should read, "Fear hath restraint." Those who possess a copy of Young's Analytical Concordance will see from it (page 995) that the definition of the word *kolasis* is "*pruning, restraining*, restraint." And the author of the Emphatic Diaglott, after translating *kolasin* in Matt. 25:46 by the words "cutting off," says in a foot note:

"The common version and many modern ones render *kolasin aionion* 'everlasting punishment,' conveying the idea, as generally interpreted, of *basinos*, torment. *Kolasin* in its various forms occurs in only three other places in the New Testament: Acts 4:21; 2 Pet. 2:9; 1 John 4:18. It is derived from *kolazoo*, which signifies. 1. *To cut off*, as lopping off branches of trees, to prune. 2. *To restrain, to repress.* The Greeks write—'The charioteer restrains [*kalazei*] his fiery steeds.' 3. *To chastize, to punish.* To cut off an individual from life, or from society, or even to restrain, is esteemed as a punishment; hence has arisen this third or metaphorical use of the word. The primary signification has been adopted [in the Diaglott], because it agrees better with the second member of the sentence, thus preserving the force and beauty of the antithesis. The righteous go to *life*, the wicked to the *cutting off* from life, *death.*—2 Thes. 1:9."

Now consider carefully the text, and note the antithesis, the contrast shown between the reward of the "sheep" and the reward of the "goats," which the correct idea of *kolasin* gives—the one class goes into everlasting *life*, while the other is everlasting *cut off* from life—forever *restrained* in death. And this exactly agrees with what the Scriptures everywhere else declare concerning the wages or penalty of wilful sin.

Consider for a moment the words of verse 41: "Depart from me, ye cursed [once redeemed by Christ from the Adamic curse or condemnation to death, but now condemned or cursed, as worthy of the second death, by the One who redeemed them from the first curse], into everlasting fire [symbol of *everlasting destruction*], prepared for the devil and his messengers [servants]."

Remember that this is the final sentence at the close of the final trial—at the close of the Millennium; and that none will then be *servants* of Satan ignorantly or unwillingly, as so many now are; for the great Deliverer, Christ, will remove outside temptations, and provide assistance toward self-improvement, which will enable all who will to overcome inherent weaknesses and to attain perfection. These "goats," who love evil and serve Satan, are the messengers ("angels") of Satan. For these and Satan, and for no others, God has prepared second death—the everlasting destruction. Fire will come from God out of heaven and *consume them.* Consuming fire and devouring fire all can appreciate, unless their eyes are holden by false doctrine and prejudice. No one ever knew of a *preserving fire;* and as fire never preserves, but always *consumes*, God uses it as a symbol of utter destruction.—Rev. 20:9.

"THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE, WHICH IS THE SECOND DEATH"—Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8

"The lake of fire and brimstone" is several times mentioned in the book of Revelation, which all Christians admit to be a book of symbols. However, they generally think and speak of this particular symbol as a literal statement giving strong support to the torment doctrine, notwithstanding the fact that the symbol is clearly defined as meaning the Second death: "And death and hell were cast into *the lake of fire. This is the second death,*" etc. (Rev. 20:14) It is sometimes spoken of as "a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. 19:20), the element brimstone being mentioned to intensify the symbol of destruction, the second death: burning brimstone being one of the most deadly elements known. It is destructive to all forms of life.

The symbolism of this lake of fire is further shown by the fact that the symbolic "beast" and the symbolic "false prophet," and death and hell [*hades*], as well as the devil and his followers, are destroyed in it.—Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8.

This destruction or death is called the Second death in contradistinction to the First or Adamic death, and not to signify that everything which goes into it dies a second time. For instance, death (the first or Adamic death), and *hades* the grave, are to be cast into it;—this work will require the entire Millennium to accomplish it; and in no sense will they ever have been destroyed before. So also "the devil," "the beast," and "the false prophet," will never have been destroyed before.

From the first, or Adamic death, a resurrection has been provided. All that are in their graves shall therefore come forth. The Revelator prophetically declares: "The sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell [*hades*, the grave] gave up the dead which were in them. . . . And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened." (Rev. 20:13, 12) It was in view of God's plan for redeeming the race from Adamic death that in both the Old and New Testaments it is called a "*sleep.*" In Israel's history of the good and the wicked it is repeatedly stated that they "slept with their fathers." The Apostles used the same symbol, and our Lord also. But no such symbol is used in reference to the Second death. On the contrary, the strongest figures of total and utter *destruction* are used to symbolize it; viz., "fire and brimstone;" because that will be a destruction from which there will be no recovery.

Blessed thought! the Adamic death (which claimed the whole race for the sin of their progenitor) shall be forever swallowed up, and shall cease in this Second death into which it is to be cast by the great Redeemer who bought the whole world with the sacrifice of himself. Thus God tells us through the Prophet, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave [*sheol*]. I will redeem them from death. . . . O grave [*sheol*] I will be thy destruction." (Hos. 13:14) The first or Adamic death shall no longer have liberty or power over men, as it has had for the past six thousand years; no longer shall any die for Adam's sin. (Rom. 5:12; Jer. 31:29, 30; Ezek. 18:2) Thenceforth the New Covenant, sealed with the precious blood, shall be in force, and only *wilful* transgressions will be counted as sin and punished with the wages of sin—death—the Second death. Thus will the Adamic death be cast into and swallowed up by the second death.

And *hades* and *sheol*—the dark, secret condition, the grave, which in the present time speaks to us of a *hope* of future life by God's resurrection power in Christ—shall be no more: for the second death will devour no being fit for life—none for whom there remains a shadow of hope, but such only as, by the unerring Judge, have been fully, impartially and individually found worthy of *destruction.* And Satan, that lying tempter who deceived and ruined the race, and who, with persistent energy and cunning, has sought continually to thwart the purpose of God for our salvation through Christ, and with him all who are of his spirit, "his angels," shall be *destroyed*, and shall never awake from death to trouble the world again. Here he is said to be cast into "the lake of fire."—the second death; and Paul in Heb. 2:14, referring to the same thing, calls it destruction—"that he might *destroy* death, and him that hath the power of death, that is the devil." And "the beast and the false prophet," the great false systems which have long oppressed and misled nominal Christendom, shall never escape from it. These systems are said to be cast "alive" (that is, while they are still organized and operative) into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.—Rev. 19:20.

The great time of trouble, the Lord's judgment, which will utterly destroy these systems, will undoubtedly cause great social, financial and religious difficulty and pain to all those identified with these deceived and deceiving systems, before they are utterly destroyed. These systems will be cast in, destroyed, at the beginning of the Millennium, while Satan's destruction is reserved until its close, when all the "goats" shall have been separated from the "sheep," and they shall perish with Satan in the Second death, as "his angels," messengers or servants. None of these abominable characters among men, who, knowing the truth, yet love unrighteousness—none of "the fearful and unbelieving"—those who will not trust God after all the manifestations of his grace afforded during the Millennial reign of Christ; nor the abominable who at heart are murderers and whoremongers and sorcerers and idolaters and liars: none of these shall escape from the second death, to defile the earth again. All such, after a full and abundant opportunity for reformation, will be judged unworthy of life, and will be forever cut off in the second death, symbolized by the lake of fire and brimstone.

Several prophetic pen pictures of the Millennial age and its work, in chapters 20 and 21 of Revelation, clearly show the object and result of that age of trial, in harmony with the remainder of the Scriptures already noted.

Chapter 20, verses 2, 4, 11, with verses 1, 2, 10, 11 of chapter 21, show the beginning of that Age of Judgment, and the restraining of blinding errors and misleading systems. The "beast" and the "false prophet" are the chief symbols, and represent the organizations or systems of error which, together, constitute "Babylon." This judgment against the "thrones" of the present time, and against "the beast and the false prophet" *systems* follows speedily upon the introduction of this Millennial judgment reign. The thrones of the present dominion of earth will be "cast down," and the dominion transferred to the great Prophet, Priest, King and Judge, "whose right it is." (Compare Dan. 7:14, 22; Ezek. 21:27) Then the systems of error will be speedily judged worthy of *destruction*, "the lake of fire," "the second death."—Rev. 19:20.

Thus the *second* destruction (or death) begins quite early in the new judgment: it begins with the false systems symbolized by the beast, false prophet, etc., but it will not reach the world of mankind, as individuals, until they have first had full trial, with full opportunity to choose life and live forever. Chapters 20:12, 13, and 21:3-7, indicate the blessed, favorable trial in which all, both dead and living (except the church, who, with Jesus Christ, are kings, priests, joint-heirs and judges), will be brought to a full knowledge of the truth, relieved from sorrow and pain, and freed from every blinding error and prejudice, and tried "according to their *works*."

The grand outcome of that trial will be a clean universe. As the Revelator expresses it, "*Every creature* which is in heaven and on the earth . . . . heard I saying, Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever." But this result will be accomplished in harmony with all God's dealings past and present, which have always recognized man's freedom of will to choose good or evil, life or death.

We cannot doubt then that in the close of the Millennial age, God will again for a "little season" permit evil to triumph, in order thereby to test his creatures (who will by that time have become thoroughly acquainted with both good and evil, and the consequences of each, and will have had his justice and love fully demonstrated to them), that those who finally prefer and choose evil may be cut off—destroyed. Thus God will for all eternity remove all who do not love righteousness and hate iniquity.

We read, regarding that testing, that Satan will endeavor to lead astray all mankind, whose numbers will then be as the sand of the sea for multitude; but that many of them will follow Satan's evil example and choose evil and disobedience, with past experience before them, and unhampered by present weaknesses and blinding influences, we need not suppose. However, when God does not tell us either the number or the proportion of those to be found worthy of life, and those to be judged worthy of death (the second death), we may not dogmatize. Of one thing we may be confident, God willeth not the death of the wicked, but would that all should turn to him and live; and no one will be destroyed in that "lake of fire and brimstone" (figurative of utter destruction.—*Gehenna*) who is worthy of life, whose living longer would be a blessing to himself or to others in harmony with righteousness.

That utter and hopeless destruction is intended only for *wilful* evil doers, who, like Satan, in pride of heart and rebellion against God, will love and do evil notwithstanding the manifestations of God's disapproval, and notwithstanding their experience with its penalties. Seemingly the goodness and love of God in the provision of a ransom, a restitution, and another opportunity of life for man, instead of leading all to an abhorrence of sin, will lead some to suppose that God is too loving to cut them off in the second death, or that if he did so he would give them other, and yet other future opportunities. Building thus upon a supposed weakness in the divine character, these may be led to try to take advantage of the grace (favor) of God, as a license for wilful sin. But they shall go no further, for their folly shall be made manifest. Their utter destruction will prove to the righteous the harmony and perfect balance of justice, wisdom, love and power in the Divine Ruler.

Revelation 21:8

The true character of the goat class is portrayed. "The fearful and unbelieving [who will not trust God], the abominable, murderers [brother-haters], whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters [such as misappropriate and misuse divine favors, who give to self or any other creature or thing that service and honor which belong to God], and all liars"—"whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" [in a word, all who do not love the truth and seek it, and at any cost defend and hold it] "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone [*Gehenna*, symbol of utter destruction], which is the Second death." Such company would be repulsive to any honest, upright being. It is hard to tolerate them now, when we can sympathize with them, knowing that such dispositions are now in great measure the result of inherited weakness of the flesh. We are moved to a measure of sympathy by the remembrance that in our own cases, often, when we would do good, evil is present with us. But in the close of the Millennial judgment, when the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall have given every advantage and opportunity of knowledge and ability, this class will be an abhorrence and detestation to all who are in harmony with the King of Glory. And the righteous will be glad when, the trial being ended, the *gift of life* of which these shall have proved themselves unworthy, shall be taken from them, and when the corrupters of the earth, and all their work and influence, shall be destroyed.

THE DEVIL, THE BEAST AND THE FALSE PROPHET TORMENTED

Rev. 20:9 tells of the destruction of those individuals who join with Satan in the last rebellion; and verse 15 tells of that same destruction in other words, using the symbol "lake of fire." They are *devoured* or *consumed* in fire. This being the case, the torment of verse 10 cannot refer to these *human beings* who are consumed, destroyed. Hence the question narrows down to this, Will Satan and a false prophet and a beast be tortured forever? and does this verse so teach?

We answer in God's own words, "All the wicked will he destroy." Concerning Satan, the arch enemy of God and man, God expressly advises us that he will be destroyed, and not preserved in any sense or condition.—Heb. 2:14.

The beast and false prophet *systems*, which during the Gospel age have deceived and led astray, will be cast into a great, consuming trouble in the close of this Gospel age. The torment of those systems will be *aionion*, *i. e.*, lasting. It will continue as long as *they* last, until they are utterly consumed. So also the system of error, which will suddenly manifest itself at the end of the Millennial age and lead the "goats" to destruction, will be consumed. (Rev. 20:7-10) That deceiving system (not specified as to kind, but merely called Satan, after its instigator) will be cast into the same sort of trouble and destruction, in the end of the Millennial age, as the beast and false prophet systems are now being cast into, in the end of the Gospel age.

Rev. 19:3, speaking of one of these systems, says, "Her *smoke* rose up forever and ever." That is to say, the remembrance ("smoke") of the *destruction* of these systems of deception and error will be lasting, the lesson will never be forgotten—as smoke, which continues to ascend after a destructive fire, is testimony that the fire has done its work.—See also Isa. 34:8-10.

Of Rev. 14:9-11 we remark, incidentally, that all will at once concede that if a *literal* worshipping of a beast and image were meant in verse 9, then few, if any, in civilized lands are liable to the penalty of verse 11: and if the beast and his image and worship and wine and cup are symbols, so also are the *torments* and *smoke* and *fire* and *brimstone*.

The casting of death and the grave into utter destruction, the second death, during the Millennial age, is a part of the utter destruction which will include every improper, injurious and useless thing. (Isa. 11:9; Psa. 101:5-8.) The second death, the sentence of that individual trial, will be final: it will never be destroyed. And let all the lovers of righteousness say, Amen; for to destroy the second death, to remove the sentence of that just and impartial trial, would be to let loose again not only Satan, but all who love and practice wrong and deception, and who dishonor the Lord with their evil institutions—to oppose, offend and endeavor to overthrow those who love and desire to serve him and enjoy his favor. We rejoice that there is no danger of this, but that divine justice unites with divine wisdom, love and power, to bring in everlasting righteousness on a permanent basis.

TURNED INTO HELL

"The wicked shall be turned into *hell*, and the nations that forget God."—Psa. 9:17.

This statement of the Lord recorded by the Psalmist we find without any qualification whatever, and we must accept it as a positive fact. If the claims of "Orthodoxy" respecting hell were true, this would be, indeed, a fearful message.

But let us substitute the true meaning of the word *sheol*, and our text will read: "The wicked shall be turned into *the condition of death*, and all the nations that forget God." This we believe; but next, who are the wicked? In one sense all men are wicked, in that all are violators of God's law; but in the fullest sense the wicked are those who, with full knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the remedy provided for their recovery from its baneful effects, *wilfully* persist in sin.

As yet few—only consecrated believers—have come to a true knowledge of God. The world knows him not, and the nations cannot forget God until they are first brought to a knowledge of him. The consecrated have been enlightened, led of the Spirit through faith to understand the deep and hidden things of God, which reveal the glory of God's character, but which, though expressed in his Word, appear only as foolishness to the world.

As we have hitherto seen, this will not be so in the age to come, for then "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9) Much that we now receive by faith will then be demonstrated to the world. When he who has ransomed man from the power of the grave (Hos. 13:14) begins to gather his purchased possessions back from the prison-house of death (Isa. 61:1), when the sleepers are awakened under the genial rays of the Sun of Righteousness, they will not be slow to realize the truth of the hitherto seemingly idle tale, that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man."

We have also seen that the gradual ascent of the King's Highway of Holiness in that age will be possible to all and comparatively easy, because all the stones—stumbling-blocks, errors, etc.—will have been gathered out, and straight paths made for their feet. It is in that age that this text applies. Those who ignore the favoring circumstances of that age, and will not be obedient to the righteous Judge or Ruler—Christ—will truly be the wicked. And every loyal subject of the kingdom of God will approve the righteous judgment which turns such an one *again* into *sheol*—the condition of death. Such an one would be unworthy of life; and, were he permitted to live, his life would be a curse to himself and to the rest of mankind, and a blemish on the work of God.

This will be the *second death*, from which there will be no resurrection. Having been ransomed from the grave (*sheol*) by the sacrifice of Christ, if they die again on account of their own sin, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." (Heb. 10:26) "Christ dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." (Rom. 6:9) The second death should be dreaded and shunned by all, since it is to be the end of existence to all those deemed unworthy of life. But in it there can be no suffering. Like Adamic death, it is the extinction of life.

It is because through sin mankind had become subject to death (*sheol, hades*) that Christ Jesus came to deliver us and save us from death. (1 John 3:8; Heb. 2:14) Death is a cessation of existence, the absence of life. There is no difference between the *conditions* in the Adamic and second deaths, but there is hope of a release from the first, while from the second there will be no release, no return to life. The first death sentence passed upon all on account of Adam's sin, while the second death can be incurred only by wilful, individual sin.

That the application of our text belongs to the coming age is evident, for both saints and sinners go into *sheol* or *hades* now. This scripture indicates that, in the time when it applies, *only the wicked* shall go there. And the nations that forget God must be nations that have known him, else they could not forget him: and never yet have the nations been brought to that knowledge, nor will they be until the coming time, when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and none shall need to say unto his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest of them.—Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34.

The Hebrew word *goi*, rendered "nations" in this verse, is elsewhere used by the same writer and rendered "heathen," "Gentiles" and "people." The thought seems to be,—any who do not become God's covenant people, even though they be not *openly wicked*. The nations (Gentiles, all who under that full knowledge do not become Israelites indeed) who are forgetful or negligent of God's favors enjoyed, and of their duties and obligations to him, shall share the fate of the *wilfully* "wicked," and be cast into the second death.

In further proof of this, we find that the Hebrew word *shub*, which in our text is translated "turned," signifies *turned back*, as to a previous place or condition. Those referred to in this text have been either in *sheol* or liable to enter it, but being redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, will be brought out of *sheol*. If then they are *wicked*, they, and all who forget God, shall be *turned back* or *returned* to *sheol*.

DID THE JEWS BELIEVE IN EVERLASTING TORMENT?

Noting that we teach that the doctrine of everlasting torment was engrafted upon the doctrines of the Christian church during the period of the apostasy, the great falling away which culminated in Papacy, some have inquired whether it does not seem, according to the works of Josephus, that this doctrine was firmly held by the Jews; and, if so, they ask, does it not seem evident that the early Christians, being largely converts from Judaism, brought this doctrine with them, in the very outstart of Christianity?

We answer, No; the doctrine of everlasting torment sprang naturally from the doctrine of human immortality, which as a philosophic question was first promulgated in anything like the present form by the Platonic school of Grecian philosophy. These first affirmed that each man contained a fragment of deity, and that this would prevent him from ever dying. This foundation laid, it was as easy to describe a place for evildoers as for well-doers. But to the credit of those heathen philosophers be it recorded that they failed to develop, or at least to manifest, that depth of degradation from benevolence and reason and pity, necessary to paint, by word and pen and brush, such details of horrors and agonies as were soon incorporated into their doctrine, and a belief thereof declared "necessary to salvation" in the professed church of Christ.

To appreciate the case, it is necessary to remember that, when the Christian church was established, Greece stood at the head of intelligence and civilization. Alexander the Great had conquered the world, and had spread respect for Greece everywhere; and though, from a military point of view, Rome had taken her place, it was otherwise in literature. For centuries, Grecian philosophers and philosophies led the intellectual world, and impregnated and affected everything. It became customary for philosophers and teachers of other theories to claim that their systems and theories were nearly the same as those of the Grecians, and to endeavor to remove differences between their old theories and the popular Grecian views. And some sought to make capital by claiming that their system embraced all the good points of Platonism with others which Plato did not see.

Of this class were the teachers in the Christian church in the second, third and fourth centuries. Conceding the popularly accepted correctness of the philosophers, they claimed that the same good features of philosophy were found in Christ's teachings, and that he was one of the greatest philosophers, etc. Thus a blending of Platonism and Christianity took place. This became the more pronounced as kings and emperors began to scrutinize religious teachings, and to favor those most likely to awe the people and make them law-abiding. While heathen teachers were truckling to such imperial scrutiny, and teaching an everlasting punishment for those who violated the laws of the emperors (who ruled as divinely appointed), we cannot suppose otherwise than that the ambitious characters in the church at that time, who were seeking to displace heathenism and to become the dominant religious power instead, would make prominent such doctrines as would in the eyes of the emperors seem to have an equal hold upon the fears and prejudices of the people. And what could be more to the purpose than the doctrine of the endless torment of the refractory?

The same motives evidently operated with Josephus when writing concerning the belief of the Jews. His works should be read as apologies for Judaism, and as efforts to exalt that nation in the eyes of Rome and the world. It should be remembered that the Jews had the reputation of being a very rebellious people, very unwilling to be ruled even by the Cæsars. They were hoping, in harmony with God's promises, to become the chief nation. Many rebellious outbreaks had occurred among them, and their peculiar religion, different from all others, came in for its share of blame for favoring too much the spirit of liberty.

Josephus had an object in writing his two principal works, "Antiquities" and "Wars of the Jews." He wrote them in the Greek language while living at Rome, where he was the friend and guest successively of the Roman emperors Vespasian, Titus and Domitian, and where he was in constant contact with the Grecian philosophers. These books were written for the purpose of showing off the Jewish people, their courage, laws, ethics, etc., to the best advantage before the Grecian philosophers and Roman dignitaries. This object is covertly admitted in his preface to his "Antiquities," in which he says:

"I have undertaken the present work as thinking it will appear to all the Greeks worthy of their study. . . . Those that read my book may wonder that my discourse of laws and historical facts contains so much of *philosophy*. . . . However, those that have a mind to know the reasons of everything may find here a very curious philosophical theory."

In a word, as a shrewd man who himself had become imbued with the spirit of the Grecian philosophers then prevailing, Josephus drew from the Law and the Prophets, and from the traditions of the elders and the theories of the various sects of the Jews, all he could find that in the most remote degree would tend to show:—

First, that the Jewish religion was not far behind popular Grecian philosophy; but that *somewhat* analogous theories had been drawn from Moses' law, and held by some Jews, long before the Grecian philosophers broached them.

Secondly, that it was not their religious ideas which made the Jews as a people hard to control or "rebellious," as all liberty-lovers were esteemd by the Cæsars. Hence he attempts to prove, at a time when virtue was esteemed to consist mainly in submission, that Moses' law "taught first of all that God is the Father and Lord of all things, and bestows a happy life upon those that follow him, but plunges such as do not walk in the paths of virtue into inevitable miseries." And it is in support of this idea, and for such purposes, evidently, that Josephus, after saying: "There are three philosophical sects among the Jews; first, the Pharisees; second, the Sadducees, and third, the Essenes," proceeds to give an account of their three theories; especially detailing any features which resembled Grecian philosophy. And because the last and least, the Essenes, most resembled the doctrines of the Stoics and leading Grecian theories, Josephus devotes nearly ten times as much space to their views as to the views of both Sadducees and Pharisees combined. And yet the Essenes were so insignificant a sect that the New Testament does not even mention them, while Josephus himself admits they were few. Whatever views they held, therefore, on any subject, cannot be claimed as having Jewish sanction, when the vast majority of Jews held contrary opinions. The very fact that our Lord and the apostles did not refer to them is good evidence that the Essenes' philosophy by no means represented the Jewish ideas. This small sect probably grew up later and probably absorbed from Grecian philosophy its ideas concerning immortality and the everlasting torment of the non-virtuous. It should be remembered that Josephus was not born until three years after our Lord's crucifixion, and that he published his "Wars" A. D. 75 and "Antiquities" A. D. 93—at a time when he and other Jews, like all the rest of the world, were eagerly swallowing Grecian philosophy and science falsely so called, against which Paul warned the church.—Col. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:20.

Josephus directed special attention to the Essenes because it suited his object to do so. He admits that the Sadducees, next to the largest body of Jewish people, did not believe in human immortality. And of the Pharisees' views he makes a blind statement, calculated to mislead, as follows: "They also believe that souls have an *immortal vigor* in them [This might be understood to mean that the Pharisees did not believe as the Sadducees that death ended all existence, but believed in a vigor or life beyond the grave—by a resurrection of the dead], and that under the earth there will be rewards and punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and that the latter are to be detained in an everlasting *prison* [death—not torture], but that the former [the virtuous] shall have *power to revive and live again.*"

Is it not apparent that Josephus has whittled and stretched the views of the Pharisees, as much as his elastic conscience would allow, to show a harmony between them and the philosophies of Greece? Paul, who had been a Pharisee, contradicts Josephus. While Josephus says they believed "that only the virtuous would revive and *live again* [Does not this imply *a resurrection*, and imply also that the others would not *live* again, but remain *dead*, in the great prison—the tomb?]" Paul, on the contrary, says: "I have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."—Acts 24:15.

We have no hesitancy about accepting the testimony of the inspired Apostle Paul, not only in regard to what the Jews believed, but also as to what he and the early church believed; and we repeat, that the theory of the everlasting *torment* of the wicked, based upon the theory that the human soul cannot die, is contrary to both the Old and the New Testament teachings, and was introduced among Jews and Christians by Grecian philosophers. Thank God for the purer philosophy of the Scriptures, which teaches that the death of the soul (being) is the penalty of sin (Ezek. 18:20); that all souls condemned through Adam's sin were redeemed by Christ's soul (Isa. 53:10); and that only for wilful, individual sin will any die the Second death—an everlasting *punishment*, but not an everlasting torment.

CHOOSE LIFE THAT YE MAY LIVE

"I have set before thee this day life and good, death and evil." "I have set before thee life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."—Deut. 30:15, 19.

We come now to the consideration of other Scripture statements in harmony with the conclusions set forth in the preceding articles.

The words here quoted are from Moses to Israel. To appreciate them we must remember that Israel as a people, and all their covenants, sacrifices, etc., had a typical significance.

God knew that they could not obtain life by keeping the Law, no matter how much they would *choose* to do so, because they, like all others of the fallen race, were weak, depraved through the effect of the "sour grape" of sin which Adam had eaten, and which his children had continued to eat. (Jer. 31:29) Thus, as Paul declares, the law given to Israel could not give them life because of the weaknesses or depravity of their fallen nature.—Rom. 8:3; Heb. 7:19; 10:1-10.

Nevertheless, God foresaw a benefit to them from even an unsuccessful attempt to live perfectly; namely, that it would develop them, as well as show them the need of the *better* sacrifice (the ransom which our Lord Jesus gave) and a *greater* deliverer than Moses. And with all this their trial furnished a pattern or shadow of the individual trial insured to the whole world (which Israel typified) and secured by the better sacrifices for sin, which were there prefigured, to be accomplished by the great prophet of whom Moses was but a type.

Thus seeing that the trial for life or death presented to Israel was but typical of the individual trial of the whole world, and its issues of life and death (of eternal life or the second death), may help some to see that the great thousand-year-day of trial, of which our Lord Jesus has been appointed the Judge, contains the *two* issues, life and death. All will then be called upon to decide, under that most favorable opportunity, for righteousness and life or sin and death, and a choice must be made. And, although there will be rewards and "stripes" according to the deeds of the present life, as well as according to their conduct under that trial (John 3:19; Matt. 10:42; Matt. 11:20-24), the verdict in the end will be in harmony with the choice expressed by the conduct of each during that age of trial.

The second trial, its sentence and its result, are also shown in the words of Moses quoted by Peter (Acts 3:22, 23): "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me. Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul [being] which will not hear [obey] that Prophet [and thus choose *life*] shall be *destroyed* from among the people." In few words this calls attention to the world's great trial, yet future. It shows the great Prophet or Teacher raised up by God to give a new judgment or trial to the condemned race which he has redeemed from the condemnation which came upon it through its progenitor, Adam. It shows, too, the conditions of eternal life to be righteous obedience, and that with the close of that trial some will be judged worthy of that life, and some worthy of destruction—the second death.

Our Lord Jesus, having redeemed all by his perfect and precious sacrifice, is the Head of this great Prophet; and during the Gospel age God has been selecting the members of his body, who, with Christ Jesus, shall be God's agents in judging the world. Together they will be that Great Prophet or Teacher promised. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"—1 Cor. 6:2.

The first trial was of mankind only, and hence its penalty or curse, the first death, was only upon man. But the second trial is to be much more comprehensive. It will not only be the trial of fallen and imperfect mankind, but it will include every other thing and principle and being out of harmony with Jehovah. "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing."

The "judgment to come" will include the judgment to condemnation of all false *systems*—civil, social and religious. These will be judged, condemned and banished early in the Millennial day, the light of truth causing them to come into disrepute and therefore to pass away. This judgment comes first, in order that the trial of man may proceed unhindered by error, prejudice, etc. It will also include the trial of "the angels which sinned"—those angels "which kept not their first estate" of purity and obedience to God. Thus it is written by the Apostle of the members of the body of the great Prophet and High Priest, who is to be Judge of all—"Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels?"—1 Cor. 6:3.

This being the case, the condemnation of the Millennial trial (destruction, second death) will cover a wider range of offenders than the penalty or curse for the sin of Adam, which "passed upon *all men*." In a word, the destruction at the close of the trial will be the utter destruction of *every being* and *every thing* which will not glorify God and be of use and blessing to his general creation.

FORGIVABLE AND UNPARDONABLE SINS

In the preceding pages we briefly show the extreme penalty for wilful sin. Adam's penalty, which involved his entire race, was of this sort; and only as the result of Christ's death as our ransom from that penalty of that wilful sin, is any forgiveness of it or subsequent sins possible.

Forgivable sins are those which result from weaknesses incurred through that one Adamic sin which Christ settled once for all. They are such as are not wilful, but are committed through ignorance or weaknesses of the flesh. God stands pledged to forgive all such sins upon our repentance, in the name and merit of Christ's sacrifice.

Unpardonable sins, sins which cannot be forgiven, are such as are wilfully done. As the penalty of the first wilful sin was death—extinction of being—so death is the penalty of every wilful sin against full knowledge and ability to choose and to do the right. This is called second death, in distinction from the first or Adamic penalty, from which Christ's ransom sacrifice will release all mankind.

The "sin unto [second] death," for the forgiveness of which the Apostle declares it is useless to pray (1 John 5:16), is not only a wilful sin but a sin against clear knowledge; a sin for which no adequate excuse can be found. Because it is a sin against clear knowledge, or enlightenment in holiness, it is called the "sin against the holy Spirit" (Matt. 12:31, 32), for which there is no forgiveness.

But there are other partly-wilful sins, which are, therefore, partially unpardonable. In such the temptations within and without (all of which are directly or indirectly results of the fall) have a share;—the will consenting under the pressure of the temptation or because of the weakness. The Lord alone knows how to properly estimate our responsibilities and guilt in such cases. But to the true child of God there is but one proper course to take;—repentance and an appeal for mercy in the name and merit of Christ, the great sacrifice for sin. The Lord will forgive such a penitent, in the sense of restoring him to his favor; but he will be made to suffer "stripes" (Luke 12:47, 48) for the sin, in proportion as God sees it to have been wilfully committed.

Not infrequently a conscientious person realizes that he has committed sin, and that it had some wilfulness in it. He properly feels condemned, guilty before God; realizing his own guilt, and forgetting the fountain for sin and uncleanness, opened by God for our weak, fallen race, he falls into a state of sadness, believing that he has committed the sin unto death. Such wander in deserts drear, until they find the cleansing fountain. Let such remember, however, that the very facts of their sorrow for sin and their desire to return to divine favor are proofs that they have not committed sin unto death; for the Apostle declares that those who commit sin of this sort cannot be renewed unto repentance. (Heb. 6:6) Penitents, then, may always feel confident that their sins were in part, at least, results of the fall, and hence not unto death, but requiring forgiveness and stripes.

Such is the wonderful provision of God, through Christ, for the acceptance of every soul which, forsaking sin and the love of it, seeks righteousness and life through him who is the Way, as well as the Truth and the Life. Thus all, whether naturally stronger or weaker, have an equal opportunity to gain everlasting life as well as to gain the great price of joint-heirship with Christ.

FUTURE RETRIBUTION

While the Scriptures teach that the present Gospel age is the church's Judgment-day or period of trial, and that the world's Judgment-day or time of trial will be the Millennial age, it is nevertheless, a reasonable question to ask,—To what extent will those who are not of the consecrated church be held responsible, in the Millennial age, for their misdeeds, of cruelty, dishonesty and immorality, of the present time? And to what extent will those of the same class then be rewarded for present efforts to live moral and benevolent lives?

These are important questions, especially to the world; and well would it be for them if they could realize their importance and profit thereby. They are important also to the church, because of our interest in the world, and because of our desire to understand and teach correctly our Father's plans.

We have learned that the sacrifice of Christ secures for all mankind, however vile, an awakening from death, and the privilege of thereafter coming to perfection, and, if they will, of living forever. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15) The object of their being again brought into existence will be to give them a favorable opportunity to secure everlasting life, on the conditions which God requires—obedience to his righteous will. We have no intimation whatever in the Scriptures that, when awakened, the moral condition of men will have changed, but we have much, in both reason and revelation, to show that as they went into death weak and depraved so they will come out of it. As there is "no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave" (Eccl. 9:10), they will have learned nothing; and since they were sinners and unworthy of life and divine favor when they died, they will still be unworthy; and as they have received neither full rewards nor *full* punishments for the deeds of the present life, it is evident that just such a time of awakening as God has promised during the Millennium is necessary;—for rewarding, and punishing, and giving to all mankind the opportunity for eternal life secured by Christ's great ransom-sacrifice.

While strictly speaking, the world is not now on trial: that is, the present is not the time for its full and complete trial, yet men are not now, nor have they ever been, entirely without light and ability, for the use of which they are accountable. In the darkest days of the world's history, and in the deepest degradation of savage life, there has always been at least a measure of the light of conscience pointing more or less directly to righteousness and virtue. That the deeds of the present life have much to do with the future, Paul taught very clearly when, before Felix, he reasoned of justice and self-government, in view of the judgment to come, so that Felix trembled.—Acts 24:25, Diaglott translation.

At the first advent of our Lord, an increased measure of light came to men, and to that extent increased their responsibility, as he said: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19) For those evil deeds committed against the light possessed, whether of conscience or of revelation, men will have to give an account, and will receive, in their day of judgment, a just recompense of reward. And, likewise, to the extent of their effort to live righteously: they will receive their reward in the day of trial. —Matt. 10:42.

If men would consider what even reason discerns, that a time of reckoning, of judgment, is coming, that God will not forever permit evil to triumph, and that in some way he will punish evil-doers, it would undoubtedly save them many sorrows and chastisements in the age to come. Said the Prophet, "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" (Isaiah 29:15) Behold, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. 15:3); and "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Eccl. 12:14) He "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."—1 Cor. 4:5.

The age of Christ's reign will be a time of just judgment; and though it will be an age of golden opportunities to all, it will be a time of severe discipline, trial and punishment to many. That the judgment will be fair and impartial, and with due consideration for the circumstances and the opportunities of each individual, is also assured—by the character of the Judge (the Christ—John 5:22; 1 Cor. 6:2), by his perfect knowledge, by his unwavering justice and goodness, by his divine power and by his great love as shown in his sacrifice to redeem men from death, that they might enjoy the privilege of this favorable, individual trial.

The varied circumstances and opportunities of men, in this and past ages, indicate that a just judgment will recognize differences in the degree of individual responsibility, which will also necessitate differences in the Lord's future dealings with them. And this reasonable deduction we find clearly confirmed by the Scriptures. The Judge has been, and still is, taking minute cognizance of men's actions and words (Prov. 5:21), although they have been entirely unaware of it; and he declares that "Every idle ['pernicious,' injurious or malicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36); and that even a cup of cold water, given to one of his little ones, because he is Christ's, shall in nowise lose its reward. (Matt. 10:42) The context shows that the "pernicious" words to which Jesus referred were words of wilful and malicious opposition spoken against manifest light. (Matt. 12:24, 31, 32) He also affirmed that it would be more tolerable for Tyre, Sidon and Sodom in the day of judgment than for Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, which had misimproved greater advantages of light and opportunity.—Matt. 11:20-24.

In the very nature of things, we can see that the punishments of that age will be in proportion to past guilt. Every sin indulged, and every evil propensity cultivated, hardens the heart and makes the way back to purity and virtue more difficult. Consequently, sins wilfully indulged now, will require punishment and discipline in the age to come; and the more deeply the soul is dyed in willing sin, the more severe will be the measures required to correct it. As a wise parent would punish a wayward child, so Christ will punish the wicked for their good.

His punishments will always be administered in justice, tempered with mercy, and relieved by his approval and reward to those who are rightly exercised thereby. And it will only be when punishments, instruction and encouragements fail; in short, when love and mercy have done all that wisdom can approve (which is all that could be asked), that any will meet the final punishment which his case demands—the second death.

None of the world will meet that penalty until they have first had all the blessed opportunities of the age to come. And while this is true of the world, the same principle applies now to the consecrated children of God in this our judgment (trial) day. We now receive God's favors (through faith), while the world will receive them in the next age, viz., instruction, assistance, encouragement, discipline and punishment. "For what son is he whom the Father chastiseth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Therefore, when we receive grievous chastisement, we should accept it as from a loving Father for our correction, not forgetting "the exhortation which speaketh unto us as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Heb. 12:4-13.

How just and equal are God's ways! Read carefully the rules of the coming age—Jer. 31:29-34 and Ezek. 18:20-32. They prove to us, beyond the possibility of a doubt, the sincerity and reality of all his professions of love to men: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?"—Ezek. 33:11.

All who in this life repent of sin, and, as the term repentance implies, begin and continue the work of reformation to the best of their ability, will form character which will be a benefit to them in the age to come; when awakened in the resurrection age, they will be to that extent advanced towards perfection, and their progress will be more rapid and easy; while with others it will be more slow, tedious and difficult. This is implied in the words of our Lord (John 5:29, 30—Diaglott): "The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life [those whose trial is past, and who were judged worthy of life, will be raised perfect—the faithful of past ages to perfect human life, the overcomers of the gospel age to perfect life as divine beings], and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."—These are awakened to judgment—to receive a course of discipline and correction—as the necessary means for their perfecting, or, otherwise, their condemnation to the second death.

The man who, in this life, by fraud and injustice, accumulated and hoarded great wealth, which was scattered to the winds when he was laid in the dust, will doubtless awake to lament his loss, and bewail his poverty and his utter inability under the new order of things to repeat unlawful measures to accumulate a fortune. With many it will be a severe chastisement and a bitter experience to overcome the propensities to avarice, selfishness, pride, ambition and idleness, fostered and pampered for years in the present life. Occasionally we see an illustration of this form of punishment now, when a man of great wealth suddenly loses all, and the haughty spirit of himself and family must fall.

We are told (Dan. 12:2) that some shall awake to shame and age-lasting contempt. And who can doubt that, when every secret thing is brought into judgment (Eccl. 12:14), and the dark side of many a character that now stands measurably approved among men is then made known, many a face will blush and hide itself in confusion? When the man who steals is required to refund the stolen property to its rightful owner, with the addition of twenty per cent interest, and the man who deceives, falsely accuses or otherwise wrongs his neighbor, is required to acknowledge his crimes and so far as possible to repair damages, on peril of an eternal loss of life, will not this be retributive justice? Note the clear statement of this in God's typical dealings with Israel, whom he made to represent the world.—1 Cor. 10:11; Lev. 6:1-7. See also "Tabernacle Shadows," page 99.

As we are thus permitted to look into the perfect plan of God, how forcibly we are reminded of his word through the prophet Isaiah, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet." (Isa. 28:17) We also see the wholesome influence of such discipline. Parents, in disciplining their children, realize the imperative necessity of making their punishments proportionate to the character of the offences; and so in God's government: great punishments following great offences are not greater than is necessary to establish justice and to effect great moral reforms.

Seeing that the Lord will thus equitably adjust human affairs in his own due time, we can afford to endure hardness for the present, and resist evil with good, even at the cost of present disadvantage. Therefore, "Recompense to no man evil for evil." "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 12:17-19; Phil. 2:5.

The present order of things will not always continue: a time of reckoning is coming. The just Judge of all the earth says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay"; and the Apostle Peter adds, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." (2 Pet. 2:9) And, as we have seen, those punishments will be adapted to the nature of the offences, and the benevolent object in view—man's permanent establishment in righteousness.

Other Scriptures corroborative of this view of future rewards and punishments are as follows: 2 Sam. 3:39; Matt. 16:27; 1 Pet. 3:12; Psa. 19:11; 91:8; Prov. 11:18; Isa. 40:10; 49:4; Matt. 5:12; 10:41, 42; Luke 6:35; Rev. 22:12; Rom. 14:11, 12.

LET HONESTY AND TRUTH PREVAIL

Having demonstrated that neither the Bible nor reason offers the slightest support to the doctrine that eternal torment is the penalty for sin, we note the fact that the various church creeds, and confessions, and hymn-books, and theological treatises, are its only supports; and that under the increasing light of our day, and the consequent emancipation of reason, belief in this horrible, fiendish doctrine of the dark ages is fast dying out. But alas! this is not because Christian people generally are zealous for the truth of God's Word and for his character, and willing to destroy their grim creed-idols. Ah no! they still bow before their admitted falsities; they still pledge themselves to their defense, and spend time and money for their support, though at heart ashamed of them, and privately denying them.

The general influence of all this is, to cause the honest-hearted of the world to despise Christianity and the Bible; and to make hypocrites and semi-infidels of nominal Christians. Because the nominal church clings to this old blasphemy, and falsely presents its own error as the teaching of the Bible, the Word of God, though still nominally reverenced, is being practically repudiated. Thus the Bible, the great anchor of truth and liberty, is being cut loose from, by the very ones who, if not deceived regarding its teachings, would be held and blessed by it.

The general effect, not far distant, will be, first open infidelity, then anarchy. For much, very much of this, lukewarm Christians, both in pulpit and pews, who know or ought to know better, are responsible. Many such are willing to compromise the truth, to slander God's character, and to stultify and deceive themselves, for the sake of peace, or ease, or present earthly advantage. And any minister, who, by uttering a word for an unpopular truth, will risk the loss of his stipend and his reputation for being "established" in the bog of error, is considered a bold man, even though he ignominiously withhold his name from his published protests.

If professed Christians would be honest with themselves and true to God, they would soon learn that "their fear toward God is taught by the precepts of men." (Isa. 29:13) If all would decide to let God be true, though it should prove every man a liar (Rom. 3:4), and show all human creeds to be imperfect and misleading, there would be a great creed smashing work done very shortly. Then the Bible would be studied and appreciated as never before; and its testimony that the wages of sin is death (extinction), would be recognized as a "just recompense of reward."

We have given foregoing but a mere suggestion of the light now shining in "due season" for the "household of faith." We invite correspondence from all who "hunger and thirst after *right*." We have *free* tracts, and books to loan to the poor in spirit who are poor also in purse. See page 2.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

The "shaking" of the ecclesiastical "heavens" continues. Dr. Hillis' denunciation of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which as a Presbyterian he has supported for many years, is about as strong as he could make it. He is credited with the following language in his discourse to the Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., on Sunday, March 25:—

"The Confession of Faith says that certain men and angels are foreordained to everlasting death, being particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished, and every young man who enters the Presbyterian church has to solemnly swear to believe and teach this frightful view. And every attempt to revise and expel that statement from the creed has been successfully combated by a majority that wishes to retain the doctrine. It would seem as if a man would prefer to be burned at the stake rather than hold or assert or charge such infinite cruelty upon the all-merciful and all-loving God. The day the scholastics wrote that chapter in the Confession of Faith they got the devil confused with God.

"I would rather shake my fist in the face of the Eternal and fling every vile epithet toward his stainless throne, where eternal mercy sits with the world's atoning Savior, than lift my hand with that creed before God's throne and affirm that I taught or believed it."

The matter is before the Chicago Presbytery, which is divided in sentiment—many of its members averring that they agree to Dr. Hillis' views of the subject. The gentleman proposes to resign his connection with Presbyterianism if the latter objects to his attacks upon it from the inside. The world looks on approvingly, and says, Bravo, Dr. Hillis! But to our view the gentleman has little to be proud of; for, granting that, as he says, he has held privately for years the views he now expresses publicly, it follows that for all those years he lived a lie before the whole world. And if for those years he kept silence because he was making a personal name and fame and following, which he has now attained, it follows that for all those years, according to the gentleman's own words quoted above, he was doing worse than "shaking his fist in the face of the Eternal"—worse than to have "flung—every vile epithet toward God's stainless throne where eternal mercy sits with the world's atoning Savior."

What an astounding confession this is to be sent forth to the world! We are reminded of our Lord's words, "Out of thine own mouth I will judge thee!" And yet this side of the case strikes very few. Why? Because they are in a similar plight, having been for years directly or indirectly upholding this same creed and thus to the extent of their influence (either as ministers and officers or else as common members of churches avowing these creeds) they, too, have been thus blaspheming the Eternal and his stainless throne. Other ministers in Presbyterian churches look with envy at Dr. Hillis' freedom and wish that the time might soon come that they would have sufficient individual influence and prestige to stand alone, that they, too, might declare their independence and cease their blasphemy against the divine character which causes uneasiness, notwithstanding long usage to it and notwithstanding the fact that "others do the same." Added to this is now another fear, that the tide of public sentiment is on the turn—that the pews, if they knew as much as the pulpits respecting such matters, would be much more honest;—and that the risk of jumping out too soon as "reformers," and thus losing prestige and possibly bread and butter, may be offset soon by the reverse risk of not jumping soon enough to get glory as a "reformer" and on the contrary being covered with odium as those who have deceived the people as long as possible.

Surely it would have been much more to Dr. Hillis' credit to have first resigned all relationship to Presbyterianism and then in a very humble manner to have confessed to Plymouth church his shortcomings of the past and his resolution henceforth to preach the truth, or at least his convictions respecting it.

* * *

Rev. Dr. Donehoo, of Pittsburgh, the very next Sunday (April 1st) took a similar stand against the Westminster Confession, which, when ordained, he solemnly vowed that he believed and would teach. Yet, while still posing as a Presbyterian and doing violence to his oath of office, he confessed in the following language, quoted in the daily press, that he has for the many years of his Presbyterian membership and ministry been acting a lie—he confesses he "*never could believe*" what he professed. We quote:—

"The question suggested to me by the text is the following, 'Are men foreordained to be damned?' It is about the bluntest, harshest, most unreasonable one that an unprejudiced reader of the Bible could have presented for his consideration. I am sorry to say that it is one that has been present in my thoughts from my earliest recollection. I have heard it discussed in the pulpit, have read many works on the subject, and have often gravely considered it in private conversation with brethren, tho I have never for one instant had any doubts on the subject so far as I am concerned. Whatever the Westminster divines may have believed on the subject, their language as now understood expresses in unmistakable phrase that such was their belief. Thus they declare: 'By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others are foreordained to everlasting death, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.'

"I never could believe such a thing, and I pray to God to preserve me from ever either unwittingly endorsing or so much as entertaining such an insane thought in my heart. Nor would I refer to this at all were it not just now published all over the land that the great Presbyterian church was about to drag a faithful minister of the gospel to trial for protesting against the idea that any man is foreordained of God to be damned to all eternity. If such a sifting process as that just now hinted at was to be fearlessly put in force throughout the church, and every man who preaches and prays every Sabbath day of his life the very opposite of this horrible dogma, whether he has the brains or the courage to admit it or not, there would be such a depletion in the ranks of the church as would throw St. Bartholomew in the shade."

The gentleman frankly avows that he would have kept quiet still longer, and have continued to tacitly endorse the slander against God had it not been his fear that a hunt for "heretics" might be started in Presbyterian circles. He hopes that a sufficient number of Presbyterian ministers will growl to deter the others from enforcing the laws and rules of the denomination. Yet strange to say, the men who stay inside the denomination and denounce it, and declare their perfidy in respect to its teachings and their unfaithfulness to God's character and Word, are honored; while honest men who refuse thus to stultify themselves and to blaspheme God's holy name for bread and "honor one of another" are disesteemed. After all then the chief fault is with the people;—the preachers merely debase themselves to supply the popular demand. It is time for all who have any moral honesty to show it. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. 18:4.

SELF-DENIAL AND CROSS-BEARING CONDITIONS

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me [*be my follower*], *let him deny himself, and take up his cross."* Matt. 16:24.

Generally the thought attached to this passage in the minds of Christian people is that the Lord is here laying down the terms and conditions upon which eternal torment may be escaped. This result of false teaching, received from earliest infancy, thus casts a false shadow upon very many of the utterances of our Lord and the apostles. To the Jew, however, who had no thought in his mind of eternal torment for anybody, the above utterance would have no such significance. The disciples, to whom it was addressed, received it exactly for what it says. To understand it as they did let us take their standpoint: As Jews they shared the nation's hopes, based upon the Abrahamic promise, viz., that in due time God proposed to bless all nations, and that Israel was to be his instrumentality through which the blessings would flow. We are to remember that based upon this hope all Israel was in expectation of a Messiah whose first work it would be to organize Israel in some sense of the word, and then, as its great Head and Guide, bring to pass the blessed conditions.

The disciples knew that Jesus claimed to be this great Messiah, and they had left all to follow him, in order that they might have a share with him in his kingdom,—according to his promise, a very honorable share in it, a seat in his throne. When, therefore, he addressed them on this subject in the above words nothing could have been further from their thoughts than that he should mean that only those who would conform to these strict rules would escape an eternity of torture: on the contrary, their understanding would be that all who would not conform to these rules, and be close followers of Jesus' example, would fail to share with him in the kingdom glories and honors—fail to be associated with him as joint-heirs of the kingdom. They certainly expected that his kingdom, when organized, would bless all nations, and if it would bless all other nations assuredly it would bless also the Jewish nation, out of which the Master was proposing to select his joint-heirs. From this standpoint our Lord's words are reasonable, and from no other standpoint.

It would be thoroughly unreasonable every way to suppose that the Lord laid down the hard and fast condition that everyone who would not become his follower and a cross-bearer to the full extent of self-denial, even of parents and children if need be, would be tormented on this account, or even destroyed. In fact, we know that the same great Teacher declared, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him," and we see most evidently that but a small proportion of the nations was at that time drawn to Jesus by the Father through the word of grace. We see that the great majority were blinded. How evident, then, it is that our Lord had no reference to the blinded ones who did not become his disciples, but intended his remarks exclusively for the class addressed, whose eyes had been opened and whose ears had been unstopped, and who had become his followers by a consecration. Note the Master's words, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear;"—here is the suggestion that the majority of the Jews did not see and did not hear, and hence had no call to be followers of Jesus in the same special sense; the majority being not even drawn of the Father, not being in a condition of heart to be drawn by the truth.

Note how our Lord refers to this matter, and speaks of the Jewish leaders, saying that they were blind guides, leading the blind people, and all about to "fall into the ditch." (Matt. 15:14) This falling into the ditch seems to those who are deluded by the eternal torment theory, to be but another suggestion that all the Jewish nation, both leaders and people were fast hastening to "hell," to torment. But on the contrary, the Scriptures show clearly that the ditch to which they were hastening was the great time of trouble which came upon their nation after our Lord's crucifixion, and which culminated with the utter destruction of their city by the army of Titus in the year 70 A. D.—since which time they have been nationally disintegrated and destroyed.

That the apostles did not understand that all who did not follow with them in the narrow way of self-sacrifice, self-denial, cross-bearing, were to be tormented, is testified by the Apostle Peter who, speaking under the inspiration of the holy spirit, declared to these same Jews that they had crucified Messiah, and then he adds, "But I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."—Acts 3:17.

This blind ignorance is referred to also by the Apostle Paul: in discussing the matter in his Epistle to the Romans he pointed out that Israel was blinded and did stumble and fall into the ditch, and did not attain the great prize which it was seeking, and that the elect only obtained that prize. He points us to the elect "remnant" selected from the nation before its complete disintegration, and informs us that this remnant, being less than the number which God had predetermined, the elect church, is to be completed during this Gospel age by the selection of the remainder from amongst the Gentiles to be fellow-heirs with the Israelites in the same promise made to Abraham. These are denominated "spiritual Israel," and the Apostle points out that this change in the divine operation was foreknown to the Lord, and was a part of his plan, as revealed through the prophets—that the Gentiles also should be fellow-heirs of the same promise.—Rom. 11:7-12.

The Apostle proceeds to show that the blindness will continue upon fleshly Israel until the Gospel church is completed, and that then blindness will be turned from them, and they shall see; and God's favor shall come upon them, and they will be amongst the first to be blessed under the new order of things following the glorification of the elect church.

With these thoughts in our minds, putting ourselves exactly in the place of the apostles, we are much better prepared to understand the meaning of the Master's words, "If any man will be my follower he must deny himself and take up his cross." The Apostle points us to the same thought, saying that it is only if we suffer with him that we shall reign with him; if we be dead with him, that we shall live with him. The reference is exclusively to those on the "narrow way," and does not at all refer to the world of mankind. The verses following, a part of the same discourse, declare that whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for the Lord's sake shall find it; this also is exclusively applicable to those who had had their eyes opened, and had become his followers, and is not at all applicable to others.

All who become Jesus' followers first take two steps, viz., justification and consecration, or sanctification. Justification is imputed to them as the result of faith in Christ as their Redeemer, and its object is to place fallen sinful human beings on such a reckonedly perfect plane or standing before God as would permit them to present their bodies living sacrifices, "holy and acceptable to God" through Christ. Consecration, self-surrender, sanctification, called in our text self-denial, consists in the giving up of our wills to the will of the Lord: and our wills controlling this implies our all.

This class, having received their share of the ransom, (justification) and having used it, exchanging its hopes of restitution for the heavenly hopes, "heavenly calling," spiritual prosperity and prospective joint-heirship with Christ, have no longer any earthly rights or hopes: hence such must either gain the spiritual life they have started out for or must lose all life. And the terms or conditions upon which the heavenly life is to be attained are the sacrifice of the earthly life and its interests. Therefore, as here stated, in respect to this class, whoever of them saves his earthly life (refusing to sacrifice it, etc.) after having made the consecration, loses it entirely—loses all hope of a future life. And on the other hand, those of this class who are now faithful in laying down the present life for the Lord's sake shall find life eternal under the glorious conditions of the kingdom. "If we be dead with with him, we shall also live with him."—2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

The succeeding verse (26) is a part of the same discourse, not to people in general, but applicable to the disciples, the followers and cross-bearers only, the little flock. It reads: "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul (being, existence), or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul (his future existence)?" We are to remember that only one offer of life eternal has yet been made to mankind; and this was the offer that Jesus was making to his followers, and that has since been made throughout this Gospel age to whoever has ears to hear and a will to walk in the narrow way. There is no offer of eternal life to the world yet, altho the Scriptures clearly show us that there is to be an offer of eternal life under other conditions during the Millennial age; but none can either accept or reject those conditions yet, for they are not offered to any.

Those now invited to eternal life under its most glorious conditions of "glory, honor, immortality," and joint-heirship with the Redeemer in the kingdom are exhorted by our Lord to appreciate highly the value of eternal life; and it is implied that anyone who will at all consider the matter will readily acknowledge that to give all that he has of earthly life and its vanities in exchange for his life eternal would be to get that great boon at a very small price—at a great bargain; We see men who as death draws near, are willing to give their all to retain their hold a little longer on the present life; how much more should we be willing to lay down our lives voluntary sacrifices, in daily self-denials, in sharing the sufferings of Christ in this present time, that we may thereby attain, according to God's good promise in Christ, the glorious and eternal life promised to the overcomers.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CROSS-BEARING?

But now we come back to the original proposition of our text, and inquire particularly respecting the declared terms of discipleship, What do they signify, and how do they apply to us individually in our daily lives? What is it for us to deny ourselves? It signifies that having consecrated ourselves to the Lord we should have no wills of our own; self should be ignored, or, as the Apostle Paul expresses it, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "Reckon ye yourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." Self-denial, then, means to ignore self-will, self-gratification: and this includes all the earthly ambitions and desires, the sinful, and no less those that are laudable and proper. We pledge ourselves at the very beginning that we are not following our own inclinations and our own wills, but are to be wholly subject to the will of our Head, the Lord Jesus, if we may be in turn counted in as members in particular of his body, the elect church.

Very graciously, the Lord vails from our sight at the beginning of the way some of the trials of the flesh and conflicts between the mind of the flesh and the new mind, which this full consecration must involve if we press along the line toward the mark which he has set for us, as the standard of character. Could we see all that is implied from the very beginning of the race we would be disheartened no doubt, but as we grow in grace, and become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, we grow also in knowledge and in love toward the Lord and toward all who are in fellowship with him, and thus it becomes daily easier for us, as we sing,

"... the pathway smooths
Since first we learned to love it."

As a result, by and by the trials which came at first seem to be as nothing, but other trials come instead, as we discern more distinctly, more clearly, the good, the acceptable, the perfect will of God. Thus our trial condition progresses, and what is required of us is that step by step we shall be faithful to what we see to be the Lord's will, and shall seek to the best of our ability to submit ourselves thereto. This is self-denial.—forsaking all else to be Jesus' disciples.

Cross-bearing is closely related to self-denial, and yet a distinction between them may be noted. Self-denial relates more particularly to passive obedience and endurance for the Lord's sake; cross-bearing relates more particularly to activities in the Lord's service, which we find to be contrary to our natural inclinations. Faithfulness in self-denial means courage and zeal; cross-bearing means victory, overcoming. Our self-denials may be victories gained in our own hearts, of which others may know nothing, and of which they should know nothing, if we desire to have the fulness of the Lord's blessing, for we are to make sure that we do not deny ourselves to be seen of men, but merely for the Lord's approval. Our cross-bearings, however, may be seen, to some extent at least, by those who are in close contact with us, and especially by those who are walking in the same "narrow way."

CROSS-BEARERS GENERALLY MISUNDERSTOOD

And how appropriate it is that all cross-bearers should recognize each other, and be able to sympathize with one another, and give an encouraging word, a sympathizing look or a helping hand, as opportunity may offer. As for others, we cannot expect sympathy from them, for from their standpoint we are counted fools (Acts 26:24; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2:14; 3:18), unwise, following an unwise course, bringing our difficulties upon ourselves, because we insist on following an ideal Pattern, the pattern of our dear Redeemer, instead of following the pattern of churchianity and the world. Such, of course, have only sneers for the faithful, and often no doubt think of them as they speak of them, as being hypocrites. This indeed is all part of the cross-bearing, especially when those who deride and who sneer are those whom we love and whose esteem we would enjoy, if we could have it in conjunction with the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Look, for instance, at our Lord Jesus, and the cross which he bore—not the literal cross of wood which he bore to Calvary, amid shame and jeers, but the cross-bearing which he practised continually throughout the three and a half years of his ministry from the time of his consecration at Jordan. Note how faithfulness to the truth, in testifying respecting his mission, the kingdom that he was establishing, and the terms and conditions of membership in it, being misunderstood by the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees, led to opposition continually, so that they not only maligned his name, but in their hatred sought his life and finally obtained it. Note that they were not worldly people, as that word is generally understood, but members of the leading denominations of his day: and that the so-called holiness people of that day were his most bitter assailants. He could indeed have fallen into line with the Pharisees or with the Sadducees, and have been considered "respectable," and have had a large following, but fidelity to the truth would not permit him to do this, but forced him to take a stand independent of all sects and parties, and this brought against him the wrath of all of them, and was his continual and daily cross-bearing, that had to be borne, if he would "overcome" and be granted association with the Father in the kingdom. And may not all of his faithful followers expect similar experiences, under similar conditions now? We think so; we know so; they have such experiences.

The Apostle mentions some of these crosses, and declares that the endurance of them are marks of his faithfulness as a servant of the Lord: "In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings," by dishonor, by evil report, as deceivers and yet true, as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. 6:4-10) How much our Master knew of being counted a deceiver, while yet he was the true one, of being called Beelzebub, while really the Prince of life! What a cross it must have been to endure such slanderous misrepresentations, and contradictions of sinners against himself; and how faithfully he bore the cross. And shall not all of his followers expect to similarly share this cross with him, and be misunderstood, misrepresented, misjudged, by those who are more or less blinded by the adversary! Such dishonor, such evil reports, are amongst the things which our Lord specifically declared would be a part of our cross-bearing when he said, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad (in all such cross-bearings), for great is your reward in heaven."

CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS SHARE HIS CROSS

In a word, our Lord calls upon his disciples to follow him, in direct opposition to the world-current. He declares that the disciple must not expect to be above his Lord in being spared such experiences, but promises great rewards at the end of the journey—life eternal, with exceeding glory.

The awfulness of the teaching of the creeds of Christendom respecting the fate of the world in general is only grasped when we begin to seriously consider the narrowness of the way in which all of the Lord's true followers are called to walk in his footsteps. Surely, if all except such faithful saints, an extremely "little flock," are to be eternally tormented, it would mean that there are to be many members of every family on earth consigned to that awful and unending agony. How absurd is the proposition, how unreasonable, how unscriptural, when the Scriptures are rightly understood!

But how reasonable is the proper interpretation of our text, how reasonable its application to those who have been drawn of the Father to the Son, and who then have accepted of the Son and his great sacrifice for sin, and who have considered it a reasonable service to present their bodies living sacrifices, and have consecrated their all to him, that they might have fellowship in his sufferings, and ultimate fellowship also in his glory. These can see readily that the kingdom honor and glory to which they are called, are blessings so great, honors so profound, and their works as kings and priests and judges in the Millennial age so particular, that all of these testings of faith, patience, love and obedience are wholly reasonable to them.

All such we exhort, especially at this particular season of the commemoration of our dear Redeemer's death, that they catch not merely at the outward form of self-denial, practiced by nominal Christendom during the Lenten season, but that whatever of outward self-denial they may practice they may learn the full meaning of self-consecration and immolation which our Lord's words signify: and that they be not content with the wearing of a cross as an ornament, but grasp fully and clearly the purport of the Master's words respecting the true cross-bearing, that in due time they may also attain to the crown-wearing promised as a reward to the faithful. Let us at this season of the year renew our covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, determined, in the words of the Apostle, that we will more zealously than ever—Lay aside every weight, and every besetting sin, and run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel, looking unto Jesus, in whose footsteps we seek to run.—Heb. 12:1.

CHRIST THE FIRST TO RISE FROM THE DEAD

Mark 5:22-24, 35-43.—April 15.

"He is risen, as he said."—Matt. 28:6.

The selection of the narrative of the awakening of the daughter of Jairus as an Easter lesson was no doubt under the common but mistaken supposition that the miracle performed upon this child was similar to the miracle of our Lord's resurrection, which Easter Sunday generally celebrates. We will examine the lesson on its own merits, and then see that the Scriptures distinctly and pointedly distinguish between the two miracles—and that the miracle performed upon Jairus' daughter is nowhere designated a resurrection, nor was it such in fact.

Jairus was evidently a man of considerable influence in his community, for to be a ruler of the synagogue meant, in the custom of that time, that he was also a member of the local Sanhedrin, the court which tried certain classes of offenders, preserved general order, convened the assembly, etc. The rulers of the synagogue had its affairs in charge also, and invited its readers and speakers, managed the schools in connection with it, etc. As a man of high station in the city, he no doubt was acquainted with the nobleman of the same city (Capernaum), whose son Jesus had healed, as recorded in John 4:46-53. His knowledge of that case no doubt helped to increase his own faith in the Lord's power so remarkably manifested in the circumstances of this lesson.

It was while Jesus was at the house of Matthew (Levi, the publican—see lesson of March 18), enjoying the banquet which Matthew had intended should bring his publican friends in contact with the Master, and probably toward the conclusion of the banquet, that Jairus arrived on he scene to beseech our Lord for the recovery of his daughter. In the account as given by Matthew (9:18) the ruler is represented as saying that his daughter was already dead, while in the account before us the implication is that altho she was in an extreme condition life still remained. The probability is that at the time Jairus left his child she was in an extremely critical condition, and that he surmised that by the time he was talking with the Lord she was quite probably dead—(and such was the case and the servants already enroute to notify Jairus). Quite possibly Jairus mentioned the matter from this standpoint: She was at the point of death when I left her; she is no doubt dead now, but come and lay thy hands on her that she may be healed and live. It was a wonderful exhibition of faith, and one which our Lord evidently fully appreciated, for he did not hesitate to go with him.

It was during this journey from the home of Matthew to the home of Jairus, a great throng of people accompanying him, that the poor woman who had an issue of blood twelve years, and had spent all that she had and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, conceived the thought that if she could but touch the hem of Jesus' garment she should be cured—and by the exercise of her faith in this manner was healed. We can imagine the feelings of Jairus in consequence of this delay; while it added to his faith in the power of Jesus, it at the same time tested his faith in respect to the recovery of his child. The test became more severe, because just at this juncture messengers arrived from his wife, saying that the child was dead, and that it would therefore be unnecessary to trouble the great Teacher.

Similar are the Lord's providential dealings with many of his poeple: he gives us a ground for faith, and then, as we exercise that faith and act in harmony with it, he gives fresh corroboration; meanwhile testing it, by permitting various difficulties, contrary suggestions, doubts, fears, etc.—not only such as would arise in our minds, but such as would be brought to us through others, sometimes those nearest and dearest. Yet our experiences have been that in all such trials of faith the Lord has been ready to speak peace, comfort and full assurance to our hearts, if we would but listen to his words. So it was with Jairus. When the servants arrived, and said, Hope is gone, submit to the inevitable; Jesus also spoke a word, saying, "Be not afraid; only believe." O, how much there is in faith! How necessary God causes that it shall be during this present age. He desires that His people shall "Walk by faith." "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and the Apostle assures us that "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Indeed, in many respects faith (not credulity) is the prime essential of an "overcomer." No one can be an overcomer without it; with it anyonce can be an "overcomer." God's grace in Christ making full provision for all such. Divine promises and blessing are to the faith-full only—both as respects the present and the eternal life.

Jesus when he had come to Jairus' house, permitted only Peter, James and John to accompany him as witnesses of the power of God. The favor manifested toward these three apostles on so many occasions is not to be esteemed as simply a selfish partiality but rather as an indication that these three who were specially zealous amongst the apostles were further advanced in spiritual things, and best able to appreciate the privileges granted them. Their selection was but another manifestation of what our Lord called attention to in one of his parables as being the divine principle of government, viz., that "to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly"—to him that hath used, and profited by divine favor most faithfully, shall proportionately more and larger favors be granted; because he more than others has by his faithfulness become capable of enjoying and appreciating and profiting by additional favors. The Lord evidently loves fervency (warmth) of spirit or disposition. No doubt he appreciates some who are naturally cold and phlegmatic, but just as evidently he appreciates still more those who have a keener interest, a warmer love, and more intense manifestations. Noting our Lord's appreciation of zeal should lead all who are his followers today to strive after greater fervency of spirit, greater zeal and energy in running the race set before us in the Gospel—greater interest in the Master's cause in all its branches.

The journey both ways had consumed considerable time, and the preparations for the burial were far advanced at the time of our Lord's arrival, for it was the Jewish custom to have a speedy burial after death. The hired mourners (whom Matthew designates "minstrels") were already there, and the usual unseemly tumult of the time was in progress. Our Lord rebuked the mourners and spoke of the maid as sleeping, just as he similarly said of Lazarus, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; I go that I may awake him." This aroused the laugh of scorn, his hearers not appreciating what he meant, even as the disciples did not appreciate the word "sleep," when used in connection with Lazarus, until our Lord said plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

The use of the word "sleep" for death is very frequent in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament the patriarchs are said to "sleep with their fathers," and this was said alike of both good and bad, kings and prophets and common people. In the New Testament the Apostle speaks of those that "sleep in Jesus," for whom we are to sorrow not as others who have no hope, because we believe in the resurrection of the dead. In the case of Stephen it is said that he "fell asleep," and the Apostle in speaking of the closing of the Gospel age declared that some of the church would not thus sleep, saying, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (1 Kings 2:10; Acts 7:60; 1 Thes. 4:14; 1 Cor. 15:51). Dr. Lightfoot calls attention to the fact that the Jewish theological writings, the Talmud, contain the expression "when he slept," hundreds of times, as signifying the time of death; and our word cemetery means "sleeping place." Dr. Trench, the noted scholar, says of this word sleep, "Thereby the reality of death is not denied, but only the fact implicitly assumed that death will be followed by a resurrection, as sleep is (followed) by an awakening."

Death would not have been even figuratively called sleep, except for the provision for a resurrection, nor would it have been appropriate had no awakening of the dead been intended. And altho this awakening could not take place wthout a redemption, and altho the redemption price securing the awakening was not paid until Calvary, nevertheless all of God's people who had faith in his promise made to Abraham ("In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed") realized that what God had promised he would surely fulfil, and that since millions of the families of the earth had gone down into death prior to the promise, and before the coming of the Seed of Abraham, therefore the fulfillment of that promise signified a general awakening from the sleep of death for all mankind—in order that all might have the opportunity of being blessed by the glorious Seed of Abraham.

It was from this standpoint that our Lord spoke and acted; he was already, since his baptism at Jordan, in process of paying the ransom—his entire life was consecrated and had been accepted of the Father, altho the sacrifice had not yet been finished, and was not completed until on Calvary he cried in his dying moment, "It is finished." As a result of the finishing of the ransom there, our Lord declared that in due time the prison-house of death would be opened and that all the sleeping prisoners would come forth; he declared, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth;" they that have done well (those now on trial, and approved by the Lord as overcomers) unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill (those who have not escaped the condemnation, nor been approved of God) unto a resurrection by judgment-trial.—John 5:28, 29.)

That judgment-trial will be their blessed opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the truth respecting the divine character and plan, and if they will of coming into harmony with it, and by the development of character during the Millennium reaching full perfection of restitution at its close. Meantime, they sleep—"sleep in Jesus," in the sense that a hope of awakening in the resurrection morning centers in Jesus by divine arrangement, through the atonement sacrifice which by the grace of God, he gave a ransom for all.—1 Tim. 2:6.

Thus we see that the future life held out before us in the Scriptures is a resurrection hope. In harmony with this the Apostle declared, "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question." (Acts 23:6), and again it is declared that his constant theme in preaching was "Jesus and the resurrection." (Acts 17:18) There is no hope of a future life without a resurrection, and there is no hope of a resurrection except in Jesus—that he died for our sins, and thus paid the death penalty which was against us, and thus permitted the wages of sin, death, to become merely a temporary "sleep," from which he will awaken mankind, that they may be blessed under all the great and wonderful privileges of his kingdom during the Millennial age, otherwise in Scripture called the day of judgment, or trial for the world, as this present Gospel age is the day of trial for the church.

When ready, in the presence of his three chosen disciples and the father and mother of the maiden, Jesus took her by the hand, saying, "Talitha cumi." These words are in the Aramaic language spoken by the common people of that time. "Talitha" in the ordinary dialect of the people, is a word of endearment to a young maiden, so that the words are equivalent to 'Rise, my child.' "—Alford.

AWAKENING OF THE DEAD NOT RESURRECTION

The maid awakened to life and consciousness. She did not come back from heaven or from hell, but merely awakened out of the sleep of death, and renewed the experiences of life as before. Such an awakening from sleep—such a restoration of the life forces that had been temporarily suspended, is of the nature of a resurrection, but is not a resurrection. We are to remember that the maiden was not *alive* before—that perfect life has not been enjoyed by any member of Adam's race since father Adam's fall into disobedience and under the divine sentence of death. As the Apostle declares, "In Adam all die," and again, "Death passed upon all," and this maiden was no exception to the rule. Our Lord, in speaking on the subject, implied that none have life in any sense of the word, except those who accept him, and they only in a reckoned sense by faith. His words were, "Let the dead bury their dead." He that hath the Son hath life." As the maiden was therefore legally dead, without perfect life, and without the right to it, before she fell asleep, so likewise, when she awakened, in answer to our Lord's command, she awakened merely to that death condition in which she previously was.

To have resurrected her he would have meant to have lifted her completely out of death in every sense of the word, out of mental, moral and physical degradation, up to the grand heights of perfection of mind and body, as represented in the person of father Adam, and our Lord did nothing of this kind. He merely awakened her, leaving her upon the same plane of death on which she had been born, and had thus far lived for twelve years. The maiden will still have her opportunity of sharing in the general "resurrection by judgments" or restitution during the Millennial age—unless at some subsequent time she accepted the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, and became one of his followers, a member of the church of this Gospel age; in which event she would, if faithful, be accounted worthy of a part in the chief or first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality. But the point we here make is merely that this lesson does not treat of her resurrection, but of her awakening.

In harmony with this is the plain statement of the Scriptures that our Lord Jesus himself, in his resurrection, was "the first fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor. 15:20) Again, the Apostle makes the same point very emphatic in his discourse to Agrippa, saying that all of his preaching was in harmony with the statements of Moses and the prophets: "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead."—Acts 26:23.

These plain statements of Scripture cannot be ignored with impunity by those who desire to be taught of God, and to rid themselves of erroneous theories and speculations respecting the word resurrection. Our Lord's resurrection was indeed the first, and hence the others were not resurrections at all. Our Lord was raised up—clear up—all the way up—out of death—into the full perfection of life. It was not necessary that he should be raised to the perfection of human nature again, for indeed it was the human nature of Jesus that was sacrificed on our behalf—one sacrifice forever—which could never be taken back or rescinded—otherwise it would have meant the repeal of man's redemption—the undoing of the at-one-ment work.

Rather, we are to remember that when our Lord Jesus made his consecration at baptism he was "begotten of the spirit," a spirit being—and that which was begotten of the spirit was in due time "born of the spirit," a spirit being—and referring to this spirit birth, his resurrection, we read that he was "the first-born from the dead." "the first-born among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18) These are additional proof texts to the effect that neither Lazarus nor Jairus' daughter, nor the son of the widow of Nain, nor the young man whom the Apostle Paul awakened, nor Dorcas, whom Peter awakened, nor the child of the Shunnamite woman whom Elisha awakened, were "born from the dead" in any sense of the word, either on the fleshly or on the spiritual plane.

Let us, then, in thinking of our dear Redeemer's resurrection, seek more and more to grasp its greatness, and to realize that nothing of the kind ever occurred before, and that as he was the first-born from the dead, so his "brethren," the church, are to come next in order. Let us remember also that his resurrection to spirit nature is quite a different resurrection from what the world of mankind may ever hope to share—theirs being a restitution resurrection to human conditions, human perfection and life. The higher, chief, or first resurrection which our Lord experienced, is promised as a special reward to his faithful church and to no others. It is this that the Apostle calls the resurrection of the dead, which he describes in 1 Cor. 15:42-44. Our great endeavor, therefore, as followers in the footsteps of Jesus, should be the same that was before the mind of the great Apostle, when he said, "That I may know the power of his resurrection (the first resurrection, to spiritual conditions, glory, honor and immortality), and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made comformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the (special, chief) resurrection of the dead."—Phil. 3:9-15.

THE VOLUNTEER WORK

Since the sending forth of the double number of our journal last issue, the "Volunteer" enlistments have increased wonderfully. The dear friends of the truth everywhere seem to think that if this issue is to be the "ammunition" used by the Volunteers the results will be momentous; hence many are anxious to enlist in the service which promises nothing of earthly fame or reward, but large appreciation by the Captain of our salvation, and large rewards in the world to come.

There are probably as many as a hundred colored brethren on the Watch Tower lists, some of them very clear in the truth, and very earnest in its service, financially and otherwise. We have received letters from several of these, who had intended engaging in the volunteer work, expressing surprise that in the call for volunteers in the March 1st issue we restricted the inquiry to white Protestant churches. They rightly realized that we have not the slightest of race prejudice, and that we love the colored brethren with just the same warmth of heart that we love the white, and they queried therefore why such a distinction should be made in the call. The reason is that so far as we are able to judge, colored people have less education than whites—many of them quite insufficient to permit them to profit by such reading as we have to give forth. Our conclusion therefore is based upon the supposition that reading matter distributed to a colored congregation would more than half of it be utterly wasted, and a very small percentage indeed likely to yield good results. We advise, therefore, that where the Watch Tower literature. is introduced to colored people it be not by promiscuous circulation, but only to those who give evidence of some ear for the truth.

We avoid, so far as possible, putting the pearls of present truth into the hands of the vicious and depraved, whites as well as blacks. Wherever we have reason to believe that people love sin rather than righteousness, we have no desire to remove from their minds any of the shackles which ignorance and superstition have put upon them; rather, we would leave them bound until, in the Millennial age, when these shackles shall all be removed, they will be under the strong hand of a strong governor, who will recompense every iniquity as well as every effort toward righteousness.

Similarly, the exclusion of Roman Catholic churches was not intended as any slight upon the people connected with them, for whom we have only the greatest good will and best wishes. Nor did it indicate that we thought none of the Roman Catholics amenable to the truth, for, on the contrary, there are quite a number of very zealous friends of the truth who were reared in Catholicism; indeed, only last Sunday (April 1st) at our meeting in the Bible House Chapel, four Roman Catholics made public profession of faith in the Redeemer and of full consecration to him, and symbolized it in water immersion. We excluded Roman Catholic churches from the Volunteer service because the vast majority of their attendants are either too ignorant or too bigoted to read and think for themselves. True, much of this would apply also to Protestants; but the percentage of hopefuls amongst the latter is so much greater as to justify, we think, the enormous expense involved in this circulation of free reading matter at the churches throughout this country.

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The volunteer service is open to all of the Lord's dear people, brethren and sisters, white and colored, who have a desire thus to serve the great Captain of our salvation, and to help deliver their "brethren" from the bondage of Babylon into the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free from sectarianism, superstition and every yoke of bondage. Nor do we desire to place this service as a yoke or burden upon any, but as the word indicates, it is only for "volunteers." We believe that the Lord would not have any conscriptions or drafts connected with his service. As to whether or not this is a way in which you can serve the Lord's cause is not for us but for you to decide. We merely give you our opinion, that this is one of the best means of serving the truth—preaching the Gospel of the kingdom—breaking the chains of error that are upon the "brethren"—honoring the name and character of our heavenly Father, and extolling the great redemption accomplished by Jesus our Saviour. It is a "harvest" work, in that it is gathering to the Lord his true people,—gathering them out of the various sects—not into another sect, but into heart-union with the Lord and with all who are at one with him through oneness of spirit, engendered by love of the truth.

WRAPPERS ADDRESSED FOR SAMPLE TOWERS

We are expecting great results from the volunteer service this year, and those who engage in it to any degree will, we believe, look back with great pleasure to their share in it. But regardless of how much blessing may come to others by this service, we are convinced that great blessings are coming to the Lord's people, through the self-denial and cross-bearing which this volunteer service implies. The bringing of our hearts into such a condition of devotion to the Master means a spiritual blessing and a character-development which surely will be great aids in the attainment of the kingdom. However, to his own master each servant stands or falls, and we are to remember not to judge or offend one another, but rather to assist each other.

In harmony with this we are quite willing to co-operate with all the Lord's dear people in whichever of the various methods of serving the truth they may decide to be the most appropriate and best suited to their circumstances, conditions, zeal, etc. We will therefore not restrict this "ammunition" to the volunteer work at the churches, but will supply it freely to others, for use amongst their friends, or in any manner that they may be able to use it. For instance, some have already sent us in numerous addresses of persons whom they have reason to believe might be amenable to the influence of the truth, and others have gotten extras for loaning amongst their friends and neighbors. While these may not be strictly counted in amongst the volunteers, we may consider them a kind of sharpshooters and "guerillas."

Those who wish us to mail samples to their friends direct from our office should write the addresses on wrappers of about the same size we use in mailing the Watch Tower (12 by 8 inches—the address to be written lengthwise of the sheet, and about one and a half inches from the top), and these addressed wrappers should be mailed to us, a postal card accompanying them in explanation. The harvest is great, the laborers are few comparatively, and the wages promised by the Master are enormous—"glory, honor and immortality" to the faithful.

* * *

Your success, and the kind of a reception you receive when circulating the truth, will in many instances depend largely upon your own manner. It is an old saying that "Like begets like," and if you go forth with your hearts full of love for the dear "brethren" whom you seek to serve, and if previous to starting you go on your knees to the Lord to ask his blessing upon yourselves, as his servants, and upon your effort in his service, praying for wisdom, grace and a fulness of his spirit of love, your manner will not be bold and blatant: but kind, courteous, humble, yet withal courageous, for you are there as a brother on the business of the Elder Brother, the King, and have nothing whatever to be ashamed of.

Your mission is both honorable and laudable. It is an appeal, not to the passions and prejudices of the people, but to their intellects and their hearts. This kind of preaching is as honorable as that done from the platform; yea, much more honorable, for many ministers are confessing in public from time to time, and to their shame, that for years they have been preaching, contrary to their consciences, a God-dishonoring, inconsistent, unreasonable and unscriptural message. They have been charging good round salaries for this falsification and defamation, while you, on the contrary, as a true minister of the Lord and the truth, not only serve to others "meat in due season" from the Master's table, but do it with good conscience, and without earthly reward or any hope of name or fame.

EFFECTUAL VOLUNTEER WORK

One dear brother, whose letter appears in this issue, had the "Dawn" in his possession, but was too prejudiced to study it, until he witnessed a "Volunteer distribution" at a church he attended, and saw amongst the Volunteers one whom he recognized as the head of a large mercantile business. He said to himself at once, "There is something real and tangible about the faith of these Christian people, and I must study the literature to find the basis of such self-denial and cross-bearing." He did investigate, and as a result is now a Volunteer himself. He is a man of college education, good natural ability, fills a fine position, and is not ashamed of the Lord, nor of the word of his grace, which has established his own heart and given him a faith and a hope beyond all compare. His present aspirations are, to be humble and faithful until death, and then to be a sharer, a joint-heir with the Lord in his Millennial kingdom, which shall bless the world.

In addition to meekness and love, manifested in look, in word and in act, we advise the dear volunteers to keep a reasonable distance away from church edifices whose congregations they seek to serve. A reasonable distance will, of course, depend somewhat upon circumstances. A quarter or a half block would not be too distant, if thereby the people could be well served. Of course, no one should take offense at a gratuitous distribution of spiritual food directly at the church door; yet experience shows that some do take offense at this, and feel as did the Pharisees of old respecting the Lord's message, when they asked, "Are we blind also?" It is well to avoid arousing prejudice. Our ammunition is not intended to wound, to hurt, to kill, but to do good, to comfort, to inspire with new Christian life and hope.

* * *

We have decided to discontinue the general volunteer circulation of the "Bible versus Evolution" pamphlet, and to use this volunteer number everywhere instead. Consequently all the new recruits to this volunteer service will be supplied with the new ammunition, and the various companies may get together at once and, through one of their number, appointed as secretary or lieutenant, communicate with us, informing us respecting the number of Protestant white churches, and so far as they may be able to judge, the average attendance at each, and the number of volunteers with their names. The Captain-General of our forces is the Lord Jesus, under whose banner alone we are enrolled, and whose cause alone we serve.

"From victory unto victory
His army shall he lead,
Till every foe is vanquished,
And Christ is Lord indeed."

A KIND MASTER, A GOOD SERVANT

LUKE 7:1-10.—APRIL 22.

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."—Psalm 103:13.

Masters and servants in the olden times occupied a much closer relationship to each other than they do today—a relationship which took on more of paternal sentiment. The change has been brought about gradually, and is not the result of great men of today having less heart than great men of the olden times, nor of employees being less faithful than employees of olden times: it is rather the result of changed conditions—the result of greater individuality and independence, which leads the employee to prefer to sell his time and energy on a strictly commercial basis rather than on a paternal basis. Nevertheless, the general influence is unfavorable in many respects: first, because men of great mental power and influence are to some extent under present arrangements cut off from fellowship and sympathy with their employees, and although the class distinctions are not less marked than in the past, nor even as much so, yet class rivalry and animosity is possibly greater than ever.

The employer, under present conditions, feels no responsibility for the employee, since he has made a bargain with him for so much money per day, without additional responsibilities, and the employee feels that having obtained the wage bargained for, and having used it according to his own will, he has no further claim upon his employer in case of sickness or other adversity. However, the system has its good features as well as its bad ones, for it should cultivate independence, self-reliance and prudence; nevertheless, all discern that this division between the interests of masters and servants stands closely related to the great time of trouble which now impends.

The lesson of the healing of the centurion's servant at Capernaum strikingly illustrates the affectionate interest that prevailed between some good masters and their good servants in the past. True, we do not have any record that this servant was a good one, yet the inference is here, because the centurion himself was evidently an orderly man, and such men usually seek for and obtain orderly servants. Furthermore, in his conversation with our Lord he declares that he was accustomed to having his servants do what he bade them.—Verse 8.

The centurion himself was, of course, a Roman—not a Jew. He was, therefore, debarred in a general way from the Lord's blessings, which he declared on another occasion were for the children of the kingdom (Israelites) only, and not for strangers. No doubt because he realized himself as outside Judaism—an alien and a stranger, and foreigner from the covenants and blessings of God bestowed upon Israel. (Eph. 2:12), that he obtained the coöperation of the leading Jews of the city, that they would favor his cause with the Lord, and intercede that his petition might be granted.

We notice the good deeds of this centurion. He evidently respected the religion of the Jews, and had used his wealth in the building of a synagogue, the ruins of which are supposed to have been found recently. Of these ruins Edersheim says, "The remains now, after eighteen centuries, in their richness of elaborate carvings of cornices and tablets, of capitals and niches, show with what liberal hand he had dealt his votive offerings." It is presumed that this miracle preceded the awakening of Jairus' daughter, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that Jairus himself was one of the elders of the Jews who came to Jesus in the interest of the centurion; and this to some extent helps to account for his great faith in our Lord's power to revive his daughter, even though dead.

Our Lord seems to have readily granted the centurion's request; and the fact that it was not presented personally is presumed not to signify any lack of respect, but the very reverse, a realization on his part that Jews were averse to having any dealings with Gentiles, except along strictly business lines. His further modesty and meekness were manifest in the fact that before Jesus had reached his house he sent friends (not servants) to hinder Jesus from defiling himself by coming into a Gentile's house. For altho he was a man of influence and power, he realized the barrier between himself and the Jews, according to which the Pharisees would have considered that they defiled themselves by entering his house. He accordingly suggested that our Lord would merely speak the word, and that he had fullest confidence that the word could be spoken as well outside as inside the house—that one possessing such power as the Lord Jesus manifested had agencies at his command which would not require him to personally see and touch the servant in order to heal him, even as the centurion himself was accustomed to perform various matters through the instrumentality of his servants.

This was a wonderful illustration, both of meekness and of faith, and it was appreciated by our Lord accordingly. There is a lesson in it for all of the Lord's people, to the effect that the more we exercise faith in the Lord along reasonable lines, in harmony with the teachings of his Word, the more he will be pleased with us. This same thing was illustrated in the case of Thomas, who, being absent at the time of our Lord's first appearance to the eleven, declared that nothing would satisfy him respecting the Lord's resurrection except the putting of his fingers into the nail-prints of his hands. Our Lord, while granting him the demonstration which he asked, intimated that he would have had a greater blessing if he could have exercised a greater faith, saying, "(More) blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Let all of the Lord's people remember this, and instead of doubting the Lord's willingness to perform what he has promised, and requiring signs and further evidences and assurances, let us rather rest content that he who has so graciously done for us in the past more than we could have asked or thought is equally faithful today, and will fulfill to us all the good promises of his Word. The more heartily we shall accept his promises, the more fully we shall trust to his gracious providences, the more peace of heart we shall have ourselves, and the more the Lord will delight himself in us as his servants and brethren, and the more he will be pleased to favor us and to use us.

Our Lord's remark: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," was a grand tribute of approval for the Gentile centurion. It distinctly indicates that the fact that the Lord's favor which for over eighteen hundred years had been confined to Israel was not merely because the Israelites were alone worthy, nor because in them alone was found such faith as that on account of which father Abraham was blessed, and the blessing pronounced on his children. But altho the Lord found greater faith in the centurion than amongst others in Israel, nevertheless he could not and did not invite the centurion to become one of his disciples, because "the gifts and callings of God are not things to be repented of," and the divine favor to Israelites must and did continue down to the full end of the "seventy weeks" of favor promised through Daniel, the prophet—altho the national favor ceased three and a half years sooner, in the midst of the seventieth week, five days before our Lord's crucifixion, when he said of that nation, "Your house is left unto you desolate; ye shall see me no more until that day."—Matt. 23:38; Dan. 9:24.

It is certainly within the range of possibility that this centurion, whose good works and alms were so highly commended by the Jews, and whose faith was so highly spoken of by our Lord, might have been removed by Roman authority from Capernaum to Cæsarea, another fortress, and that he may have been the centurion named Cornelius, the first Gentile accepted to the privileges and favors of the Gospel church, at the expiration of the "seventy weeks" of favor confined to the Israelites.—Acts 10:1-35.

One lesson connected with this subject which should specially commend itself to any of the Lord's people who are masters or employers is the lesson of kindness for servants. If a Gentile would be so careful for the interests of his servant, and thus bestir and trouble himself much to secure his release from pain, much more should every true Christian not only feel a kindliness for those who are of the household of faith, but also be disposed to do good unto all men as they may have opportunity. We may be sure that all such evidences of interest in fellow-creatures, all such evidences of the spirit of love and kindness, are pleasing in the Lord's sight; and not only so, but that every time we exercise ourselves along such lines we deepen them and strengthen, confirm and establish character along the lines of love and mercy. This is one of the ways in which we are to develop ourselves more and more as copies of God's dear Son.—Rom. 8:29.

THE DISAPPOINTED PROPHET'S WISE COURSE

LUKE 7:18-28.—APRIL 29.

"He hath done all things well."—Mark 7:37.

While Jesus was performing many miracles, making numerous disciples, and meeting with comparatively little opposition, things were going very differently with his cousin, John the Baptiser. Yet this was only in accordance with what John himself had prophesied, saying, "He must increase, but I must decrease." John was in prison, about 120 miles from where Jesus was laboring so successfully. To be shut up in a dark dungeon of the kind usual at that time, and to have our Lord proceeding with his work, and raising no voice of protest on his behalf, and exercising none of his mighty power for his deliverance, probably seemed very strange to John—especially in view of his expectations respecting the work of the Messiah—that he would be a great earthly general and king, in harmony with the general Jewish expectations.

We see how readily John might have permitted doubts and fears to enter his mind. He might have said, This whole matter is a fraud, and Jesus and I have been deceiving ourselves. He might have lost all faith in God's providential dealings in the past, and all heart and hope for the present and for the future; but notwithstanding the great disappointment he felt, his faith continued its firm hold on the Lord. This is indicated in his sending of his disciples to Jesus, to make inquiry, and also in the character of the inquiry. He does not say, Is this whole matter a farce, and are we deluded? but on the contrary his question was a sound one, and expresses the conviction that thus far the Lord has been leading, and that the only doubt in the prophet's mind was whether or not, as he was the forerunner of Jesus, Jesus in turn, greater than he, might be the forerunner of some one else still greater and yet to come. And strictly speaking, this was exactly the case; for Jesus in the flesh was indeed the forerunner and preparer of the way before the still greater glorified Christ of the second advent, who will accomplish the great and wonderful things foretold by all the holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:21-23.

Our Lord, it will be noticed, did not answer John's question directly—he did not say that there was not another coming and still greater work than that which he was performing, but he did give John to understand distinctly that the work he was then doing was the very work which had been foretold in the prophets, and the proper thing to be done at that time. While John's messengers were with Jesus a number of miracles were performed in their sight, and Jesus sent them back to John with instructions that they bear witness to him of the work of the Lord progressing in his hands, and to say to John that while the opportunities to stumble at Jesus, his work and his words, were many, and while many would stumble at these, as the prophet had declared (Isa. 8:14) yet a special blessing would rest upon all who would not stumble, but whose faith in the Lord would continue, despite various disappointments of expectation respecting his work and their fulfilments—through misapprehension of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan, which, as the heavens are higher than the earth, were higher than human conception could have foreseen. For instance, what Jew could have thought for a moment of the still higher than Jewish expectations of the kingdom—of the spiritual kingdom-class to be selected first before the establishment of the earthly kingdom, and to be sharers with Messiah in his glory, honor and immortality?

All of the Lord's faithful servants need to remember the same lessons which were thus forcefully impressed upon John: they need to remember that when sometimes matters turn out very differently with themselves than what they had expected, when they receive injuries, reproaches and oppression, as the rewards of faithfulness to duty and to truth, it does not mean that God has forgotten them, nor that they were misled in their previous service to the Lord; nor does it mean that the Lord has changed his plan; nor that he is careless or indifferent respecting their condition. True, their first thought should be whether or not present unfavorable conditions are in the nature of chastisements or the results of any misdoings on their part, or failures to serve the Lord in his own way, but if they find their course to be harmonious with the divine will and Word they should at once rest their faith upon the Lord, and conclude that God knows better than they how to manage his own work. Then while thankful to be used in that work for a time they should nevertheless be pleased, if it were the Lord's will, to be set aside for a time—perhaps for the good of others, or perhaps for their own training in the school of experience and in the learning of lessons of patience and of faith.

But such a resting in the Lord, such a centering of life in him, can be enjoyed only by those who have made considerable progress, who have run a considerable distance in the way of the Lord, and who have already been exercised under the Lord's providences, and have learned many lessons in his school. This, however, is the condition which all of the Lord's true followers are to strive to attain, as the only one thoroughly pleasing to the Lord. The proper course of all God's servants when perplexed is the one followed by John, namely, to go to the Lord with the perplexity—not doubtingly, but inquiringly—and be set at rest by his Word. We may not be able to hear the Lord's words with our own ears, but we can receive it second hand as did John—through the testimonies of the apostles and prophets, by whose writings God has provided in advance replies to all proper queries.

The question arises, Was John imprisoned on account of officiousness—on account of trying to mind Herod's business? Or was he imprisoned because of his faithfulness in the discharge of that duty? Was it right or was it wrong for him to reprove the king, and to say to him that it was not lawful for him to take as his wife his brother Philip's wife? There is no question that Herod was in the wrong, and that John's expression on the subject was a correct one, and that Herod was living in adultery, but the question is, Was this any of John's business? Did he need to meddle with the king's affairs, and thus get himself into trouble? And if it was John's duty to reprove Herod on this subject, was it not the duty of our Lord Jesus to have done the same, and in addition to have uttered a protest against the imprisonment of John, and in general to have raised a great hubbub over the injustice being done by the wicked ruler? And if John was right in this matter was our Lord Jesus wrong in not following the same course? Or if Jesus was right in not following John's course in reproving Herod, does it prove that John erred in giving the reproof?

We answer that our Lord's conduct is certainly to be considered as above reproach, since "in him was no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" but this does not prove guile and sin on John's part in following a different course. We are to remember that in many respects John and his ministry differed widely from our Lord and his ministry. For instance, the uncouth skin-girdle which John wore was very different from the seamless robe which the Lord wore; and the Scriptures call attention to the fact that John lived a very abstemious life, "neither eating nor drinking" ordinary food, but practicing a continual fasting or self-denial as respects these comforts, while our Lord Jesus came "both eating and drinking," attended wedding feasts and banquets made in his honor. The lesson is that these grand characters each fulfilled his own mission, according to the divine arrangement, but that they had different missions. John's mission was pre-eminently that of a reprover and reformer, and we are to understand that as a prophet he was supernaturally guided in respect to the various features of the course which he took. Our Lord's mission, on the contrary, was a different one; he was gathering to himself those whom John's ministry served to arouse to righteousness and to zeal to know and do the Lord's will.

We who are called to be the "body" of Christ and to follow him, may learn a lesson in this as respects our proper course: we are not sent forth as John was, to dwell in the wilderness, living and dressing uncouthly, and to criticise and denounce everything and everybody. Some of the Lord's dear people fail to notice that such commissions are special and very rare, and sometimes in following the wrong copy, undesignedly bring reproach upon the Lord's cause. We are to be copies of God's dear Son, our Lord, and not to be copies of John the Baptiser. We are not to stir up strife by trying to mind other people's business, nor to seek to govern all the affairs of this world, reproving emperors, kings, governors, etc., but to the contrary of this are exhorted by the Apostle to remember that what God sees fit to permit we can see fit to endure.

Even tho we find many things which we cannot commend or indorse, we may equally find ourselves able to avoid any special denunciation of them—especially of things which have no bearing whatever upon the proper understanding and fulfilling of the Lord's Word. The Apostle points out our proper position, saying, "As much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." And our Lord emphasized the same thought, saying, "Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called the children of God."

Some of the holiest of the Lord's people err on this subject in their own families, and needlessly arouse prejudice and opposition, and make their homes unhappy, by continually finding fault with things which tho not up to the standard of saintliness and cross-bearing, are nevertheless not immoral or wicked even in tendency. Parents and guardians are surely to guard against all tendencies toward immorality, etc., but to find fault with those they love merely because they are only nominal Christians and have the spirit of worldliness, is certainly unwise. Their general life of peace and joy in the holy Spirit is the very best reproof of worldliness they can give and the best recommendation of the glorious gospel they profess. This is the epistle that will be read, the light that will reprove darkness. In other words, we must not expect from nor try to force upon the unconsecrated the details of our own self-denials. We must wait until they shall see full consecration to be their "reasonable service" and present their bodies living sacrifices to God. Pastors and teachers, however, should seek to keep continually before the Lord's consecrated flock the high Scripture standard, realizing that many influences are continually at work to lower the standard of holiness and devotion.

JOHN MORE THAN A PROPHET

The multitude who stood about must have heard the message which John's disciples brought to Jesus, and no doubt queried within themselves, if not audibly, Is John losing faith in Jesus as the Messiah? If John is a prophet himself, should he not be informed by God on this subject, without sending to inquire of Jesus? Does not this, in connection with the fact that John did no miracles, prove that John was not a prophet, but merely some sort of a reformer, possibly self-appointed? Our Lord seems to have detected such a questioning, and hence after John's discipline were gone, so that his words could not be construed as a sop of flattery to hold John's confidence, he delivered quite a eulogy upon his faithful forerunner, which we paraphrase thus: What did you expect in John—a weak, pliable character, easily swayed by every wind of doctrine and fancy, as a reed is easily swayed by the wind? Those who get such an impression respecting his character are deceiving themselves. On the contrary, he is a prophet, yea, more than a prophet—he is a special ambassador and messenger of God at this present time, to do an introductory work related to the kingdom which I am now preaching. He is referred to by Malachi the prophet (3:1). Indeed, I declare to you that there has never arisen a greater prophet than John, and yet I say to you that the least one in the kingdom-class is greater than he; for he does not belong to the kingdom-class at all, but to the previous dispensation—"the house of servants." "The law and the prophets were until John" (and he is the last of the prophets), and since then the kingdom of heaven is preached, that now whosoever will of this divinely favored nation may press his way and gain an entrance into it and become a son of God.—John 12:1.

Note in the text the clearness of our Lord's words respecting the distinction between the new institution which he was founding and the old institution founded by Moses, and which was then coming to an end, giving place to the new. The Apostle shows that the call of us Gentiles during this Gospel age to a joint-heirship in the kingdom as members of the kingdom-class is because those of the Jews ready to receive the kingdom favor upon the Lord's terms were fewer than the predetermined number. Our call is to fill the places of those "natural branches" of the Abrahamic stock, by being grafted into and made partakers of the original root of divine favor—the Abrahamic promise—to be members of the seed of Abraham, in which as a kingdom-class all the families of earth shall be blessed with certain favors of knowledge and opportunity.—Compare Rom. 11:1-33; Gal. 3:16, 29.

How highly we who belong to the new dispensation should value its privileges and opportunities, and seek to "make our calling and our election sure." (2 Pet. 1:4-11) If those who were called with an earthly calling to be a "house of servants" rendered but a reasonable service when they engaged in the Lord's work zealously, as did John the Baptist, and have been faithful, how much more zeal and energy ought we to put forth who have been favored so much more highly! "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness!" Let us remember that this "high-calling," this "heavenly calling," to joint-heirship with our Lord in the kingdom, is a very special and a very limited call, that it will soon end, and that so far as the divine revelation shows, it will never be repeated. In view of these things let us lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race set before us in the gospel, looking unto Jesus, the author, until he shall have become the finisher, of our faith.—Heb. 12:1.

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THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

Each year seems to add to the interest of the Lord's people in the celebration of the great event which lies at the foundation of all our Christian hopes—the celebration of the death of "Christ, our Passover." Each year the matter seems to be more clearly grasped by a larger number, and correspondingly the solemnity and holy joy proper to the occasion seems to be the more intense, and the overflowing blessing to be more pronounced.

Many of the little companies of the Lord's people who celebrated on the evening of April 12th have responded to our request for information respecting the numbers participating, and the measure of the Lord's Spirit and blessing prevailing. From these reports we judge that the number participating this year was considerably more than last year. Though we have not heard from nearly so many, the totals are larger. We believe, too, from the letters that the meaning of the institution was very deeply appreciated, not only as marking the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, but also as marking the consecration of his people to be one with him in his sacrifice.

The Allegheny church had a most blessed season, about 290 participating. We first reviewed the general meaning of the Passover, as it was instituted with the Jews, tracing the relationship between the typical Passover Lamb and Christ the Lamb of God, our Passover, and saw in the first-born of Israel passed over in that night a type of the church of the first-born, which God is passing over during this Gospel night. We saw that subsequently these first-born ones became the leaders of Israel as a whole, and their deliverers from Egyptian bondage, and we saw that the anti-type of that deliverance will be the ultimate deliverance of all who love God and who desire to serve him, from the bondage of the world and of sin, and of Satan, the antitype of Pharaoh, and that this ultimate deliverance would be during the Millennial age, when "the church of the first-born" ones will be associated with Christ in the Millennial kingdom.

Next we saw how that the Jews had celebrated the type for over sixteen centuries, with no knowledge of the antitype, and yet that in God's due time Christ, the antitypical Lamb, was slain on the very same day of the month that the typical Lamb was slain; and that on the very same day in which he and his disciples met as Jews to celebrate the typical Lamb and the typical passing over, our Lord instituted a new memorial, which would not look back to the type, but to himself, as the antitype. We noted also the appropriateness of the emblems which Jesus choose to represent his flesh and his blood; we saw that unleavened bread most beautifully illustrated the purity, the sinlessness, of our dear Redeemer, and that the cup, the fruit of the vine, represented his sufferings—not sufferings that were grievous, but joyous, endured willingly, gladly, on our behalf, and we rejoiced in these things.

We considered how we were to feed upon the Lord in our hearts while using the bread emblematically—that we could feed upon his flesh in the sense of calling to mind the fact that only through his sacrifice could we have life, only by his becoming our substitute in death could we, as a race, be set free from the condemnation that was upon us through father Adam's transgression. We considered the fruit of the vine, the symbol of our Lord's blood, as the sealing of the New Covenant under which God, through Christ, could be merciful toward our imperfections, accepting our intentions, even though the weaknesses of the flesh might sometimes hinder us from attaining all the desired results.

Then we viewed the matter from the other standpoint—the secondary one mentioned by the Apostle in 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, viz., that the entire church is one loaf, and that it is the duty and the privilege of all who have become members of the one loaf, the one body of Christ, to be broken in the service of the Head and in the service of each other, that thus we might have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings and ultimately be sharers in his glory. We saw that the cup of blessing with which we bless is indeed our communion or fellowship in the blood [sufferings] of Christ, our mingling of our lives with his life, our joining with him in "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." We sought to enter into the very deep meaning of the beautiful symbol, and to have it in our hearts a power of God, leading us to keener appreciation of our dear Saviour, and to a keener devotion as his disciples, to walk in his footsteps.

Then, after a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the living Bread that came down from heaven—for Jesus, who was not a condemned member of the human family, but a specially provided one, suitable to be our Saviour, our Bread, our Life-giver, and for all the blessing which we have through his great sacrifice, we partook of the bread. After this we gave thanks for the cup, acknowledging that we have no righteousness of our own, even though all the past were forgiven, and that we could not hope to stand before God acceptably or to have any dealings with him except under the gracious provisions of the *New Covenant, sealed with the precious blood of Christ. We gave thanks also that by God's grace we have been called to fellowship with Jesus, and told the Lord of our hopes that by his grace we might run our course with faithfulness and eventually be received to joint-heirship with our Master in his glory when we are partakers with him of the joys of the kingdom.

The simple but impressive memorial being ended, it was requested that in order that the solemnity of the hour might abide with us, to our mutual comfort and joy, we should part on that evening without entering into any conversation likely to attract our minds from the precious things which filled them, but rather might, for the hours following, remember the severe trials of the disciples, and the dear Master's trials, and seek to enter into close sympathy with his faithfulness, and to be all the more on guard against the wiles of the adversary, which seems to be so potent at this season of the year. Then singing the first hymn we were dismissed.

An incident which added to our blessing in connection with this service was the fact that our dear Brother Horace A. Randle, who for about twenty years has been a missionary in China, was with us, and took part in the service with evident pleasure to himself and profit to us all. Bro. Randle wrote us in January last that he was about to start on his long journey of 16,000 miles, with the desire and intention to reach Allegheny in time for this Memorial service. He arrived just the day before, and was very warmly welcomed by us all. He addressed us on Easter Sunday, amongst other good things telling us of his great joy in the harvest truth, and of his intense desire to make known the grace of God to all the Lord's dear people, and of some efforts he had already put forth, and some of the fruitage which the Lord had permitted him to see amongst the missionaries of his acquaintance. Yet with regret he told us of how few of the missionaries seem to have any interest in these matters, and how the majority of the responses he received were in the nature of scoffings. We hope that our dear brother will put his address into writing that we may lay it before the larger church some time in the near future.

We have received reports, all of them excellent, from 280 celebrations—from every State of the Union and from Canada. A few of these were from solitary individuals, who had no opportunity of meeting with others, but to whom the Lord granted much blessing, compensating them for their loneliness otherwise. It may be interesting that we give the numbers participating at some of the gatherings reported, as follows:—

Baltimore, Md., 20; Brantford, Ont., 29; New York, 18; Poughkeepsie, N. Y., 16; Washington City, 23; Scranton, Pa., 28; Boston, Mass., 97; Philadelphia, Pa., 55; Toronto, Ont., 37; Tiffin, O., 22; Sippo, O., 19; Youngstown, O., 25; Cleveland, O., 38; Columbus, O., 27; Canton, O., 22; Toledo, O., 28; Wheeling, W. Va., 16; Dayton, O., 16; Indianapolis, Ind., 34; Chicago, Ill., 70; Saginaw, Mich., 18; St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., 23; Weatherford, Tex., 24; St. Louis, Mo., 55; Omaha, Neb., 19; Council Bluffs, Ia., 16; Vanetia, Tex., 16; Los Angeles, Cal., 61; Allegheny, 290.

We are not foolish enough to think that these figures give any occasion for boasting; for the total amounts to only a few over 2,600, and we have every reason to suppose that we have heard from two-thirds of those who celebrated: foreign reports will come later. However, we have every reason to believe that these numbers represent people who not only profess Christ, but who also are seeking daily to live the Christ-life. Moreover, they are full of the Jubilee music, and having heard the joyful sound they are all repeating it far and near. Consequently we expect a much larger showing next year, as others of the Lord's truth-hungry, famished household are found and fed with things new and old now supplied us by our Lord.

Boston reports the largest numbers of immersions preceding the Memorial, viz., 23.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue, for critical examination of Covenants.

KNOWLEDGE INCREASES RESPONSIBILITIES

Matt. 11:20-30.—May 6.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Our Lord would seem to have been somewhat disappointed at the result of his ministry, especially in Capernaum, where he had resided a considerable time, and our lesson opens with a warning to the people of Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida, that having been favored with many mighty works and many evidences of Jesus' Messiahship, and that the kingdom was being offered to them, etc., they would be held correspondingly responsible. As Capernaum had been greatly blessed highly exalted, or, figuratively, "exalted up to heaven" in its privileges and opportunities, the result to it would be greater degradation, and eventually it would be brought low into the dust—destroyed, "brought down to hell," in the text, signifying brought down to hades, the death state. And surely this was fulfilled in the trouble which came upon the Jews, and which destroyed their nationality, as a result of their having failed to accept the Messiah, and the kingdom which he offered to establish.

But though our Lord was disappointed that he was so generally rejected, he cannot have expected that he would be widely welcomed by the people. He must have known, as he elsewhere describes to his disciples, quoting from the prophecies, that he would be rejected by Israel, and that the kingdom offer would pass by them. As a matter of fact his rejection on their part incidentally permitted the sending of the gracious call to the kingdom honors to believers among the Gentiles, and thus we are favored at the present time.

The contrast which the Master draws between Bethsaida and Chorazin and Tyre and Sidon is a strong one. The latter two were flourishing Gentile cities, yet, as was common in such, very full of wickedness and immorality, so that evidently their names were synonymous for that which was unholy, licentious, unclean. So then, for our Lord to say that if his mighty works had been done in those unholy cities they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes, that is, with deep contrition, was to say that the people of Bethsaida and Chorazin were in very much worse condition of heart than those Gentiles: futher from such a condition as God could bless.

From this we may gather that God takes a different standpoint of viewing such matters from that taken by the majority of people. He does not merely say, Is this a moral or an immoral city? Are these people decent or indecent? The question which the Lord would examine rather would be, What is the heart attitude of this people or that people, this individual or that individual? What is he aiming, striving for?—how would he be effected thereby if granted clearer light respecting the divine will? Hence, if we look at ourselves, and find that we are not immoral, not coarse, sensual, brutish, but more refined than many others, this is well; it is what we should be in view of our favors, privileges and mercies; but we are to remember that we might still be very far short of what would be pleasing to the Lord, and that if God should favor us with certain privileges and blessings and opportunities, and we were to reject them, our attitude in his sight might be worse than that of the immoral.

Turning to Capernaum, most favored of all, our Lord contrasts her with Sodom, whose wickedness was very great, so that it brought upon her a fierce destruction from the Lord. Capernaum is clearly told that from the Lord's standpoint of view her people were more wicked, less worthy of divine favor, more worthy of punishment, than the people of Sodom. This was a severe arraignment, and yet, we can see, a just one, for the poor Sodomites, walking in the way of sin, ignorance of God, etc., gradually went down and down, according to the course of fallen nature, while the people of Capernaum had much advantage every way as Jews, whom the Lord had blessed with a knowledge of himself, and to whom now, finally, he had sent Messiah, and whose miracles they had seen repeatedly, and with whose beautiful character and teaching they had been brought much in contact through his considerable residence in their midst.

In view of these privileges and mercies, their rejection of Messiah and failure to grasp their opportunities branded them, so to speak, as being inferior to the Sodomites, in appreciation of righteousness and truth; for our Lord declares that the Sodomites would not have met the end they did had they had similar privileges and mercies bestowed upon them.

The question naturally arises, Why did not our Lord grant the Sodomites as good an opportunity as he granted the people of Capernaum, and why did he not grant the people of Tyre and Sidon, who were still living, as favorable an opportunity as he granted to the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida? We answer, that none of these people were granted a trial for eternal life. The Sodomites did not have such a trial; the people of Tyre and Sidon had no trial of any kind; nor did the people of Palestine have a trial for life eternal. The trial which they did have was a trial respecting their love for the Lord and for righteousness, and of their readiness to be his people and supporters of his kingdom. The result of the trial showed that they were not sufficiently in love with righteousness to appreciate the Lord's kingdom, nor to become its friends and servants; and in consequence of this their city and their land, and they as a people were rejected by the Lord from being his agencies in connection with the establishment of his kingdom.

That no individual trial for eternal life had yet come to any of these people is evident from several facts: (1) that the whole world was under condemnation through Adam's transgression; (2) that no one could be relieved from that condemnation, so as to have a fresh individual trial for life, until the ransom price was paid, and it was not yet finished; (3) this is further implied by our Lord's statement (verse 24) that there would be a day of judgment future—a day of testing, a day of trial, a day to see who would be worthy of eternal life and who unworthy. (Acts 17:31) In that judgment day, the Millennial age, all are to have a chance for everlasting life; for the granting of this very chance to all of Adam's race was the very object of our Redeemer's death. Meantime, the people of Bethsaida, Chorazin and Capernaum, having rejected the Lord and having been rejected by him, he nevertheless found some there and has been selecting others since, of a special class, which he is calling to joint-heirship with himself in that Millennial kingdom, under whose beneficent reign of righteousness a full and impartial judgment or trial for life shall be granted to all. He would have his hearers understand, however, that in that future trial time the people of Tyre and Sidon and Sodom would be treated with more consideration and allowance than those, who having many more privileges, had hardened their hearts against what they did see and know. "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee," Capernaum.

How scathing was the rebuke of these words, that the people of Sodom, notorious for their wickedness, licentiousness, etc., should find more favor, more tolerance, at the Lord's hand, when he should begin the work of judging mankind, than themselves, who had been God's favored people, but who had not appreciated his favors, and had done despite unto his goodness! But if any infer from this that the people of Capernaum, when they shall be on trial for life during the Millennial age, will be unkindly treated, it would be a great mistake; because the declaration of the Lord's Word distinctly is that the world shall be "judged in righteousness"—not in wrath, malice, not with a desire to do them injury, but with a desire to do them every good possible—hence it will be "tolerable" for the people of Capernaum in that day—very tolerable—it will be a grand and blessed opportunity for them to come to a full, clear knowledge of the Lord; but it will be still more tolerable for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sins, although greater in some respects, were less heinous in the sight of God—they were less against character, more sins of ignorance.

We may assume, therefore, that during the Millennial age disciplines, such people as those of Tyre and Sidon and those of Sodom, who had never known God to any degree, who had never known his laws, will be in a condition of heart much more readily amenable to the influences and requirements of that time than will be some others—the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, who having known more respecting God had misused the opportunities of the present life—who broke down their characters instead of building them.

And these are merely ensamples, for we know that all those that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth—"they that have done good [the saints, the overcomers] unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil [all mankind outside of the saints] unto the resurrection of judgment."—John 5:28, 29.

We can readily see, in harmony with our Lord's declaration in this lesson, that many who in the present life have no knowledge and no opportunity may be nothing disadvantaged thereby in that judgment time, but on the contrary, may be more susceptible to the good influences of the kingdom and its laws than some others will be who have had contact with the light to some extent in the present life, but who have refused it. What a blessed promise is this one, of a future judgment or trial! How much it means to the whole groaning creation, that God, who let the sentence of Adam fall on all without giving them an individual trial, has provided a redemption for all from that first sentence, and has provided that each member of the race shall individually have a trial, a judgment, in due time, at the hands of him who died for all. And then, how favorable the conditions are to be, under which that trial will be granted! Satan is to be bound, and the earth is to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord and his goodness and his gracious arrangements on behalf of his fallen creatures, whom he desires shall not perish, but, if they will, have eternal life through Christ.

However, as our Lord distinctly intimates (v. 5), these things respecting the coming judgment and the blessed opportunities which shall be accorded to every member of Adam's race, are hidden from the majority—especially do they seem to be hidden from the worldly-wise and prudent, who instead of accepting so gracious a plan, are rather inclined to teach the people that the poor Sodomites went to eternal torment without ever having had a chance, and with no prospect of ever having a chance in the future, although our Lord declares that if they had had as good an opportunity as the people of Capernaum they would have repented with a deep contrition. The wise and prudent are inclined to tell us also that the people of Tyre and Sidon, although not favored with our Lord's blessing, are also to be considered doomed to eternal torment, though they would have repented had they had as good an opportunity as the people of Palestine; and finally they tell us that these people of Palestine, having rejected our Lord, must necessarily be sufferers of eternal torment, and not merely losers of the kingdom. They fail to see; they are blind to the truth—blinded by the traditions of their religious teachers—as the Jews were.

Then, to add to their confusion, they begin to attempt to apply the Lord's words respecting a day of judgment, and of course interpret it to mean a day of damnation, instead of a day of trial. They fail to note that their claim is that the Sodomites were already in hell, suffering torments of the severest form for nearly two thousand years, at the time our Lord uttered these words. Do they think that the Sodomites could suffer any more after the day of judgment than they describe them as suffering now? What do they understand by the words "day of judgment," anyway? Evidently they have no proper conception of the meaning of the words. They see that our Lord referred it to a future time, and they are hopelessly confused and thoroughly unable to give any reasonable explanation of the matter, either in harmony with God's character or in harmony with their own wretched and God-dishonoring theories.—See Dawn, Vol I, page 137.

How comforting are our Lord's words, that these things are revealed, nevertheless, to some—to babes, to those who are not great, not wise, according to the course of this world; to those who are of humble mind, ready to be taught of the Lord, instead of wishing to teach the Lord. This great blessing, dearly beloved, is ours, and let us be very careful that we maintain the attitude of childlikeness and simplicity, that we may continue to be taught of God, and to "know the things that are freely given unto us of God." Let us rejoice in them and use them, and let the light shine out to others. The explanation of the fact that the divine plan is hidden from the great majority of the learned, the doctors of divinity, etc., is that so it has pleased the Father to let "the wise be taken in their own craftiness," and to reveal his purposes to those of an humble mind. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (1 Cor. 3:19) The Father drew to the Son at the first advent, not the doctors of the law, the scribes and the notables, but certain "Israelites indeed," in whom was no guile, though they were but an humble few. And the same class has received the blessing all down the age.

The Master realized that his special instructions must be toward those whom the Father had given unto him, rather than toward the unready and unwilling ones who would not receive his testimony because not in a proper condition of heart to appreciate. To his faithful disciples, therefore, and to all of the same class since, he declared that all things he possessed he had received of the Father; he claimed nothing of himself; and further, he asserted that no one knew him truly, fully, intimately, but the Father, and that no man knew the Father except himself, the Son, and he to whom the Son revealed him. The average reader gets very little meaning out of this passage at first. The Christian who has been making progress for years, growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord, can appreciate it much better. He realizes that while he had some knowledge about Jesus and about the Father at first, from the very inception of his Christian experience, yet it was a different matter to come to know the Father and to know the Son in the intimate sense, in the sense of becoming well acquainted with them, knowing their mind as one knows the mind, the heart, of an intimate friend. It is a privilege to receive such an acquaintance. It is not to be had by everybody; it requires seeking for and knocking for, and such seeking and knocking implies an earnest desire to have an intimate fellowship and communion. Such a growth in grace should be earnestly sought by all of the Lord's true followers who seek to be his joint-heirs in the kingdom; for without it they cannot make progress. In proportion as we know the Father and know the Son we will love them and seek more and more to do those things which are pleasing in their sight.

COME! WEARY AND HEAVY-LADEN

Still addressing the same class, and implying that there were some present of the right disposition who had not yet become his disciples, our Lord appealed to his hearers individually, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The difficulty with most of the people would seem to have been that they were neither weary nor heavy laden, but on the contrary pretty well self-contented. We cannot suppose that physical weariness and physical burdens was the thought before our Lord's mind, but rather the heart-burden and sin-weariness, which all true Israelites must have felt, if they were honest with themselves.

We are to remember that they were under the Law Covenant, that its requirements were very exacting, and that it made no allowance for weaknesses, imperfections, errors, etc.; consequently, all of those Jews should have felt themselves continually condemned in striving to carry the burden of the Law of Sinai. Not that the law was an unjust one or impossible to be kept by a perfect man, but because all being imperfect and fallen they were unable to keep the Law Covenant. So we may suppose that amongst the Jews at that time, while the majority were professing to be holy, law-keepers, who did no sin, there were some who honestly admitted to themselves and to others that they did not, could not, keep the law perfectly, and who therefore felt burdened and wearied with their fruitless endeavors. Such felt their need of a burden-bearer, such felt their soul-sickness and need of the good Physician, and to such Jesus addressed himself, inviting them to come to him and receive rest, relief.

This coming to Christ for rest is the first step toward a Christian life; it is justification, the acceptance of him as the satisfaction for our sins; and from the time we thus accept him, as the Apostle declares, we have joy and peace through believing. (Rom. 5:1; 15:13) But having been thus received and blessed, there is something more for us to do, viz., to learn that there is another burden and another yoke which we should take upon us voluntarily.

A yoke is a symbol of servitude, and so our Lord implies that those who are set free (either from the yoke of the Law Covenant, as were the believing Jews, or from the yoke of Satan, as were the believing Gentiles) should become his servants, should take his yoke, should learn to do his will. A yoke generally is arranged for two, and our Lord speaks of it as his yoke, by which we are to understand that he also is a servant; having come to do the Father's will, and having put on the yoke of servitude, he invites us to become true yoke-fellows with himself in the doing of the Father's will, co-laborers together with Christ in the great work of the world's deliverance from sin and death.

The secret of the ability to wear this yoke, and to have companionship with Christ in his service, and to have as a result a great blessing in our own hearts, a rest unto our souls, lies, he explains, in our learning to be meek and lowly of heart as he was. It will be impossible for those who are proud, haughty, self-willed, ambitious, worldly-wise, etc., to labor in the same yoke with Jesus, or to find the true rest of soul which we properly seek. But if we are meek, teachable, humble-minded, ready to know and to do the Lord's will at any cost, then indeed we shall find rest to our soul's satisfaction—the peace of God which passeth all understanding will rule in our hearts.

We notice a difference between the two rests of vs. 28 and 29. Of the first it is said that the Lord will give it to him who comes to him in faith; of the second, it is said that he finds this rest to his soul through becoming a yoke-fellow with Jesus. And so it is: there are two blessings; the first blessing is that of justification—the joy of having our sins forgiven, realizing ourselves no longer strangers and foreigners from our heavenly Father, but brought nigh by the blood of Christ; the second is the joy which comes more gradually, a fruitage, a grace, a development in the heart, the growing and abiding peace and joy of the holy spirit. This second blessing, however, is attained by very few; the majority of nominal Christians know nothing of it; and yet it is the very object of the calling of this Gospel age, and those who fail to come to the Lord and to take his yoke, and to learn of him, to become thus "copies of God's dear Son," will fail utterly of the special purpose and call of this Gospel age, and will have neither part nor lot in the kingdom. The blessing of justification by faith is merely to fit and prepare us to take the yoke and to become a co-laborer with the Lord in the Father's service.

This yoke which Jesus invites us to come under with him is a very formidable affair from the standpoint of the world; to them it seems to be a most unreasonable yoke, a most terrible burden—to consecrate life, time, means, everything to the service of God; but from the standpoint of those who have come unto Jesus, and to whom he has spoken peace and rest through justification, the matter is very different. To such it must seem a "reasonable service," that since the Lord has graciously redeemed our lives and our all, we should use what remains of that life to his praise and glory; and after we have fastened the yoke upon ourselves we find that it is an easy one, and that with it any burden, any duty, any trial, any difficulty, any vexation of spirit, any burden of any kind that could come to us, would be light indeed, because of this yoke.

Why? Because those who wear this yoke have the assurances of the divine Word, that all things are working together for good to them; that the heavier the burden that may be attached the greater will be the blessing and the reward by and by; the more severe the experiences during the present time, the brighter shall be the glory, and the brighter shall be their character and the more sure shall they be of being fitted and polished for the heavenly kingdom. From this standpoint every burden is light, because our yoke is appreciated, and is so easy, so reasonable; and additionally it is so light because the Lord is with us in this yoke. He is the great Burden-bearer, and will not suffer us to be tempted nor to be pressed with more of the burdens of life than we should probably be able to endure. He is watching out for the interests of all those who take his yoke upon them. Their burdens are his burdens, their trials are his trials, their interests are his interests: yea, all things shall work for good to them because they love him.

Let us remember, however, that the Lord takes no slaves in this way; he does not fasten the yoke upon any; he merely invites us to come, and then to fasten his yoke upon ourselves, to make a full consecration of ourselves to him and to his service.

TWO TYPES OF SINNERS

Luke 7:36-50.—May 13.

"Thy faith hath saved thee."

Simon was a very common name amongst the Jews, and hence it is not so remarkable that there were two Simons at whose homes Jesus was entertained. It is a little peculiar, however, that there are so many features of similarity connected with the two entertainments—that at both of them our Lord's feet were anointed, etc. (Compare Matt. 26:6-13) It is supposed that about a year and a half elapsed between the two events, that recorded by Matthew being just prior to our Lord's death, "anointing for my burial."

In this lesson we see Simon, a Pharisee, evidently considerably impressed with our Lord's character and teachings, and more favorably inclined toward him than the majority. He thought it would be pleasant to invite Jesus to dinner, thus to honor him, and possibly have a little notoriety himself in connection with the noted Nazarene.

When our Lord accepted the invitation and attended the dinner Simon treated him kindly and politely, but did not go to any extreme of politeness in his entertainment; perhaps thinking of him as not being used to special attentions, but rather as being a companion of fishermen and common people generally. Simon therefore did not salute him with a kiss on his arrival, as was usual with honored guests, for that would have seemed like bestowing too much honor upon an ordinary person whom he, as a Pharisee, was not yet prepared to fully endorse; nor did he send the servant to take off the Master's sandals and to wash his feet, according to the custom of the best entertainers of that time. He may have said to himself; This man and his disciples are not used to being entertained in such style, and my servants would recognize themselves as being on a par at least with any of these men except the Teacher himself. Without, therefore, going to the extremes of polite entertaining, the Pharisee had nevertheless cordially welcomed the Lord to his table, feeling no doubt that in doing this he was honoring the Lord, and not sufficiently realizing that he was the one who was being honored, in the privilege of entertaining so noble a guest. How will Simon regard the matter when, in the resurrection time (during the Millennium), he ascertains that his guest was "the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth?"

The Apostle urges upon us all, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels [God's messengers] unawares." The Lord wishes his people to be generous with such things as they have (but not to be vaingloriously extravagant), hence it is written again, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth: and there is that withholdeth more than is meet [proper] and it tendeth to poverty." It is a part of our present lesson to learn of our own mean selfishness, which all have inherited through the fall, and gradually, under the instruction of the Lord's Word, to get the victory over this and become more generous—more like our Father in Heaven.

Let us be specially generous and hospitable toward the "brethren," who really represent the Lord himself; not only as "ambassadors for God," but also as "members of the body of Christ."

The "woman of the city" mentioned, was evidently a common character, widely known to the people of the city, though she might not be known to Jesus and the disciples, who were not residents. Whatever the woman's previous life may have been, she had experienced deep contrition of heart, and a desire to live a better life. She had heard about Jesus, the great Teacher, and that unlike the Pharisess he did not disdain to speak with and to encourage fallen ones and to help them up again. She felt that she would like to go to the Lord in prayer for forgiveness, and would like to make a fresh start in life, to seek thereafter to live more consistently. She knew not how to approach the matter; she knew not what to say respecting herself; she would merely take a little offering in her hand, and while he was reclining at dinner, after the custom of that time, and while his feet would be easily accessible to her, she would venture to anoint them with the fine ointment which she had brought with her. Saying not a word, her heart too full for utterance, she reached the Master's feet, and there her tears trickled over them. By her tears he should know, more eloquently than she could voice her sentiments in words, what were the true longings of her heart for forgiveness and for reconciliation.

How merciful and considerate of our needs, is the Lord's provision that when we come penitently to his feet for forgiveness we are not required to approach him through another, nor to formulate our petition in some exact form of language —he can read our hearts and accepts our tears and even our humblest efforts to make amends and to serve the "members of his body." And even though he may delay the message of forgiveness it is but to let the roots of penitence and faith sink deeper in our hearts.

Jesus for a time seemed to heed her not, and she may have questioned whether or not he was misunderstanding her motives and her prayer, but the fullness of her heart found vent in still more tears, and tenderly she wiped his feet and anointed them with the ointment. The Pharisee, meantime, was saying within himself: Now it is most fortunate that I invited Jesus to dinner to-day, and it is fortunate that this woman came in; it affords a proof, a test, respecting the ability of Jesus to read the hearts of those about him. If he were a prophet, if he were specially empowered and enlightened of God, he would have known the character of this woman; but he evidently does not know her character, and therefore is permitting her to anoint his feet, and this seems to be a proof that he is not a prophet.

But Jesus, fully conscious of all that was going on, and with a clear knowledge of the heart of the poor woman at his feet, and of the self-satisfied Pharisee who entertained him, was planning a way by which he might do good to both of them—a way by which he might set before all present a great truth. Therefore he put a parable to Simon, saying that a certain creditor had two debtors, the one owing a large amount, the other a small amount, and when they were totally unable to pay he cheerfully and promptly forgave them both. Then our Lord pointed his lesson on this little parable, by enquiring which of the two forgiven ones would be most appreciative of the creditor's leniency? Simon, who had not as yet caught the import of the parable, promptly answered that the one who had the largest debt forgiven would undoubtedly be the one who would be most appreciative, and our Lord approved this answer. Then directing attention to the woman, he reminded Simon that although he had been kind in inviting him to dinner, and although he appreciated his attentions, nevertheless the still greater attentions of the woman, and the still greater marks of respect which she had showed, were evidences that while they both loved, the woman loved the more; and the intimation clearly is that the greater love was developed by a greater realization of sin and a greater desire to be relieved from it.

Of course, in one sense of the word, all are sinners, all have come short of the glory of God, and are hopeless without forgiveness; yet the Pharisee occupied a different position from the woman, because under the Jewish Law Covenant he was already occupying a standpoint of typical justification, and was seeking to maintain that standing by living a life of strict regard for the divine Law. On the other hand, the woman, although under the same covenant, by living an abandoned life in open violation of the law, had lost her interest in the national typical justification, and was therefore in a much larger sense of the word a sinner. Simon knew very well that while he was trying to keep the law he was not keeping it perfectly, but infracted it in various ways from time to time, and yet he was not wilfully an infractor of the Law, as was the woman; hence in this sense of the word there was the wide difference between great sin and less sin; yet both needed the Saviour, and if the Pharisee had realized the truth of the matter he needed the Saviour just as much as did the woman; for the Law Covenant could not give him everlasting life—to attain that he must admit his sin and accept forgiveness and salvation from sin and its penalty, death, as a gift from the Saviour who honored him by consenting to be his guest.

Then Jesus turned to the woman and said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven." What words those must have been to her! Her prayer was answered—a prayer, which had arisen in her heart, and which had expressed itself through tears and ointment, had been heard and she was forgiven and all the past treated as forever blotted out. How thankful she must have felt! Poor Simon, however, so far as we know, did not come to the point of saying, Lord, I also am a sinner, and even though I have loved less than this woman I also need to be forgiven, and I pray for the forgiveness of my sins, that I may be counted one of your followers. No; the very fact that he had a religious standing in the nominal church, and had made a profession of holiness, seems to have stood in his way, and to have hindered him from accepting the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins. And so it is right along. How frequently do we see that people who have been living moral lives, evidently seeking to walk in paths of righteousness, are much less prepared to accept forgiveness through the Lord Jesus Christ than are some others who have been living more carelessly and who awaken to a realization of their undone condition, and go to the Lord more contritely and more earnestly, and exercise a greater faith, and feel for him consequently a greater love!

There is no intimation, however, that because of his failure to ask forgiveness and to become a follower of Jesus, Simon was condemned to "hell," etc.; quite to the contrary, he simply followed the course of his nation (blinded by prejudice and false traditions of men). Their rejection of Jesus lost to them the privileges of joint-heirship in Christ's kingdom, and led to their national rejection from God's favor until the opening of the Millennial age. Then, as the Apostle clearly shows, their blindness shall be removed and they shall be blest with a much clearer knowledge of the truth. Then the Lord will "pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, and they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and shall mourn because of him." Then when they weep as did the woman with the ointment, God, through the glorified Christ, will have mercy on them and forgive their sins. Then their trial for everlasting life will begin.—See Rom. 11:25-32; Zech. 12:10.

The other guests at the table were particularly struck with our Lord's declaration that the woman's sins were forgiven her. Not recognizing the speaker to be the Messiah, the Son of God, they questioned the propriety of such words, but this was one reason why our Lord uttered the words; it was one of his unostentatious methods of calling attention to the fact that he was the Messiah, and that as such, and in view of the work which he was yet to do all power to forgive sins was in his hands.

Then he said to the woman, "Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace." He wished her to know that it was not her tears that had brought the forgiveness; that it was not the value of the ointment that had moved him to forgive her, but that the thing which was pleasing in his sight, and on account of which her sins were forgiven, was her faith. She not only realized her own sinful condition, but she had realized that this great Teacher had the power to forgive her and to restore her, and she had trusted, and acted upon this, and our Lord wished her to realize that the reward she had received was because of exercise of this faith. And so we may realize in respect to all of the Lord's favors in the case of each one of his people. When we come unto the Lord, with tears of penitence, we are to know that they do not prevail; and if we present gifts we are to know that they do not prevail, and that the tears and the offerings could avail us nothing except as we present to the Lord our faith, accepting him as the one who has power to forgive sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And not only is this necessary at the beginning of the Christian way, but similarly faith is necessary all the journey through. If we do not continue in faith we cannot progress. "According to thy faith be it unto thee," would seem to be the Lord's method of dealing with all who are his disciples, from first to last of their Christian walk and experience.

The center of the lesson, then, is abiding faith in the Lord: faith when he seems not to notice us; faith when things seem to be going prosperously with us in our spiritual affairs and in our temporal affairs and faith equally strong when the currents and forces seem all to be against us. The victory that overcometh the world is the faith that in all conditions is able to look up to the Lord with absolute confidence in his goodness and faithfulness, and to realize that according to his promise eventually all things will work together for good to us because we are his people.—1 John 5:5; Rom. 8:29.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

MATT. 13:1-8, 18-23.—MAY 20.

"The seed is the word of God."—Luke 8:11.

Jesus and his disciples had just returned to Capernaum, his home, from a tour of Galilee, and the multitudes, many of whom had heard him before and witnessed his miracles, gathered about him as he sat on the beach of Lake Galilee, assuredly expecting that they would hear some gracious words from his lips. And the Master never seemed weary of presenting his message, although frequently, as in this case, the mass of his hearers understood but dimly his parables. There was a fishing-boat lying near, quite possibly owned by some of his friends or relatives, and evidently with the owner's consent Jesus used the boat as his pulpit, speaking to the multitude which lined the beach, which at this point is said to rise rapidly, and which therefore would give the general effect of an amphitheatre. A traveler once made an experiment, to see how well the voice would carry under such circumstances, at this spot, and says, "It was remarkable how distinctly every word was heard, though our voices were not raised, even at three hundred yards off; and it was very easy to comprehend how, in this clear air, a preacher sitting in a boat could address a vast multitude sitting upon the shore."

The Master had no difficulty in finding a topic. Quite possibly his eye rested on a seed-sower, and as a result we have this parable, designed to show that there are different classes of hearers, and that it is not merely the eloquence or force or truthfulness of the message that determines the result, but chiefly the attitude of the heart that hears; hence the importance of the injunction, "Take heed how ye hear"—see that your heart is in a right condition to receive the truth, if you would expect a benefit from it; do not expect that the mere hearing of the truth will profit you, irrespective of your own character conditions.

The good seed of the parable is the Word of God, the truth, even as false teaching, human philosophies and doctrines of devils, are not wheat-seed but tare-seed; our Lord is not showing in this parable what will be the result of sowing good or bad seed, but merely that the good seed can accomplish its work only in certain classes of hearts.

The class of heart that is like the "wayside," solid and compact with selfishness, not open and generous, is very unfavorable ground for the truth; nothing need be expected from such ground. The sower will let as little as possible fall on such, but whatever does fall upon it the Adversary will soon take away. "Wayside" hearers are not necessarily bad people, in the sense of grossly wicked, but they are bad in the sense of being unsuited to the Lord's present work and call. They will need to have the furrow run through them again and again, that troubles of various kinds may make them more generous, more open, more ready for the message. But in many instances the Lord will not run the plowshare of truth through such soil in this present age; rather, he will leave it for the Millennial age, when he will be dealing, not only with these hearts that were partially prepared and which have become unsuitable, but when also he will have a work to do with the great masses of mankind, which, like the virgin forests and prairies of earth, are yet uncleared, unplowed and unbroken. The great time of trouble at the beginning of the Millennial age will be a time, we believe, in which the Lord will run the plowshare of truth in every direction throughout the world, as it is written, "The plowman shall follow close after the reaper." (Amos. 9:13) And, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9), and thus be prepared for the new sowing time of the new age, under circumstances more favorable in some respects than the present, though less favorable in other respects.

Another class upon which the same good truth falls at the present time is one that has a good appearance upon the surface—fine soil, etc., but underneath, and but a few inches from the surface, is rock. The soil on the surface is but a veneer to hide the rock; it has the appearance of depth of character, sympathy and love, but this is merely a deception. Civilized customs have popularized at least an outward imitation of the graces of the holy spirit, and appearances of good heartedness, but down below in the real heart and intention is selfishness, that would merely follow the ways of righteousness because of popularity or because of some hoped-for gain, but thoroughly unable to appreciate self-sacrifice for anything or anybody. This class of shallow characters sometimes receives the truth with avidity, with joy, and seems to contain some of the truth's most enthusiastic followers; but this is merely for a little while, because of novelty or pride to show off, and not from love of the truth. The selfishness which is the substratum of their character will not permit them to endure hardness for the truth's sake. Consequently, as soon as they find that with the truth always goes something of persecution and tribulation they are surprised, thoroughly disheartened, and all their interest speedily dies out. This class has no hope for the kingdom either. They are not of the kind that the sower expects will yield a crop to maturity in the present harvest.

The third class of hearers favored by the truth in this present time is referred to by our Lord as "thorny ground." This does not mean poor ground, for the thorns are to be found in the very best of ground, especially the thorns of Palestine, to which our Lord undoubtedly had reference. Of these Prof. Thomson says, "These thorns are not briar bushes or brambles, but are an after-growth of a variety of thistles, which come up quickly in every wheat-field of Palestine." We may say, then, that every Christian who receives the wheat or word of God into a good and honest heart during this Gospel age is in danger of having it choked with the thorns, and of thus becoming one of the class referred to in the parable, a class that was favored, that had every advantage, but which brought forth no crop worth gathering, because the thorns took possession of it to such an extent as to choke out the wheat-seed.

We have heard Christian people describe the thorns which threaten the good seed in the hearts of God's people to be theaters, card-playing, carousals, etc., etc., but this is a great mistake; the hearts that are beset with such things are probably not good ground in any sense of the word, and probably have never received the good seed. But how reasonable is the interpretation which our Lord himself gives—the thorns are the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches—just exactly what every Christian realizes. The cares of this life are not gross immoralities, but the home duties, family cares, business cares, etc. The deceitfulness of riches is not merely the baneful influence which is exercised upon those who possess riches, but especially it represents the snares, the difficulties, the entanglements, the misleadings of efforts to become rich. How many Christian people can testify that their spirituality, their love for the Lord and for the truth and for the kingdom have been choked in great measure by wealth-coveting and wealth-seeking! How many can testify that the cares of this life have crowded out their fellowship with the Lord, and the power of his word in their hearts, and how as a result their lives are barren, unfruitful of anything in the way of character development, service of God and for the "brethren" and others.

What can such as realize that thorns are growing in their hearts and choking the Word of the Lord do to get rid of them? How can they overcome this difficulty of permitting the cares of this life to absorb their time, their talents, their influence? How can they get rid of the false allurements and attractions of riches? How can they become fruitful toward God in good works, in riches of grace in their hearts and characters, in riches of the knowledge of the divine Word and plan?

It is a difficult matter to get rid of these thorns, if they spring up and get well under way after we have received the wheat, and it will probably be a slow and tedious business to root them out; and one in which we could not hope at all for success by ourselves, unaided. All such must go to the Lord himself for the aid which he alone can give, and the method and process by which the Lord will assist them will be in the transforming of their minds so that they will mind not earthly things but heavenly things, set their affections on things above, not on things beneath, set their affections upon true riches of the divine nature and high calling, instead of on earthly riches, which are but transitory and unsatisfactory, even if attained.—Matt. 6:19-21.

And the way to effect this transforming of the mind, this uprooting of the thorns, is to draw time and attention away from the earthly things in a compulsory manner, limiting the time that we will give to earthly things, and devoting more and more time to spiritual interests in our own hearts and in the hearts of our families and friends. This will mean more time for the study and practice of the truth; and as the truth comes in it will be found to be the sanctifying power of God which alone can uproot the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, and keep our hearts in the right attitude to bear much fruit to our Master's praise.

The "good ground" hearers are those whose hearts are in good condition, ready for the word of the Lord, plowed and furrowed by experiences. This class free from thorns, is ready to bring forth an abundant harvest, and yet even of this class all may not yield the same amount of fruitage to our Master's sowing, for he represents that some will bring forth thirty, some sixty and some an hundred fold. He does not speak slightingly of those which bring forth but the thirty fold, but leaves it to us to discern that those who bring forth the hundred fold are the most pleasing in his sight. We have much to do with this matter of the amount of fruitage which we yield to the Lord; it will be measured by the degree of our zeal, our love for him; consequently the class bringing forth the hundred fold represents those Christians who love the Lord the most fervently, whose hearts are warmest for him, his truth and his people. The Apostle Paul was undoubtedly one of this hundred-fold class, the Apostle Peter was another, and no doubt there have been many in humble positions unknown to fame, whose love for the Lord, and zeal for his cause have been counted to them as hundred fold return for every seed of truth they received. Let us each with more and more care seek to bring forth much fruit, and as one means to this end to keep down the thorns and everything that would choke or hinder the influence of the truth in our hearts, in our daily lives, and in our words. Let us cultivate the seed and not the thorns.

THE MESSAGE OF THE KINGDOM

Luke says, "The seed is the Word of God"; Matthew says, "The word of the kingdom." Our Lord no doubt used both expressions—the good seed is God's word or message of the kingdom. Indeed, the message of the kingdom may be said to be the only message God has yet given to mankind as a message of hope. He intimated the kingdom to Abraham when he promised him that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed; the intimation was that Abraham's seed should be blessed by being granted kingdom powers which should prove a blessing to the world at large. Israel, at the time of this parable, was hoping to attain this very promise.

All the promises through the prophets pertain to the kingdom, the time when it shall be established, the blessings which shall flow from it to the uttermost parts of the earth, when all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, when righteousness shall flourish throughout the world, and when sin and sinners and Satan himself will be subjected to the powers of righteousness, in the hands of the Messiah. At the time of the utterance of this parable the seed, word or message of the kingdom had taken on a special form, viz., an invitation to some to become joint-heirs with the Messiah, the heir of the kingdom.

Whoever has never heard anything about the kingdom has never heard anything about the Gospel, for it is the "Gospel of the kingdom," as our Lord declared. Hence we see that much of the preaching of eternal torment and other things falsely called the Gospel of the kingdom, are delusions which are not of God, not his word, not the good seed that would bring forth the good fruit. The false messages have brought forth "tares" in abundance. This good seed of the kingdom it is that rightly received into a good heart cannot be easily choked with earthly hopes or ambitions—for the kingdom hope is above all, grand, pre-eminent, soul-satisfying. The kingdom hope is as an anchor to the soul, and does not permit the cares of this life to seem large and to crush it out. On the contrary, to honest hearts which have received the good seed of the kingdom the cares of this life are merely incidental trials which are to be overcome, that thereby character may be formed, much fruit brought forth, to the Lord's praise, and a share in the kingdom atained. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself," and bringeth forth much fruit.

NEWS FROM THE "BRITISH BRANCH"

You will all be glad to learn of the safe arrival of Brother Henninges and wife at their destination. A "pilgrim" trip to the principal centers of interest was made while word was sent to the home office respecting the British postal laws, etc., bearing on the work proposed to be done there. Much interest was found at various points and the friends of the truth, we may well hope, were edified and enthused.

We were surprised and rather disappointed to find that British postal laws are much less favorable than our own. However, the Lord pointed out to us (we believe) a manner of adapting our work to the laws as they stand which we doubt not will accomplish a great work there this year. At all events we have resolved to try it for the remainder of this year at least (D. V.) and accordingly an office will be opened at once and soon as possible the address will appear in the WATCH TOWER. We have prepared over four tons of reading matter for shipment, part of which has probably already reached London, and the remainder is now on the ocean.

The following from London will be interesting:—

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—You did not overestimate the matter which in your last you termed a "pleasant surprise" for British brethren. Bro. Henninges' visit to us is indeed a joyful privilege and to hear him set forth things "new and old" is a pleasure that words cannot describe. We certainly feel that there is scope for much work on the lines that our brother has come over to adopt, if the way be made plain to him by the Lord.

Of course it is not for us to urge or push this matter unduly, however much we feel it would gratify us, but this we can offer, that if the Lord makes plain the way to you and him our sympathies can then take practical form. These are my personal feelings, but I know I am only voicing those of many of our dear brethren here. It would have done your heart good to have seen the little gatherings of glad faces at the last four or five meetings; to feel the warm, sympathetic hand-grasps and the cheery, honest words of encouragement and the earnest God-speeds given to our dear Bro. Henninges and his dear wife. Not but that we always have joy in meeting together and great joy indeed, but this joy seems a super-added one—a joy abounding.

We give thanks to our Lord that he has made you such a channel of blessing to us, and we pray that our eyes and hearts may be anointed and that we may be given that discerning spirit which discriminates between that which harmonizes with and that which militates against our Father's revealed plan. So with the boldness and assurance born of sad experience we can confidently approach our Father's throne with requests according to his will.

If there are any suggestions from you to us as to how we may aid in this present scheme for additionally helping our English brethren we shall be glad to hear from you. In the meantime we are one with you in this Gospel of the kingdom, in unity of spirit, in the bond of love and in righteousness of life. Yours in our present Lord,

Bro. and Sister Guard.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

ABOUT MAGNETIC—HYPNOTIC CURES, ETC.

Question.—The world is full of aches and pains, diseases, and naturally we look about us for relief. You have already expressed your judgment that the cures effected by Christian Scientists and Spiritualists are probably produced by improper spiritual influences, although exercised to some extent at least in harmony with natural laws. I desire now to inquire respecting cures by hypnotism, and still other cures by so-called magnetic healers. What shall we think of these, and will it be proper for the Lord's consecrated people to avail themselves of such means for attaining health?

Answer.—We feel suspicious of magnetic and mental healing. In our judgment they in many instances are allied with or related to hypnotism; yet it is particularly difficult to draw the line here, because we all know that there is such a thing as a legitimate mental influence which we all exercise upon one another, favorably or unfavorably. We know, for instance, that hope and faith, love and joy, are healing and helpful influences, and that doubt and despair, anger and malice, are injurious influences whether exercised by our own minds upon our own bodies, or upon others. In this proper sense of the word every child of God possessing the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, is a mental healer, and a heart healer, a wound healer; wherever he or she may be, the influence will be uplifting, comforting, strengthening to good impulses. If therefore the Lord's consecrated ones visit the sick, their presence should be a refreshment, comforting, cheering and helpful, and so much the more if they carry in their hearts and communicate with their lips the exceeding great and precious promises of our Father's Word. With this much of mental healing we are most thoroughly in accord.

But Christian Science, Mind Healing and Magnetic Healing, running upon this same line, seem to us to carry it to an extreme—in the case of Christian Science to the extreme of lying to oneself and believing the lie, and thus gradually becoming a liar, self-deceived and deceiving others in respect to all of life's affairs. We cannot believe that any course so opposed to that which the Scriptures mark out can be of God, nor can we believe that the cures it at times effects are either natural or of God; we can only suppose, therefore, that the Adversary favors this lying and deceiving process to the intent that he may beguile the mind through further lies and deceptions far from God and the truth.

Magnetic Healing is more on the order of hypnotic healing; that is to say, the magnetic healer gains a control over the mind of his subject which is somewhat akin to the control gained by mesmerists and hypnotists, and akin to the spirit control of spiritualism over its mediums. We can have no sympathy with anything of this kind, for even if we were satisfied that the power of control was merely a human power and not a Satanic one (and we are not satisfied of this), we cannot feel that it is right for one human being to subject his mind, his will, to another, when the evidences prove that every such subjection decreases his will power and places the subject more and more in the position of a slave or machine, subject to the influence or control of others—breaking down his personality.

The Lord's people are admonished to make such a submission of their minds to the Lord, and no one else; and we are confident that the Lord will take no advantage of us under such conditions, to rob us of any good quality. On the whole, then, we urge all of the Lord's people to be on guard against mind healers, magnetic healers, etc., especially where, as in the case of Christian Science the mind is to be given up to believe a lie, or in the case of hypnotism, it is to be given up or subjected entirely to another. Our minds are our greatest possession, and are to be given only to the Lord and to each other as directed by the Word of the Lord; and if we cannot have health without violating these principles, we can afford to be without the health for the few more days that remain under the present conditions, knowing that by and by, if faithful to the Lord, we shall have the perfect resurrection bodies promised.

WHO IS BORN OF GOD?

Question.—In 2 John 5:1 we read, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Does this signify that we are begotten of the spirit at the same moment that we are justified through faith?

Answer.—No; the Apostle, in the words quoted, is not attempting to give the complete philosophy of salvation, that being given in other parts of his own testimony, and that of the other apostles. He is discussing the condition of a believer who has not only been justified through faith, but who, continuing to be a believer, is acting upon that faith and the Lord's call which comes to the justified, and who, in harmony with that justification and call, has presented himself a living sacrifice to the Lord, and has been begotten of the holy Spirit. He is still a believer, must always continue to be a believer, must always continue to maintain his faith, which is the foundation of his reckoned new nature in Christ.

The word here rendered "born" should be rendered "begotten;" it is the same word in the Greek as the word rendered "begotten" following it in the same verse.

Numerous Scriptures show us that our condition as sinners is such that we cannot be begotten of God through his holy spirit until after we have been justified through faith. As sinners we were "children of wrath even as others," and were "called to repentance" (but not called to the "high calling"): as repentant sinners we are pointed to the Lord Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life, by whom alone we can return to harmony with the Father. When we accept Christ as our Saviour and his sacrifice as our ransom price we are justified by faith—reckonedly perfected—and have peace with God, and realize that we are no longer children of wrath, aliens, strangers and foreigners, being brought nigh by the blood of Christ. Our justification, however, is not our begetting to new nature, but, as the Word itself signifies, a making right of our old natures—a compensating on our Lord's part for the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh which are ours through the fall, so that we are reckoned as tho we were perfect men—like father Adam before he sinned.

It is to such justified or reckonedly perfect men and women that the Lord sends the "high calling" of this Gospel age—a call to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, a call to suffer with him for righteousness' sake in this present time, with a promise of sharing with him glory, honor and immortality in the future, of being joint-heirs with him in the kingdom which is to bring restitution blessings to all mankind.

The call of this Gospel age is to find the "royal priesthood," of which our Lord Jesus is the Head or Chief Priest, and all his faithful ones the under priests. The work of this priesthood is especially future—during the Millennial age the instruction, guidance and teaching of the world of mankind. The call to this priesthood includes two things: (1) A call in the present time to faithfulness even unto sacrifice, and none can be in this priesthood except he offers up himself a willing sacrifice in the divine service. (2) It includes the glorification that shall follow the exaltation of the sacrificers.

The thing which each is to sacrifice is himself, his will, his life, his all (Heb. 8:3; Rom. 12:1); but God cannot accept to his holy altar any blemished sacrifice, and hence he has not invited sinners to sacrifice themselves—for they are all blemished. None but our Lord Jesus, therefore, could be actually acceptable as a sin-offering on Jehovah's altar; hence the provision is that his church, called to present their bodies living sacrifices, and to thus have fellowship in Christ's sufferings, and by and by in his glory, must first be "justified freely from all things" by the merit of Christ's sacrifice, before they could be accepted as sacrificers "holy and acceptable to God" or in any degree come within the limitations of the high calling.

Altho the Apostle, in the verse you quote, does not particularize the three steps of (1) knowledge, (2) faith and (3) consecration, he nevertheless implies them, as will be noticed from the context: vss. 3 and 4 tell us that the class the Apostle refers to are overcomers of the world, and that they seek to keep God's commandments, and do so willingly, not feeling them "grievous." Thus we see that he is speaking only of the consecrated class; and since we know that there were none righteous,—no, not one,—of all of Adam's race, and since we know also that the unrighteous could not be accepted as joint-sacrificers with Christ, we know assuredly that the Apostle John had in mind a class of consecrated and spirit-begotten ones, who previously had been prepared by a knowledge of Christ and by a faith in him unto justification.

That "new creature" represented by the new mind which is now begotten of the holy spirit when the justified believer reaches that point where he sacrifices the human will and presents himself unreservedly to the Lord, is merely "begotten." The present life is the formative period during which there is no independent life, but merely the reckoned one of our "mother," the Abrahamic Covenant. (Gal. 4:23-31) Our birth will be in the first resurrection, when we shall be "born from the dead." Then we shall have life and our mother covenant will be dead, having borne the promised seed that shall bless all nations. Compare Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5.

HOW WILL THE DEAD HEAR?

Question.—What is implied by the expression, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and they that hear shall live?"—John 5:25.

Answer.—The Greek text seems to be in full harmony with the English, and neither can be understood logically and in harmony with other Scriptures, except by understanding this to mean that the dead of mankind shall be awakened to such a condition as will permit them to hear, comprehend, understand, tho they will still be dead from the divine standpoint —dead in trespasses and sins—dead in the sense of being still under divine sentence of death. Then after hearing, comprehending, if they respond to the hearing, if they obey the voice, the command, the instruction, of that day of judgment, they shall eventually attain to perfection of life —being raised to the living-point gradually by the processes of restitution or resurrection, by (through) judgments, during the Millennium.

The fact is simply this, that a fall took place, a fall from a certain standing or condition of perfection and life and a redemption was provided at Calvary, on account of which there may be extended to all who fell an opportunity to rise again. The rising, be it never so insignificant in its beginning, must go on to completion—until the subject shall have been raised out of death into life. This raising up is necessarily up to the point or condition from which the fall occurred, and anything short of that would not be in the proper sense of the word a raising out of death and to perfection of life.

When considering the word *anastasis* it is proper that we should interpret it along this line, which is its only true and logical meaning, and if it were in any place used in a less comprehensive sense, it would evidently be the exceptional use of it, and should not militate against its full meaning.

But let us look for a moment at the resurrection of the just ones and the resurrection of unjust ones. There will be no question as to the resurrection of just ones, that to them *anastasis* means a perfect raising up to perfect conditions in the first resurrection. Likewise, we claim, is its meaning in respect to unjust ones. It does not say that all of the unjust ones will be raised up, and other Scriptures show that this will not be the case, but that only such of the unjust ones as will conform themselves to the laws of the kingdom, will thus be raised up and that others will fall back when but partly raised up and suffer second death;—those who refuse to hear (obey) their Lord in that day. Compare Acts 3:23.

JOINING TRADE UNIONS

Question.—Can I consistently join a Trade Union? I prefer to be free, but am threatened with loss of employment unless I join one.

Answer.—The Lord's injunctions are specifically along the lines of religion, and hence our separateness from unions should be specially along this line. A trade union has nothing of a religious worship connected with it, as have the churches and some of the secret orders. Of course, as those who are free indeed in Christ, we would prefer not to incur any obligation except to the Lord, but if obliged to join a Trade Union to obtain employment, I think you would do right to join one. I would, however, state to them that I preferred not to join them (not for the sake of the dues, being quite willing to pay my share of maintaining the proper price of labor), but from a desire to be free, lest at some time the Union might wish to dictate to my conscience what would not agree with it. I would therefore give them notice at once that I would be obedient to the demands of the Union so far as my conscience agreed, and that only.

ONLY A FEW MORE YEARS

——FRANCES C. SHORE.——

Only a few more years to learn our part,
  Just a few more miles the race to run;
So gather courage fresh, O fainting heart!
  O weary "feet," thy journey soon is done.

Only a few more months, but full of toil,
  For in the "field" are hungry souls to feed,
Then struggle on, O weary, burdened one!
  For thou shalt find a strength in time of need.

Only a few more days to fill with love—
  Love for all God's creatures, friend and foe,
Love which shall cover every human fault,
  And bring a balm for every earthly woe.

Only a few more hours, we know, for some,
  Who in this life have fought a goodly fight,
Henceforth for them remains a glorious crown,
  A rest within the radius of God's light.

Only a few more days of willing sacrifice,
  Of patient standing when our work is done;
Soon in his radiant presence we'll rejoice,
  And praise him in our everlasting home.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

A ZIONIST LEADER'S VIEW OF JESUS

Dr. Max Nordau, a widely known Hebrew leader, not long since in reply to a question concerning his view of Jesus, wrote the following:—

"The picture of Jesus as we have it given by the synoptic gospels is a vague outline and is a typical and ideal Jewish character. He observed the law; he taught the morality of Hillel—love thy neighbor as thyself—he constantly occupied himself with matters of eternity; he felt himself in spiritual communion with God; he despised that which was mortal in his being and all the accidental things of this life on earth. All these are characteristic peculiarities of the best Jews of the time of the Roman supremacy, especially of the Essenes. And as to his origin and ethical physiognomy, there, too, the language of Jesus was throughout Jewish. For all of his parables, parallels can be found in greater or less abundance in the Talmud. His prayer, the most beautiful that a believer ever formulated, is the quintessence of Jewish ideas concerning the relations between man and his Creator. The Sermon on the Mount is the substance of rabbinical ethics; its figures and comparisons are common among the rabbis.

"Jesus is soul of our soul, as he is flesh of our flesh, and who, then, could think of excluding him from the people of Israel? St. Peter will continue to be the only Jew who will say of this descendant of David: I know not the man! If the Jews have not to the present time paid that tribute of public honor to the exalted moral beauty of the character of Jesus, the ground for this is to be sought in the fact that those who tormented them did so in his name. The Jews concluded what the Master was from the doings of the disciples. This was a wrong, but it was pardonable on the part of those who were eternally the objects of the never-ending hatred of so-called Christians. But every time that a Jew went back to the original sources concerning Jesus and learned to study Christ without regard to his followers, he was compelled to exclaim in amazement: Without accepting his Messianic claims, this man is of us! He honors our race and we claim him as our own, as we also claim the synoptic gospels as examples of genuine Jewish literature.

"And the revision of this trial? This had been done long since. The most learned specialists in the department of Jewish legal procedure have proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that the trial of Jesus, as tradition reports it, could never have taken place before a Jewish court of law. If Jesus was condemned to death, it was done by the Roman judge, and no Jew, faithful to his law, had the least thing to do with it.

"Jesus would never have been condemned to death on the cross before a Jewish court, as this method of punishing criminals was not allowed by the Jewish law; and it never could have taken place on a Friday, the evening before the Passover, as the law stringently forbade any execution on that day. If the Jews had condemned Jesus after the manner reported by tradition, then they would have committed a series of crimes, each of which would have been severely punished by the Jewish law. It is accordingly certain that the whole story of the trial of Jesus can be nothing but an act of vengeance intended to punish the Jews for not having recognized the divine mission of Christ."

This is interesting as showing the change that has come over the people who cried, "His blood be upon us and upon our children!" The Doctor's expression is falling into line with the Prophet's declaration of what must soon be the attitude of the Jews as a people, viz., "They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him as one mourneth for an exceptional son."

Undoubtedly the best reading matter for the Jew is the New Testament, whose simple Gospel narrative and whose masterful Pauline arguments refer him freely to the Old Testament and show prophecy and fulfilment, type and antitype. However, we are not to expect Israel's blindness to fully depart before the divinely appointed time;—when the elect Gospel church shall have been completed and glorified. Nor are we then to expect their blessing and enlightenment except through the great trouble in which they will share with all others, and out of which they shall be saved and blest by the glorified spiritual Israel.—Rom. 11:25-27, 31.

METHODISM MORE DEMOCRATIC

The basis of the Methodist Episcopal church is hierarchical, exclusive, all power and authority being vested in the hands of the "clergy." But for some years public sentiment has been growing in favor of a more democratic arrangement, culminating in a demand that the "laity" be granted equal representation and voice with the ministers and bishops in the regulation of the M. E. church's affairs.

The ministers were loth to part with any measure of their "authority" and power, but finding the "laity" persistent they have with as good grace as possible finally yielded the point, as the following dispatch from the General Conference at Chicago shows:—

"CHICAGO, May 2.—The pulpit and the pew will hereafter share equally in the highest governmental body of the Methodist Episcopal church. Without a dissenting vote the General Conference, which opened at the Auditorium to-day, ratified the action of the annual conferences in extending equal representation to the laity. The 157 provisional delegates were admitted without a contest.

"The step taken makes the Methodist church a democratic body, and the rule of the preacher passes with the century. As the roll was made up to-day there are 356 preachers and 236 laymen on the regular list. At least 50 reserve laymen will close some of the breaches in the delegation."

Radical as this step is, it has little meaning and will have little effect in the affairs of Methodism, and it is because the preachers realize this that they yield the point without special contest. They well know that the *name* and *form* of liberty and power are all that their "laity" care for or know how to appreciate. So long as the preachers can keep "their people" in ignorance on the subject of hell, etc., they can manipulate them just as well in conference as elsewhere.

* * *

A memorial has been drafted for presentation to this General M. E. Conference requesting that the strictures of the Methodist discipline against dancing, theatre-going, etc., be expunged.

The Methodist "tares" know that they have just as much right to such things as the Presbyterian "tares" and the Baptist "tares;" and though they have been enjoying the interdicted amusements for years and intend to continue so to do whether the conference cancels the prohibition or not, yet somehow they would feel just a little more free if the words were not there. Not that their consciences are very tender on the subject, but that it gives some of the "wheat" class an opportunity to upbraid them and seems a curtailment of their "tare" privileges and pleasures.

And why should not the General Conference grant the request and expunge the article so obnoxious to the "tare" element? The Methodist "wheat" need no such restrictions even as the Presbyterian and Baptist and other "wheat" need them not. After all, the "tares" are not "the children of the kingdom" and why should such restrictions give some of them more of a deceptive appearance of being "wheat?" Let them do what they will—the wider the difference between "wheat" and "tares" the better, and the more speedy the separation, now that the harvest time of separation has come.

PRESBYTERIANISM STANDS "BEFORE GOD AND MAN WITH A LIE IN ITS RIGHT HAND"

Says One of its Ordained Ministers

"Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee," saith the Lord. And they gnawed their tongues [chewed their words] in pain, but continued to blaspheme [slander, misrepresent] the God of heaven.

The commotion amongst Presbyterians continues—some standing firm for their church creed, others repudiating it and begging to be released from it, but not noble-minded enough to step out into liberty in Christ (as they might so readily do) because of the cost of that liberty in name, salary, etc. Many thus indirectly confess that they despise the chain wherewith they are bound, and have despised it for years, and have realized it to be a lie and a blasphemy against God, and after confessing to this acting and confessing a lie for years they beg to be released without cost or loss either of human or divine favor, and especially without loss of bread and butter.

Note the expression of Rev. Samuel T. Carter in a Presbyterian journal—*The Evangelist*. He says:—

"It must be admitted that if a church is honest, that which stands in its Confession is its faith. It must be acknowledged that what is contained in its Confession is the faith of any honest church. The Westminister Confession of Faith is still the unquestioned Confession of the Presbyterian church. Is the Presbyterian church honest in its zeal for purity first and peace afterward?

"Be it known, then, to all the world that the Presbyterian church by its Confession declares that all the heathen perish, that many men are hopelessly lost from all eternity by the decree of God, and that there are infants in hell. . . . In reality the church does not believe these dreadful doctrines. Then it stands before God and man with a lie in its right hand."

The Independent, a high-class religious journal of Westminster proclivities, makes some very sensible remarks on the situation as follows:—

"The time for removal of error is always; and now revision of some sort begins to be exigent. The Presbyterian church is suffering for it. The arguments for it are those of truth and charity; the argument against it is that it will delay union with the Southern Presbyterian church, which is not yet ready for revision. But we doubt very much if revision is the best course to be pursued. Let the old Confession remain as a historical document. It expressed the views of the Westminster Assembly. It answered its purpose then. It was a noble but faulty document. It gave forth all the light its makers had. Put it where it belongs, as an expression, not of what we must believe, but of what its makers believed. They did grandly express their own faith, but they had no right to enslave our faith, any more than God has a right to enslave our will. There is no nobler intellectual work that a man can do than to formulate what he believes about God. Theology is the noblest of the sciences—a man of intelligence ought never to tire of making creeds for himself. He ought to revise his creed every year. A man's conduct, and so his religion, depends on what he believes about the relation between God and man. More evidence, more discovery, more study, more enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, will change his belief, his creed, and so affect his religious duty. We would leave the formulation of a creed to each man's own conscientious study."

We are surprised and gratified to have so able a journal as *The Independent* come forward thus boldly in advocacy of a view we have been seeking to promulgate for years; namely, that each individual Christian should have *his own* creed, his own faith or belief respecting the things which God has revealed to his people by his spirit through his Word;—and that each Christian should keep adding to his knowledge and his faith daily from the inspired record, the Bible, using all the helps obtainable to this end. This is the thought of the Apostle when he speaks of *growth* in grace and knowledge and approach to the stature of manhood in Christ. He suggests that the beginner in the Christian way is but a "babe" who needs "the sincere milk of the Word that he may grow thereby," and that when further advanced he will need the "strong meat" of truth which is for the more matured.

With such an arrangement there is no room for the methods in vogue among Christians of all denominations which just now is causing Presbyterianism so much trouble—namely, the fixing by the Doctors of Divinity of each denomination of a creed (claimed to contain all the "milk" as well as all the "strong meat" of God's Word) which each "babe" as it is received is required to swallow, and which it is instructed will supply all the spiritual nutriment proper for it to receive to the end of life. Such doses or pills are administered by every sect—some sugar-coated to conceal the real contents from the "babe," and some like the Presbyterian creed, plain, honest and terribly bitter.

A gentlemen in Allegheny related to us his conversation with a Presbyterian pastor before his withdrawal from that church. The gentleman said, "Pastor, I find many things in our Confession of Faith which upon now more mature consideration I cannot endorse nor continue to be identified with, unless you can help me to reason them out." The pastor replied, "My dear brother, you are getting at this matter from the wrong standpoint; our Confession must be swallowed whole or not at all. It is like a Brandreth pill; if you attempt to chew it [reason it out] you can never swallow it."

How strange that the simple and rational way of feeding "milk" and then "meat," which affords both pleasure and nourishment, should have been discarded for the wickedly injurious practice of imposing upon the "babes" doctrinal pills which not only afford no nourishment but which hinder all growth, and as a result has filled Churchianity with "babes" who as respects spiritual things have never had their senses exercised to discern the true from the false and are utterly unable to follow the Apostle's counsel to "rightly divide the word of truth" and to "try the spirits" (doctrines) whether they be of God or are human fabrications.

A SIMPLE CONFESSION NECESSARY

However, a simple public confession is necessary to demonstrate who are "babes" in Christ—to distinguish such from "children of this world." But this confession should be very simple—so that the merest "babe" in Christ could comprehend and fully endorse it as his own. (1) It should declare faith in Christ as a personal Saviour; that he was sent of the Father and gave his life a *ransom* for all mankind. (2) A personal acceptance of him as a personal Saviour and a determination to forsake sin. (3) A full consecration to be a follower of Jesus in every respect and to lay down life itself in his service. Whoever could not confess these should, not be esteemed a "babe" in Christ at all—nor be fed as such, nor expected to grow up into Christ in all things.

May we expect the church nominal to follow this program —or that the voice of the *Independent* will be more potent than our own in bringing to pass such conditions? By no means. Churchianity contains too many "tares" and not enough "wheat" for such suggestions to be impressive. She will soon go down in the great time of trouble; and not until the kingdom has been set up need we expect a better general arrangement. Then it will apply not to the elect church, which will then be completed and glorified, but to the restitution class, then being developed.—Acts 3:19-21.

THE VOLUNTEER SERVICE

This work is now nobly started and just in time, we trust, to see it well accomplished before July, when so many church attendants are apt to absent themselves for the summer. The brethren and sisters engaging in this service seems to be profiting by it spiritually themselves and it is difficult to conceive of any other form of preaching present truth that could be more effective. The fact that this matter is handed out by Christian gentlemen and ladies adds to the weight and force of the matter circulated. The results cannot be even approximated this side the vail.

Order more "ammunition" as you find you will need it. We have a good supply now. But be careful, please, not to order more than you will faithfully and promptly use—for it is expensive. Letters on this subject should have the word "*Volunteer*" at the head, and "Order No. 2" or "Order No. 3" as the case may be. Initial orders should invariably be made out along the line mentioned in March 1st Tower.

CONGRATULATIONS TO BRITISH FRIENDS

We have pleasure in announcing to the friends in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales that our London branch office is open at the address given above. It is or will shortly be well stocked with DAWNS, booklets, tracts and WATCH TOWERS. This will greatly convenience you all, we are sure, not only saving time but also postage, and permitting you to use domestic instead of foreign Money Orders.

Volunteer orders will be filled from there also and we hope to hear of many fresh enlistments in this branch of the service.

Any who feel disposed to enter the Colporteur work in Great Britain are invited to write *there* for full instructions how to work, where to work, terms, etc., etc.

Friends there desirous of visits from "Pilgrims" to hold public and parlor meetings in Great Britain are also invited to write. Address all such letters to

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY,
131 Gipsy Lane, Forest Gate, London E., England.

PROGRESS OF THE TRUTH IN CHINA

Our dear Brother Randle, formerly a Baptist missionary in China, has been with us at Allegheny for about a month, and we have learned to love him dearly as one of the Lord's "brethren." He has written for the TOWER a little sketch of his recent experiences in receiving the truth and of his efforts to let it shine forth in turn to others. We know it will be appreciated. The brother's depth of interest is well attested by his long journey of 16,000 miles to Allegheny. He proposes spending the remainder of his earthly life in sounding the Jubilee Trumpet—the Gospel of the kingdom. He will probably select Great Britain, his former home, as his future field for harvest work—preaching, and colporteuring the DAWNS.

Before leaving this country he has consented to do some "Pilgrim" work. He is now visiting a number of little gatherings in Ohio and western Pennsylvania, and later on will meet with the churches at Washington, Baltimore, Richmond, Philadelphia, New York City, etc., including some on the Hudson River. We confidently assure him a most hearty welcome from all WATCH TOWER readers he may be permitted to meet. His article follows:—

PRESENT TRUTH IN THE FAR EAST

There has been in China for years one solitary witness for the present truth, Miss Downing, of Chefoo. This lady was formerly a missionary of the Presbyterian Board and she chanced to meet with a stray WATCH TOWER, about the year 1883, in which she read an article on restitution, and at once decided to subscribe for the paper. She was the means of leading Mr. Fuller (whose letter is published at the end of VOL. III.) to study the DAWNS which proved so great a blessing to him. He died in 1894.

Amongst the missionaries of Shantung I am afraid Sister Downing was considered a queer old lady having some odd notions. She prevailed on me, however, to subscribe in 1892 for the WATCH TOWER and to get the *Diaglott*. The latter I much wanted. I read a little here and there in the TOWER, but too rashly concluded that it was the organ of some kind of universalism, which I did not want to corrupt my orthodoxy, so threw them aside.

I was too much afraid of the word "Universalism." Now I know that some things *are* universal. God's sunshine is universal; it shines from pole to pole, upon both the just and the unjust. So is his love. (John 3:16) Light and truth are yet to be universal (John 1:9; Isaiah 11:9), and so is the testimony of the ransom. (1 Tim. 2:6; John 12:32) Because of my prejudice then I continued four years longer in darkness.

Toward the end of that time I saw Millennial Dawn advertised in the *London Times*, and having been interested for years in the Lord's return, I had a growing desire to read that book. In the summer of 1896 Miss Downing lent me Vol. I., but a day or two later I received another copy from England, sent to me (without my request) by my dear mother. I returned Miss Downing her copy, and starting for my mission station, four days journey from Chefoo, I first read the Plan of the Ages in a mule-litter. It wonderfully opened my eyes, and I became more and more astonished at the beautiful Bible exegesis it revealed. Later on I received Vols II. and III., and continued to read with admiration. In November of the same year I wrote my first letter to Allegheny, asking for the Tower, and more information of any kind along the same lines. After reading the three volumes myself, I read them again with my wife, and afterwards with my children, and God has been graciously pleased to lead both my wife and my eldest daughter into a joyous reception of the present truth.

In 1897 I began to speak with my missionary colleagues about the character of the Judgment Day, for I was rejoicing in the strong consolation it gave me to see that God's purposes regarding the heathen—to give them a gracious and full opportunity to enter into life—were infinitely more grand and beneficent than I had ever dreamed.

When the question of the Trinity loomed up it gave me a temporary shock, but I soon saw that I should neither honor the Father nor the Son by making the Lord Jesus more than the Bible clearly teaches, when examined without prejudice: and I recognized not only that all men should "honor the Son even as they honor the Father," but also that it was the supreme will of the Father to have it so.

In 1898, being persuaded that this testimony is from God, and is in conflict with nominal Christianity, I did not consider it necessary to confer with flesh and blood, but resigned my connection with both the Baptist church, and the Mission Board with which I was connected. Being now free from the creeds and traditions of men my first desire was to tell to others the truth that had given me such comfort and joy.

I was able to hold about a dozen meetings among missionaries in several stations, but my principal effort to reach the missionaries of the far East had to be done by correspondence, for they are scattered over thousands of miles of country, in some 500 different stations. For this purpose I had a circular letter printed (a copy of which appeared in the Tower, June 15, 1899, page 157). To each of these letters we added something further in writing, and enclosing one or more tracts, sent them all out by letter post, which we considered to be much more likely to command a reading than if the whole thing had been printed and sent out as printed matter. In all we despatched the following:—1847 to missionaries in China; 385 to missionaries in Japan; 72 to missionaries in Corea; 20 to missionaries in Siam, etc.; making a total of 2324. The number of tracts sent out was about 5,000.

The vast majority ignored our appeal. This we fully expected, for we know that many are much too full of work for the Lord to hear him speaking to them. Still many replies were received, varying much in tone and spirit. No less than four accused me of blasphemy. One Doctor of Divinity thought I had lost my head; one predicted that I had begun to drift toward infidelity. Some deplored my departure from the faith, while yet others, more kindly in intention, begged me to return to the simplicity of the Gospel; but none of them knew the pearl of great price I had found.

One wrote to me thus:—"I am very grieved that you should have been so led away by the wicked one, and would solemnly urge you not to become one of Satan's agents, and a 'seducing spirit.' . . . We are living in perilous times, and I would warn you to beware of him who not only goeth about as a roaring lion, but also as an angel of light." Another wrote:—"It is just as Paul told Timothy, evil men will wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. I am so sorry to think that you, Dr. Randle, are one who is being deceived by these evil men." These are both personal and esteemed friends, from whom, as from many more, I am now counted alienated. May the Lord deal very graciously with them.

Others wrote thankfully, and showed their readiness for the harvest message. A well-educated Chinese woman wrote:—"I have been reading the tracts you so kindly left me, first with interest, then with delight, and I feel so much happier than I have been for a long time; the more I read the more I want to read and the more light I get, but there is still much I want to know. I would like to have Millennial Dawn and the pamphlet on *Hell*. If you tell me how to send the money I will be ever so much obliged."

In all we sold 90 Dawns and 38 pamphlets on *Hell*, *Tabernacle Shadows*, etc. One missionary, a young man who bought the four volumes, and has learned to appreciate and love the precious truths therein expounded, came out from Brethrenism, and is now standing alone in North China, bearing his testimony for the present truth. Four other missionaries are reading and studying the Dawns with joy and profit, but have not yet come out of Babylon, which is to them no easy thing. I was also able to leave 25 volumes in Shanghai for further sale, and will be able to send more out if required, so that I trust the harvest work in the far East may continue to develop, until all shall have received at least some testimony to the light of present truth.

How true it is that the vast majority of the household of faith have no ear to hear the harvest message! As it was in Christ's first presence, so it is now. Immersed in their own work, many are preaching in his name, and doing wonderful works for him (Matt. 7:22), and yet they are as blind and deaf as the Pharisees of old, neither knowing nor doing the will of their Father in heaven. It is a strait gate indeed, and a narrow way, and verily few are finding the life they lead to. May we never cease to humbly and diligently inquire what is the Father's will concerning us, and abiding in Christ, that we may receive his spirit, may we be enabled not only to do that will, but also to see the loving-kindness that is in it!

Horace A. Randle.

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

Matt. 13:24-33.—May 27.

"The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the Kingdom."

Parables of the kingdom are really word-pictures of the kingdom. No one of these parables represents the complete view of the subject, but merely one phase of it. The attentive Bible student will notice that the theme of the Gospel from first to last is the kingdom. The message first given to Father Abraham was that his posterity would bless the world—that is to say, be a kingdom exercising control over the world, and for its benefit and uplifting. This hope was before the Jewish mind for over sixteen hundred years, their expectation being that they would be exalted by God to that kingdom position and bless all the families of the earth, reconciling them to God. Our Lord's proclamation and that of his apostles, at the first advent was, "The kingdom of God is at hand"—God is now ready to establish his kingdom if the people are ready to receive it. "But his own received him not," and the kingdom was taken from them as a nation, to be given to the holy nation, the peculiar people, the royal priesthood, whom the Lord would select,—choosing first from fleshly Israel so many as were ready, and the remainder from amongst the Gentiles during this Gospel age.

Naturally enough, the Jews did not grasp the situation, but were looking for our Lord to establish a fleshly kingdom in their midst; and it was to counteract this erroneous thought that Jesus uttered these parables of the kingdom—about nine of them—three being embraced in this lesson. The series began with the parable of the sower, examined in our last issue, which showed that there was but one true seed or message of the kingdom, and that the fruitfulness of that seed would depend upon the character of heart into which it would fall. Next we have in order the parable of

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES

Here the good seed or the message of the kingdom which our Lord planted is represented as springing up in believers, and constituting them children or heirs of the kingdom. It is very proper here to note that there is no other method at present of becoming a child of God, an heir of the kingdom, except through the acceptance of the kingdom message, with all that it implies of consecration to the Lord, even unto death—"if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" in his kingdom.—Rom. 8:17.

The object of these parables, then, was not to depict to our minds what the kingdom would be like after it has been established in the world, but rather to picture before our minds something respecting the processes of development by which the kingdom-class would be selected from amongst mankind and made ready for the kingdom which is to be set up at the second coming of Christ in power and great glory, —when he shall establish that Millennial kingdom for the very purpose of granting a judgment or trial to all the families of the earth—peradventure under the favorable opportunities of knowledge, etc., then granted unto them, many may choose life through obedience to God and attain it.

As in the preceding parable the Lord Jesus, himself was the sower of the good seed, so in this parable: It was Jesus who was sowing the seeds of truth, the promises, etc., which, springing up in the hearts of his disciples, transformed them to newness of life, making of them new creatures, and operating through them as his mouthpieces carried similar blessings wherever the message, the Gospel of the kingdom, has gone.

"While men slept" the enemy of the sower of the good seed, viz., Satan, came and sowed tares amongst the wheat. The Lord himself not only made possible the kingdom by redeeming mankind, but announced his willingness to receive some as joint-heirs of it, and then departed for the far country, even heaven itself, not to return until the time for his kingdom to be established in glory and power. (Mark 13:34) His chosen apostles faithfully guarded the field so long as they lived, but when they fell asleep in death, as the Lord has foreseen and here predicted, the adversary found good opportunity to bring in false doctrines, to sow error, and through the error to produce amongst the wheat a crop of tares—darnel. Tares have the peculiarity that while growing they very decidedly resemble wheat, so that it is almost impossible to tell them apart until a certain degree of maturity is reached; then the difference is clearly discernible to all of experience.

We see the fulfilment of this feature of the parable in Christendom to-day; the wheat was sown broadcast over a certain part of the field, the world of mankind, especially throughout Europe and America, and the tare-seed, the error and false doctrine, seems to have been sown still more liberally; and looking back we date that sowing as commencing as soon as the apostles were "fallen asleep." In consequence we find to-day Christians, true Christians, genuine Christians, begotten of the Word of God's promises, and fully in accord with it, and seeking to bring forth good fruit in their lives; and we also see an almost innumerable tare-class of imitation Christians, begotten not of the truth nor of the word of the kingdom, utterly ignorant of it indeed; begotten of excitement, begotten of fear of hell, begotten of hopes of worldly advantage by joining a nominal church, begotten of pride and a desire to be in good society, begotten of social and financial ambition, etc.

It is often very difficult to discern clearly between these wheat and tare classes; nor has it been necessary so to do down through the eighteen centuries of this age, for the Master declared that they were to be permitted to grow together until the harvest-time, when the ripening of both under the clearer light of the harvest-time would manifest each class thoroughly and distinctly, and then a separation would take place under his supervision.

To our understanding we are now in the "harvest" or end of this age, and the light of present truth, as it shines for the Lord's people walking in the path of the just, which shines more and more unto the perfect day, as well as the light of present truth as it is shining upon the world and its social and financial and scientific questions, is tending to ripen both the wheat and the tares. The tare class no longer seeks to hide itself, but rather seems to claim that it is the genuine article, the scientific class, evolutionists, higher-critics, and in general the worldly-wise. The wheat class is also becoming more and more discernible, as it ripens in the faith and hope and joy begotten of the Gospel of the kingdom. The separating work mentioned in the parable is not only at hand, but in progress; a cleavage and separation between nominal Christians (tares) and true Christians (wheat), as nearly every one who is awake discerns: and this separation will be more and more discernible year by year as the harvest work progresses, until its close.

To have attempted to root out all the tares, and to have thus cleansed the wheatfield, at any time in the past, would have meant, as the parable shows, a complete shaking throughout the entire field, a commotion which would not have served the best interests of the wheat; hence the Lord has permitted for all these centuries that the two classes should live side by side and co-operate in church work, and unitedly profess to be his people, intending the separation to be manifest in the end of the age. And surely when the separation does occur it will cause a wonderful commotion in nominal Zion—"Babylon."

The reapers are first to gather the tares and bind them in bundles *to* burn them. They do not burn them at once, but proceed to gather the wheat into the garner; and not until after the wheat is garnered does the fire consume the tares. We are to remember that this is a parable, and that the fire is as much a symbol as the tares, the wheat and the garner; hence we are not to expect a literal burning of the masses of Christendom in a literal fire, after the little flock, the faithful wheat class, the children of the kingdom, have been gathered into the barn, the garner, the heavenly condition.

The fire which will then come upon the wheatfield, from which the wheat has been gathered, and in which the tares are bundled, will be what the Scriptures elsewhere denominate "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation" —social trouble, financial trouble, religious trouble, accompanied by famine and pestilence, and the end of it will be the disruption of all law, order and religion and the prevalence of anarchy. In that trouble all the tares will be destroyed, in the sense that none of them thereafter will claim to be what they are not—none of them will claim to be God's consecrated people. The various inducements by which they were brought to claim themselves to be Christ's followers, when they were not, will then be at an end. No longer will such a claim gain for them social or financial or other standing or advantage, and no longer will they make the false claim.

Explaining the parable privately to his disciples, our Lord showed them that the gathering of the wheat into the garner meant the completion of the work of this Gospel age—the completion of the kingdom class that shall bless the world, and he says, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Thus the Sun of Righteousness that is to arise in the Millennial morning, and which is to bless the whole world with the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God in Christ, is to be composed, not only of our Lord Jesus himself, the great light, but also of those chosen to be his joint-heirs in the kingdom, his associates in the shining forth of the light of truth.

This was a totally different conception of the kingdom from what had come to the minds of the Jewish people; and altho an explanation of the parable was given to the apostles, and they answered that they understood it, we may well doubt if they grasped the subject comprehensively, until after the day of Pentecost, when, as our Lord promised, the holy spirit brought them enlightenment of understanding.

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED

The third parable-picture of the kingdom in its present embryotic condition of development is intended to show that from a very small beginning the nominal church of this Gospel age would attain to quite considerable proportions. Its start is likened to the small mustard-seed, which attains to the largest size of its class of herbs. Yet this large development does not necessarily signify advantage or anything specially desirable, but on the contrary it becomes a disadvantage, in that the fowls of the air come and lodge in its branches, and defile it. The "fowls of the air" in the preceding parable of the sower represented Satan and his agents, and we are, we think, justified in making a similar application here, and interpreting this to mean that the church planted by the Lord Jesus flourished rapidly and exceedingly, and that because of its attainments, strength, etc., Satan through his agents, came and lodged in the various branches of the church. They have been lodging in the branches of this Gospel church for these many centuries, and are still to be found in her, a defiling element. They come in, not for the benefit of the mustard-seed tree or shrub, but for their own convenience and benefit. It is in harmony with this that in the present time the Lord speaks of Babylon, nominal Christendom, as "the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."—Rev. 18:2.

This contamination of the original good planting, by the adversary and his agents, is as prominent in this parable as in the parable of the tares, merely showing it from a different standpoint.

THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN

Here again we have a word-picture of the Lord's church during this Gospel age of her development and preparation for the kingdom glory to follow.

In this parable we have brought to our attention the Lord's provision for the necessities of his people during this Gospel age—he did not leave them without a proper supply of food. The three measures of meal, equivalent to one ephah, constituted a good, liberal household supply. Like all of the Lord's provisions, it was good and pure, but as in the other parables the adversary introduced impurity, falsity, etc., so in this one leaven is introduced into the meal. Leaven represents corruption throughout the Scriptures: in every other instance of its Scriptural use it is represented as an evil, an impurity, something that is defiling. For instance, the Israelites were to put away all leaven, all impurity, at the time of the Passover, that they might come the nearer to the Lord in holiness, etc. Again, our Lord Jesus refers to leaven as a corruption, bidding his disciples "Beware of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees"—beware of the false doctrines, the corrupt influence, proceeding from the scribes and Pharisees. Again, the Apostle Paul represents the leaven as an evil thing, saying, "Purge out the old leaven."—Exod. 13:7; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 5:7.

It would not seem reasonable that our Lord should use the word leaven here as Christian people generally suppose, in a good sense, as implying some grace of the holy spirit. On the contrary, we recognize consistency in all of his teachings, and we may be as sure that he would not use leaven as a symbol of righteousness as that he would not use leprosy as a symbol of holiness.

How then shall we apply this parable? We answer, that the grace of God given to his people in the beginning of this age, (1) the faith once delivered to the saints, (2) the hope set before us in the Gospel, (3) love, the bond of perfectness, summed up the three measures of the Lord's provision for his people,—in partaking of which they were to become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. But gradually a woman arose, a false woman, represented in Revelation as a harlot, and as "that woman Jezebel." This Roman Catholic system obtained great power over the three measures of meal provided for God's household, and proceeded to mix therewith the leaven of her own impurity. The result was that all the family food, all the holy doctrines were contaminated with her false doctrines—nothing was left pure and clean, as handed to us originally by the apostles. The faith once delivered to the saints was distorted out of all semblance to its original simplicity; the hope set before us in the Gospel was changed to another hope entirely, unlike the original; the spirit of the Lord, love, was perverted to a selfish love of creeds of men and human institutions. Alas! no wonder all Christendom is spiritually sick, because of this adulteration in its food supply.

From this standpoint we readily see the force and meaning of the Master's declaration, that at his return he would gird himself, and come forth and serve his people, and that he would send forth at the hands of his servants things both new and old from the storehouse of his grace, "meat in due season."

THE HARVEST PLENTEOUS—THE LABORERS FEW

Matt. 9:35-10:8.—June 3.

"It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."—Matt. 10:20.

It is a great tribute to the spirit of liberty which prevailed amongst the Jews, that our Lord could and did preach the Gospel of the kingdom from city to city in their synagogues without molestation. In contrast, we may feel sure that were he to attempt to teach in any of the churches of to-day, of any denomination, he would be refused the privilege —no matter how faithfully he should adhere to the Scriptural declaration, and the more explicit his teachings the more unsatisfactory would they be to those now in charge, who have a theory of their own respecting the kingdom, which will not stand investigation, and whose weakness they would not wish to have exposed. And this loss of liberty amongst Christians, as compared with the Jews, in religious matters, is to their injury—making it that much the more difficult for them to hear the joyful sound of the present harvest message.

Nothwithstanding all the healing of disease which our Lord accomplished, there were still multitudes of sick who flocked from various directions to him, in hope of relief, and when we read that he was moved with compassion for the distressed sheep of Israel, it gives us a deeper appreciation of his kindness, his love, his mercy, and we do not feel that it was strange that he who had left the glory of the Father and the holy angels, and had humbled himself to man's estate, should now feel compassion for the weak and sinful, the degraded, depraved and pained. Rather, we say, It was just like him! Without such a spirit of compassion how would he have become our Redeemer, how would he have left the heavenly glory on our behalf! And when we think of him as being still the same it gives us fresh confidence, that notwithstanding our weaknesses and imperfections, and the imperfections and weaknesses of the whole world, "the groaning creation," this same Jesus has compassion, not only upon his people, but in a large sense in due time will have compassion upon all the families of the earth, and grant to all a full opportunity of recovery from the blights of sin, mental, moral and physical. Surely he only waits for the due time—the time appointed of the Father; then with his faithful, his kingdom-class, as the Seed of Abraham, he shall indeed, in times of restitution, bless all the families of the earth with a full opportunity of reconciliation to God, and thus of the attainment of life eternal.

At the time of our lesson his work had not yet taken this broad sweep; nor has it yet, altho it has advanced beyond the confines of that time. Then his message of reconciliation and his help were extended only to the lost sheep of the household of natural Israel—not to the Samaritans nor to the Gentiles. Since then the blessing of reconciliation has been extended so that whosoever has an ear to hear, amongst the Gentiles or amongst the Samaritans, has the privilege of reconciliation during this Gospel age; but the great time of opening deaf ears and causing all to know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, will be in the Millennial age to follow this one.

Compassion, however, will be an element of the Lord's character so long as there are any who need help, and desire it; and this will be until the close of the Millennial age, when all willing to receive the help will have received it, and the only ones not blessed thereby will be those who shall have deliberately rejected his help. Then, and not until then, will his compassion cease to be exercised, for then there will be no need of compassion, that which is perfect having come through the grace of God in Christ.

Our Lord's compassion for the multitude suggested the sending forth of representatives, clothed with the power to heal the sick, etc., and in order to bring his disciples into line with his thought he told them that the harvest was plenteous, but the laborers were few, and that they should offer prayer on this subject. The substance of their prayer would necessarily be,—Lord of the harvest, send forth me as a reaper in the harvest. Jesus himself was the Lord of the harvest; the whole matter was in his hands, and evidently the twelve apostles quickly caught his thought and spirit respecting the increase of the harvest work, and in consequence he sent them forth two and two; yet he restricted their going, even as he had restricted his own ministry, to fleshly Israel, because all of God's covenants and promises were still confined to that nation, and would not be open to others until a due time which the Father had fixed, and specified through the Prophet Daniel—viz., the end of Israel's seventy weeks of favor—three and a half years beyond our Lord's crucifixion.

"And he gave them power [authority] over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease and sickness." This power was holy Spirit power, the same and yet different from that which they received later on at Pentecost from the Father. It was the same, in that the holy spirit or power of God is always the same power even tho it have differences of manifestation. It was holy, in that it was the spirit of our Lord Jesus, the holy Spirit or power which was granted without measure unto him,—which he at this time communicated to these apostles, that they might, as his representatives, do a work in his name.

Indeed, we may surmise that as the curing of disease caused vitality to go out of our Lord Jesus, to effect the cure, and that thus every cure meant the robbing of himself of his own life-powers, his own vitality, so in this case we should understand that the power for the healing of the sick was Jesus' power, that the disciples did not use their own vitality, but merely his, which he communicated to them, and authorized them to use, saying, "Freely ye have received, freely give." They were giving what cost them nothing, but which was costing Jesus much daily and hourly. It is when we get this thought of our Lord's yielding up his life daily in doing good to others that we can best appreciate how his perfect life was so thoroughly used up in the short space of three and a half years.

The healing of the sick and the casting out of devils were but parts and incidents of their mission. In connection with it they were to preach the Gospel of the kingdom—the good news that the kingdom of God was nigh at hand; and the influence of the miracles should properly attract attention to the message, and make the people ready, yea, anxious, for the kingdom. But so far as the record shows, the people were anxious for the miracles, the healing, but very indifferent respecting the kingdom. They would take the cures from Jesus and his disciples, but if they wanted information respecting how and when the kingdom of God would come they would follow their blind guides as usual.

Nevertheless we may presume that the influence of this mission work throughout Israel was not entirely lost, and that after our Lord's crucifixion, and after the holy Spirit had come upon the disciples at Pentecost, and they preached the Gospel of the kingdom from a different standpoint, inviting all true Israelites to unite with Christ, and thus become joint-heirs of the kingdom with him—then it was that many, no doubt, of these who had heard previously and witnessed the miracles, were that much better prepared to enter the embryotic kingdom, the church through consecration of themselves to the Lord. And the conversion of several thousands within a few days after Pentecost corroborates this.

The harvest in the end of the Jewish age foreshadowed or typified the harvest of this Gospel age. And now, as then, Jesus is the Lord of the harvest, and his disciples, his messengers, are his agents in the gathering work. Now, as then, he seems to speak to these, saying that the harvest is great and that the laborers are few, and that if we have his spirit in the matter, and entreat him to send us forth in his service, he will be pleased to do so. And many are thus praying from day to day, and seeking to see what more their hands can find to do in the harvest work. And the Lord is graciously with such to guide their service and to bless the results to their own good as well as to the good of others. As all of the disciples then prayed this prayer, and got opportunity to engage in some part of the harvest work, so now all true disciples should be praying this prayer, and should be expecting and utilizing opportunities for service.

The methods of the harvest work then and now may be slightly different, and yet they are considerably alike. This is not the fleshly Israel, and the blessings sent at the hands of the harvest reapers are not temporal blessings—not the healings of physical disease; but they are better than these—the opening of eyes of understanding, a far greater blessing than the opening of natural eyes, the removal of deafness as respects the Lord's great plan, a far more precious boon than the restoration of natural hearing, etc. Likewise, the offering of the kingdom now is much more tangible and can be demonstarted much more clearly than was possible then, for it is nigh, even at the doors, and even the world can see the shakings of the present institutions, preparatory to their removal, that those things of truth and grace which cannot be shaken may remain, may be established, under the Lord's reign of righteousness.

As the harvest laborers going forth now seek the ripe wheat of this Gospel age, each should remember the words addressed to the laborers in the Jewish harvest, "It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." Not that we are to expect to have miraculous powers of speech granted us, but that we are to be filled with the truth and its spirit, and then indeed it will be true that it will not be our own wisdom that we shall speak, nor our own plan that we shall declare, but the wisdom that cometh from above, and the plan of the Lord our God.

A WICKED WOMAN AND A WEAK MAN

MARK 6:14-29.—JUNE 10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be ye filled with the spirit."*—Eph. 5:18.

Herodias, a young woman, closely related to the reigning family of the Herods, was ambitious to become a queen; her uncle Philip, being the eldest son of Herod the Great, was presumptively his heir, and accordingly she pressed her suit, and with such success that she was accepted as Philip's wife. But at the death of Herod the Great it was found that he had disinherited his eldest son, Philip, and that Herod Antipas was made successor to the kingdom.

It was necessary that Herod Antipas should go to Rome to be invested with regal authority, and while there he was the guest of his brother Philip and of Herodias, his wife and his niece, who of course was chagrined that she had failed of her ambition. However, ambitions know no bounds, especially selfish ones, and she seems at once to have set herself to captivate her younger uncle Antipas. Her cunning seems to have been without scruple of any kind, and remarkably successful. She so wrought upon Herod Antipas that he dismissed his wife, the daughter of the king of Arabia, and then Herodias, with her own child, a girl of probably fourteen, left her husband Philip, to become the wife of Herod Antipas, and thus to attain the position of queen, which she had coveted.

The shortcomings and failure of others should become to us valuable lessons. In the case of Herodias before us we see illustrated the power of ambition, and how important it is that our ambitions be noble and true and pure. Nearly all there is of good accomplished in the world is somehow or other connected with good ambitions, and likewise nearly all the evil in the world is somehow or other associated with wrong ambitions. How important that we should learn to guard our ambitions, our desires, our hopes, our aims: we cannot accomplish anything without hopes and aims and ambitions; hence the necessity for securing good ones. And here let us note the fact that the majority of mankind have little or no ambition, and therefore are passing through life in a kind of maze, accomplishing comparatively little for themselves or others. This is a wrong condition; every man, woman and child should have a noble ambition, and should labor constantly for the attainment of that ambition.

Others of the world have such ambitions as had Herodias: they are ambitions for wealth, or for social position and display, or for title and honor amongst men. These are all selfish ambitions, yet they are the powers that are moving politics and business and society every day—and we are sorry to say these are the ambitions which are moving many in the pulpits and many in various religious works. These are all wrong ambitions, and tho they may not all result as evilly as did that of Herodias they are all selfish, and all tend at least in the same general direction toward evil, and many are seduced by their selfish ambitions into doing those things which their consciences do not approve, and many such become seducers of others into evil deeds and reprehensible schemes.

The Christian has before him the only proper, legitimate and worthy ambition possible at the present time; nor does the average or nominal Christian have these correct ambitions, but rather only such Christians as are taught of God, such as hear and heed the Word of the Lord. Before these are set the most noble, lofty ambitions; they are invited into the society, friendship and fellowship of the King of kings and Lord of lords. They are invited to become his companions, his brethren, co-workers together with him in the great work he is now accomplishing, and also to be joint-heirs with him in the great work of the Millennial kingdom which he is shortly to inaugurate. Could there be a higher ambition than this set before mortal man? Surely not. Moreover, it is an ambition which tends to develop all the higher qualities of mind and character, for the terms and conditions of this fellowship are based upon purity of heart, devotion to the Lord, etc., so that he that hath these ambitions and hopes in him purifieth himself even as he is pure with whom he has become associated. Let us have these true ambitions before us, that they may crowd out and trample down the inferior ambitions of earth and sensuality, that lead to sin, groveling and devilishness.

Herodias, having gained her point thus far, and finding herself in the coveted position of queen, undoubtedly felt greatly elated, flushed with her success; but in the midst of this elation came the news respecting John the Baptist. and how he had had an interview with Herod the king, and in the presence of courtiers and others had declared that it was not lawful for him to have Herodias for his wife. This was a shock to Herodias. Who would have thought that any man would have been bold enough to have spoken to the king on such a subject; and who would have thought that the king would have heard him patiently, and even have seemed interested in him, and have considered him a prophet of the Lord God?

What wonder Herodias was angry with John the Baptist, and sought to wreck upon him her vengeance! Had she plotted and planned for years to reach her present position, and was she to be thwarted now, and to be cast out at the word of such a man as this? Moreover, if she were now cast out, it would mean a worse condition than ever, for of course she could not with decency go back to her busband Philip, and expect to be kindly received of him. Hence, if Herod should give ear to John the Baptist, and should permit his message to influence him, it might mean that Herodias would become an outcast. Can we wonder, then, that the evil ambition which had thus far ruled the woman's heart should now move her against the great prophet? We could only say that it would be the legitimate fruitage of such evil ambitions as she had for years been cultivating at the expense of every principle. It had not hesitated thus far at anything, and why should it hesitate even at murder, now in its greatest extremity?

So it is with all evil, selfish ambition—the tendency is always downward, going from evil to evil, from sin to sin, from crime to crime. On the contrary, the ambitions which are inspired of the Lord tend always upward and upward, higher and higher—whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are in harmony with God —this is the tendency and impulse of the ambition which God inspires, the wisdom which cometh down from above, which is first pure, then peaceable and easy of entreatment. full of mercy and good fruits.

THE KING OUTWITTER BY HIS WIFE

Herodias had sufficient influence over her husband to secure the arrest and imprisonment of John: but apparently she was chagrined that she could not accomplish her desires to the full in securing his death. This was not so much because Herod had a mind of his own, but rather, as the narrative declares, because of his fear. He knew John to be a righteous man and holy, and, as the Revised Version expresses it, "kept him safe"—possibly fearing that if John were set at liberty Herodias would find agents for his destruction. Apparently John was granted unusual liberties in prison, for his disciples had opportunity to come to him and to bear messages to and from him; and the intimation is that Herod was perplexed respecting how he should deal with him, and occasionally sent for him and heard him with interest.

Herodias concluded that this was a dangerous condition of things, and again her tact and shrewdness came to her assistance. Herod's birthday was approaching, and knowing that it was generally celebrated she proposed to make a special effort on that occasion to secure her ends. These birthday feasts were occasions of carousal; the king would be surrounded by the notable men of his realm; all would be considerably under the influence of wine, and then would be Herodias' opportunity for securing her wishes. She was crafty, however, and realized that John had an influence upon the king that to some extent at least off-set her own. She realized then that the king knew well her heart, and that he would hesitate to make a broad and liberal offer to her, and so she prepared her young daughter, educated in Rome, beautiful, attractive, that she should take the place before the king of the ordinary dancing girls who usually served on such occasions of revelry.

This was supposedly a rare treat, a high honor to the king, that his niece, a young lady of refinement, should take the position ordinarily occupied by one of a low class. The ruse was successful; the king and the court were charmed with the girl's beauty, and Herod's mind, inflamed with the wine, was generous and unselfish to the extreme. It was customary to remunerate the dancing girls liberally on such occasions, in proportion to the dignity of the entertainer and now how liberally should he treat this one, who had so bewitchingly pleased himself and the company, and who was his own niece and step-daughter? He would ask her what she would like to have, and in her natural hesitancy he would press the matter upon her, to mention whatever it might be, even to the half of his kingdom; and then boastfully he would make oath to his liberality. The girl, no doubt, was instructed of her mother what to expect, and yet the crafty woman had kept the design wholly within her own grasp. Her daughter should not know in advance, lest she should make some error; she would merely first have the king's word that she would have her desire; then she was to come to her mother and receive instructions. Childlike, she seems not to have had great ambitions and wishes of her own, and hence she at once adopted her mother's wish, and asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

How horrible it seems, that anyone should have such a desire, such a murderous condition of heart! How strange it seems that a refined, educated woman should have such sentiments as would prompt such a request! Yet it was but the natural operation of the evil in the fallen heart. As the Apostle James says, the beginning of temptation is to be drawn away of desire, of ambition—enticed thereby. Then, when desire (ambition) has conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.—James 1:14, 15.

Even the weak and despicable Herod was shocked by the request. He had been trapped, and he saw it; he realized at once that this was a scheme on the part of his wife, and that now, as on former occasions, she had proven more than a match for him. What would he do? Would he resent such infamous conduct, and denounce his wife and her daughter as murderers, plotters against innocent blood of a righteous man? Would he take his stand for justice and for truth, and resolve that now, seeing the depth of wickedness into which he had been ensnared, he would strive to turn about in his course, and follow the advice of this prophet of the Lord, and reform?

EVIL RESULTS OF A WRONG STANDARD

No; he had not sufficient character for that; and from his wrong standpoint of view duty appeared to lie on the other side: First, had he not given his word, and should not the word of a king, given on his birthday, and at a feast, and in the presence of his chief generals and supporters, be inviolable? Moreover, in his maudlin condition he had riveted the matter with an oath, and now from his wrong standpoint pride asserted itself, and would not permit him to take the right course. Here again we see in an exaggerated form a principle which applies daily to worldly people in all of their affairs. They have a wrong standard before their minds. It is a standard of pride and self-esteem and love of approbation of others, and not a love for righteousness, for truth, and of deference for the Lord; and hence many have found themselves like Herod, led step by step, by what seems to them to be fate, and as they would say, beyond their control: but such matters are beyond the control of men because they are not under the proper control, because they are not the Lord's people; because they have not given their hearts to him. Therefore the affairs of life, instead of working for good to them and bringing them valuable lessons, helpful and elevating, are bringing them experiences which lead downward continually. The lesson here for the Lord's people is to make a proper start, to recognize the Lord, his will, his word, as the standard of justice and of truth, and to walk accordingly. A further lesson is, that wherever we may be, wherever the truth may find us, in a downward course, the only proper method is to at once recognize the voice of the Lord, the voice of right as paramount, and to obey that voice, regardless of how matters may seem or appear to fallen fellow men.

That the king was sorry is indeed an indication that his heart was not utterly corrupt, but that he should yield to what he knew to be wrong, through pride, is an evidence of utter lack of character. History shows that a certain amount of retribution came upon these guilty people forthwith: the sending back of his first wife led to a war between Herod and his father-in-law, the king of Abrabia, in which Herod's forces were worsted seriously. Later on Herodias prompted Herod to apply to Rome for an enlargement of his dignity and power, but his application was rejected, and instead he was dethroned, lost all his title, power and influence, and the only redeeming quality noted in the case of Herodias is that she shared Herod's loss and banishment. Poor woman! Perhaps finally she learned that earthly ambitions are much like the apples of Sodom; perhaps she learned the folly of the course she pursued, that it brought no true joy, no true blessing, but only excitement and one disappointment after another. Perhaps, too, King Herod learned some lessons. We read that he heard of Jesus and his wonderful works, and that superstiously he concluded that this must be John risen from the dead. Altho not a Jew, but of the family of Esau, he nevertheless had some knowledge of God and of the hopes set before the Israelites, and possibly his evil experiences brought him some valuable lessons.

So with many of the world in the present time: their experiences are bad, and yet they impress lessons upon themselves, and upon others, which ultimately may be of service, of value. As we look at their mistakes let us learn to profit by avoiding them in our lives. Let us remember, too, that all ambitions and temptations are not on the large and terrible scale of this picture before us, yet that the same principles are involved. Let us learn to recognize principles, whether operating in little things or in great ones, and that he who is faithful to right principles in small things will be faithful in greater trials. Let us first of all learn that the proper course for us is to consecrate ourselves to the Lord, and then seek to have the lawful and laudable ambitions which he will inculcate through the Word.

FAITHFUL CO-LABORERS HEARD FROM

MR. C. T. RUSSELL,

DEAR SIR:—I take the opportunity to write to you, in manifestation of my sincere and heartfelt approval of your magnificent works, now in my hand. Your volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN I must hold and confess to be a veritable Bible Key, justly deserving the appellation they bear—Helps for Bible Students. I have in my possession volumes one to five, in addition to *What Say the Scriptures About Hell?* and *Spiritism.* Sir. before offering any opinion or remarks, permit me to say first, that with regard to your little work on *What Say the Scriptures About Hell?* I do a little Greek reading. I know nothing of Hebrew, but I must confess that it puzzled me beyond measure to find out where our early interpreters of the Scriptures found the substance or foundation of that horrible doctrine. And gaining much, very much knowledge on the subject by reading that little work, I have to ask the question, "What was their motive for establishing this hell torment doctrine?" The only answer I can find is that it was from some selfish end to frighten men into Christianity, a plan the Almighty never intended, having made man a free agent to choose for himself. But these "devil doctrines" will soon have to give way to the light of present day truth. My profession being that of Christian work—a catechist and schoolmaster—in the latter position I sometimes, find it difficult indeed, after choosing a text, to know where to begin or where to end; not because words fail me but from the fact that the doctrines I have been brought up in were so twisted and distorted that I did not know where was solid ground. I am not ashamed to confess that many passages appeared so difficult that I preferred to leave them to themselves. But thanks to your invaluable helps, many such confounding passages are now as clear to me as daylight. Sir, I hold that Almighty God himself has raised you up to be the purveyor of heavenly food for his famishing children; so that I need not say anything more than wishing you a fair share of his divine blessing. I am still reading and studying my volumes. At first there were some things that seemed to conflict with my views and opinions, and where disagreement crept in, but that, I hold, was because I did not grasp the full purport of the subject, for no sooner than grasped, disagreement disappeared, leaving the approval to remain. I never quickly agree to a special subject or point, before I thoroughly sift and strain and pry into it to find its foundation and harmony. I came to this country in November, 1898, under the appointment of the Bishop of Jamaica. Before I left my island I once had the opportunity of seeing the first volume of DAWN, which a friend possessed, but partly destroyed—back and inside leaves were gone. I determined to find out the authorship and was gratified in having my wish supplied. Mr. A. M. Brownfield is the man from whom I obtained all. He is my constant visitor since. There is also another brother who has written me from Colon, after learning I was a reader of DAWN, Bro. Isaiah Richards. Sir, I am your disciple, I can assure you; and I hope one day to find myself where you are. This, I hope, is but the first of the many letters I expect to write. Yours in Christ,

H. E. WYNTER,—*Isthmus of Panama.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Many thanks for the kindly words and token of your letter of Dec. 25th. The gracefulness of your action manifests an imitation of him who was the embodiment of grace. (Psalm 45:2) Oh, to get nearer to him in thought, word and deed! The Christ-like spirit is so very rare, but the genuine article so very precious. I trust you will always bear in mind how very much we treasure up your many labors of love, and how our unceasing desire and prayer is, that Jehovah's richest blessing may constantly rest upon you and the great work committed to your care.

In our work here we are striving to do what we can. We are not realizing all we desire, for our hearts are so human, that, battle as one will, the prevailing spirit of indifference brings at times a keen sense of disappointment. The truth is so glorious that one is saddened at the reception it meets from the vast majority. But then, of course, God's "due time" is the grand refuge and sweetener; the "lamps" of the "ten virgins" are not intended to take the place of the sun, but to light their individual pathway. Each must have his own lamp and oil in it. The great bulwark of error is leaning upon others; true faith must be individual, endurance likewise. A mob of sheep rushing after a leader of their own nature is the general position; the Good Shepherd leads his sheep and calls them each by name. The body of Christ is to be one, as a collective number (John 14:21-23), but this oneness is contributed to by each individual.

How the truth isolates! It demands a strong individuality in each. Surely the life of Christ shows this most clearly. He was a reflex of the Father, he was the Father's great and perfect representative. "I seek not mine own will, but his that sent me." And yet what a wondrous *personality!* His was not a passive service, he was not a machine (holy Spirit does not destroy personality) but an active, willing, responsive being, God's "vessel unto honor." Christ's moral nature responded to the touch of God like a bud to the rays of the sun or a grand organ to the fingers of a musician, but he was alone, in the most complete sense, so far as this world was concerned. His motives, ideals and practices were so different. "He dwelt amongst us." Fellowship with God was his only source of companionship. "God was with him." Why? "Because I do always those things which please him." Surely this is our pattern: individual fellowship and service is the one means for individual strength. "Study to show thyself approved unto God." The bride of the Lamb when gathered into one is plural, but its building up is in the singular.

What a grand prospect the "truth" presents as the goal of this individual discipline! A perfect nature, "satisfied when I awake in thy likeness;" the goal of human creeds is paltry, absurd,—a future state of locality merely—going to heaven, missing "hell!"

There is beautiful scenery on earth, but it does not give rest or peace or happiness. Our restless nature is like a troubled sea, nothing outside can calm it; the trouble is *in* man; that is where it started, and that is where the reform must be made. The chief value of heaven is because of God's presence and nature, "it is his throne;" so with the earth: far greater planets roll in space, but Christ places this planet as next in importance to God's throne, not because of its intrinsic value, but because of God's promises, purpose and presence. "The earth is my footstool," hence Jesus says, "Swear not by it." "Forever with the Lord," in his nature, throne and work is the perfect goal.

But surely this perfect goal embraces even more; it is not merely for the individual believer and overcomer. "What shall they do, that are baptised for the dead?" etc. The joy set before Christ embraced more than his own perfect bliss. His glorified body is not only perfect, but it is a conquering one, "acording to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself." Preeminently this feature separates the "truth" from all human conceptions. Something to *do,* something to realize, "to show forth the praises of him who hath called us," etc. "The glory that shall be revealed in us." Service is the grandest law of God's universe. "My Father *worketh* hitherto, and I *work.*" His angels are ministering spirits; perfect happiness and rest will only be realized by a perfect nature *performing* perfect service. May it be ours more and more to enter now into the true glory of service to see its lofty standard, its eternal basis, and by and by to see his face and enter into his joy.

Your brother in the one blessed hope,

ALFRED PEARSON,—*New South Wales.*

VOL. XXI ALLEGHENY, PA., JUNE 1, 1900 No. 11

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

WHY REV. LYMAN ABBOTT IS NOT A UNIVERSALIST

At a General Convention of Universalists one session was set apart as "Interdenominational Evening," and amongst other speakers was Dr. Lyman Abbott, a representative Congregationalist, who gave his reasons for not believing in universal salvation. Speaking as a liberal Congregationalist he declared that modern Congregationalism *does not accept the doctrine of eternal punishment as preached by the celebrated Jonathan Edwards* of the last century.

We make quotations from Dr. Abbott's discourse as follows:—

"I do not believe that any one of God's creatures will be kept by God in eternal existence simply that he may go on in sin and misery forever. The proposition has long since become spiritually unthinkable to me. I might perhaps believe that a soul could suffer eternally; but I can not believe that any being that God ever made will be kept in existence by God that he may go on in sin eternally.

"What was the old doctrine of eternal punishment? The Savoy Confession, up to about the middle of this century, was the recognized expression of orthodox Congregationalism. Not that it was binding on orthodox Congregationalists; but it was the only historic creed they possessed. Except in the matter of polity, and one or two minor matters, it was identical with the Westminister Confession of Faith; and this was the substance of its statement: It declared that our first parents fell by eating the forbidden fruit; that, they being the root of all mankind, their guilt was imputed and their sinful and corrupted nature was conveyed to all their posterity; that as a result we are 'utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good;' that from the race thus lost and ruined in the Fall, 'by the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others are foreordained to everlasting death;' that those not effectually called, God was pleased, 'for the glory of his sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice;' and that those 'not elected, altho they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come to Christ, and therefore cannot be saved.'

"Specifically, and clause by clause, I disown that statement. . . . . This doctrine is inconsistent with the character of a righteous God. I might fear such a God; I might tremble before such a God; I might, because I was a coward, obey such a God; but I could not reverence such a God. It is inconsistent with the faith that Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh, for it was not His nature to pass any by or to ordain any to dishonor and wrath. It is inconsistent with the Scripture; inconsistent with the parable of the prodigal son, which is Christ's epitome of the Gospel; inconsistent with the declaration of Paul that 'every knee should bow and every tongue confess Jesus Christ to be the Lord, to the glory of God the Father'; inconsistent with the very chapters of Romans on which it is supposed to be founded, for they close with the declaration that '*God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all;*' inconsistent with the splendid picture John paints, of the time when every creature that is in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, shall give praise and glory to the God of their salvation."

These noble words and logical arguments surely appeal to all God-loving and God-honoring hearts and heads; and we are glad so to think: it is a sign of heart enlargement which should be admired, even tho the speaker (like other great men of our times) has swerved far from the Bible under the influence of Evolution and Higher Criticism, and is no longer trusting in the great sacrifice for sins "finished" at Calvary for salvation. But Dr. Abbott said some more good things in that discourse. In telling his Universalist audience why he does not believe in universal salvation, he displayed excellent logic. In reasoning that "the ultimate fact in human life is the freedom of the human will," he said:—

"I know that I can choose the good, and therefore I can choose the evil. What I find true in myself I believe to be true in every other man; he can choose the good, and therefore he can choose the evil. And while I wistfully desire—yea, and sometimes devoutly hope—that when the great drama of life here and hereafter is ended, all God's creatures will have chosen the good—I do not know. If I were a Calvinist, I should be a Universalist. If I believed that God could make all men righteous, I should be sure that he would make all men righteous; otherwise he would not be a righteous God. But I start from the other pole. I begin with my own absolute freedom. I recognize as a fact, in my life, in my philosophy and in my preaching, that, in the last analysis, the destiny of every man is in his own hands. Father may persuade, mother may entice, influences may environ, God himself may surround with all possible persuasions, but in the last analysis the destiny of every man is in his own hands. And what he will do with it I do not know.

"Why, if God be good, has he made a world in which there is sin? Why has he not made a world sinless? Could he not? Certainly; he not only could, he has. The birds are sinless. But he could not make a world in which are free moral agents able to choose the good without giving them at the same time power to choose the evil. Power to choose the one is power to choose the other; and a world in which there are some men who choose shame, dishonor, sin and death, is a better world, I dare to say, than a world made of machines that could choose neither the good nor the evil."

We fully concur with the foregoing, reminding our readers nevertheless of the necessity for remembering the two opposite views of *free agency* which may properly be taken from different standpoints, as shown in our issue of Dec. 1, 1899, page 264.

But two queries naturally arise:

(1) How does Dr. Abbott harmonize his two propositions, *(a)* that the *decision* respecting his harmony or disharmony with God lies with *man* himself, individually; (*b*) that God has made no provision for the eternal torture of any? The logical mind will surely inquire, What then will become of the wicked who are *unwilling* to be saved on divine terms and hence *unfit* for the rewards of eternal bliss, if the time is to come when "every creature that is in heaven and on earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea shall give praise and glory to the God of their salvation"?

Is it possible that so fine a logician as Dr. Abbott has overlooked the logic of his own expressions? Oh no! We answer, The connecting link in the Doctor's logic is clear to his own mind, but he does not care to make it very public because it is not very popular yet—the same is true of many others of the ablest ministers in all denominations. The connecting link of his logic will be seen at once when it is stated,—he believes in the *utter destruction* of the incorrigibly wicked, as we do, and as we teach publicly.

But public teachers who keep silence on this subject and put their light under a bushel, do so at a great *cost*—the cost of further guidance of the Lord into the "all truth" promised. Oh, how many ministers in seeking to avoid the senseless charge, "Annihilationist," have suffered God's character to be blasphemed and his people to be deluded by the doctrine of an *eternal torment* of the unsaintly;—preferring numbers and popularity and honor among men and the financial emoluments of these rather than the truth! Alas! they seek to be wise and prudent according to this world's standards, entirely overlooking the fact that the Lord declares he will not reveal his secrets to such. Our Lord pointed this out, saying, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast *hidden these things from the wise and prudent* and hast revealed them unto babes"—who will utter the truth regardless of consequences.—Matt. 11:25.

(2) Some one will say then, If Dr. Abbott believes thus in the final reign of righteousness and the destruction of the incorrigibly wicked, is he not very close to the truth and a very hopeful subject?

We answer, No. At one time, so far as we might judge of any man's heart by his writings, Dr. Abbott was very close to the truth—a believer not only as above but also in the Atonement and in the second coming of him who made the atonement with his own precious blood. But the Doctor seems to have permitted himself to become one of the "wise and prudent" who prefer honor one of another rather than that which cometh from God only. (John 5:44) At any rate, instead of coming out more and more boldly for the truth on these unpopular subjects, he seems to have put the light he had under a bushel until it has gone out. For according to Dr. Abbott's present teachings he undoubtedly is now an Evolutionist with all that implies of rejection of the Bible doctrine of a fall by our first parents (and we in them) from perfection and harmony with God—into sin and its mental, moral and physical degeneration and death. And the rejection of this implies a rejection of the Atonement; for if man did not fall he needed no redemption from the fall—no Redeemer. And if the "ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:6) is denied, then logically "times of *restitution*" to a former estate (Acts

3:19-21; Ezek. 16:55, 61) must be denied also. And accordingly there would be no object in establishing the Millennial kingdom—for Evolutionists argue the world is progressing splendidly under Evolution and needs Christ's kingdom no more than it needed a sin-offering when it had committed no sin and was under no condemnation.

Thus nearly all the great and wise prudent according to the course of this world, *professing* themselves to be wise, have by leaving the truth of God's revelation, the teachings of the Bible, become foolish; and their foolish hearts have become darkened. Indeed we believe this to be the secret of the greater blindness and more rapid falling away of ministers than other Christians from the very hub of revealed truth, the ransom, and hence from all truth. With greater advantages for learning the truth than others they have not *loved* truth so as to search for it, especially when they perceived that their search would not only cost time and energy; but the truth being now as ever unpopular would cost them *popularity* with all classes wedded to errors.

In consequence many ministers have so trifled with truth and with their own consciences that they not only have lost love and relish for truth as truth, but have even lost much of that keen perception for truth which always accompanies a tender and trained conscience. This is well attested by the frequent confessions of prominent ministers appearing lately in the public press. They confess to systematic deception practiced for years respecting their beliefs versus their confessions. And the fact that this is done without even an apology or any manifestation of shame for so ignoble a course demonstrates that these gentlemen either never had much conscience to hurt, or, as we prefer to think, that they have so long and so persistently trodden it in the mire of self-interest and "prudence" that it has lost its life, its power. It is for this reason that the ministers of all denominations are much less amenable to the truth than the consecrated "sheep" of their flocks;—just as it was in the end of the Jewish age. Not only so, but they are the greatest enemies of the truth—and now as eighteen centuries ago many of them do not hesitate to say all manner of evil falsely, openly and by insinuation, to stir up the evil passions of their deluded followers to reject and to *crucify the truth!* Woe is surely coming upon all such hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, who will neither enter the kingdom themselves nor permit those who would be so inclined to enter.—Compare Matt. 23:13.

LOWER ANIMALS SUFFER LESS THAN MAN

Infidelity's hyper-criticism has charged the Bible and the Bible's God with unsympathetic brutality in commanding Israel to sacrifice sheep, oxen, goats and doves by the tens of thousands—causing these innocent creatures intense pain merely to *typify* something future. Moreover, it is claimed that the method commanded by Moses' law for the killing of animals for food—namely by bleeding to death—is barbarous, causing needless prolongation of the animal's sufferings: and the Hindus of India are pointed to as examples for Christians, because they will not taste animal food even if starving: whereas the founder of Christianity, while giving his followers the law of love, not only neglected to mention the lower animals but ate thereof himself.

Our answer has been that it is a mere supposition quite unproven, that the lower animals suffer pain in anything like the degree known to man:—especially such as under the Jewish law were prescribed as food for man. In our opinion the cutting of the throat, while it does not exhaust life instantly, does render those animals unconscious so that they suffer no pain whatever. The horse and the dog, not permitted the Jews as food, give many instances of greater nerve-sensitiveness than do the ox, sheep, etc., and more than any other animals, tho very much less than man. Doubtless the sensitiveness of these two is designed to make them more tractable to man's control and therefore more useful and companionable to him.

We clip from the *Pittsburg Press* an article corroborative of the above that may be both interesting and profitable reading, as follows:—

Animals Which Have no Pain—Recent Experiments Show That Lower Orders are not Sensitive

"The old writers, according to science, assumed that an insect has sensations and feelings resembling our own—that it sees what we see and suffers as we would suffer if treated in the same way. Recently the pendulum has swung in the other direction, and high authorities practically deny that the lowest organisms feel anything that can properly be called pain.

"Thus the late Prof. W. W. Norman, of the University of Texas, maintained as the result of experiments on the flounder and lower species, that the reactions of these creatures against injury do not indicate pain sensations at all.

"Certain motions are said to express pain, because they always accompany injury. Since they do accompany injury they are said to indicate that the injury causes the animal to suffer. This, the professor says, is a mere argument in a circle. He regards movements as the immediate consequence of physical stimulation. To prove his position he made a considerable number of experiments.

"The most striking and classic of these experiments were made on the common earth worm. If such a low animal be divided at its middle transversely, only the posterior half shows those squirming and jerking movements which, anthropomorphically viewed, seem to indicate pain; the anterior half (containing the brain) crawls, as ordinarily, away. Now, if each of these halves be halved again, the posterior segment of each squirms while the anterior halves crawl away. This same process may be continued with precisely like result until the pieces are no longer large enough to crawl independently.

"This striking phenomenon is explained in part by the two sets of muscular fibers in the worm, one longitudinal, causing the squirming and jerking, and the other circular, which produce the crawling. Why in the posterior segments the former set should be initially stimulated and in the anterior the latter set, Professor Norman says he does not know.

"The abdomen of a hermit crab may be cut in two without any 'but a very slight response' from any remaining movable organ. 'Limulus' stops a few seconds when four or five abdominal segments are cut away, then proceeds quickly breathing as before.

"'Geophilus' cut in two in the middle continues its crawling, the front half going forward and the rear half backward. Millipedes divided while walking do not hasten nor stop nor jerk. Dragon flies lose part of their abdomens without any appreciable change in position. Eels continue to eat when their abdomens are cut away during the process.

"Lastly, sharks and flounders, provided a current of water circulates through their gills, will allow the most tedious and deep-going operations on their heads without the slightest appreciable movement indicative of pain."

* * *

Many friends of the truth have queried whether or not God's plan reveals any provision for the lower animals. They query whether or not there will be deaths among the lower animals during the Millennium and if so, if that would not cause pain to their human friends, etc.

Scripture promises are addressed only to man and refer to the lower animals only as they stand related to man's welfare. For instance, the promise that the lion shall eat straw like the ox and lie down peaceably with the lamb, is for man's comfort and assurance, and by no means implies everlasting life to the lamb. Altho all animals have suffered by the fall of man, it is indirectly, in that their ruler, their king, lost his balance, his full sanity, and hence has been unable to regulate and govern properly his subjects. Restitution times therefore will bring its blessings chiefly to man, who because of his much higher and finer organism has suffered by his degradation and death sentence immeasurably more than the brutes.

We may expect death among the lower animals during the Millennium as they shall live out their periods of usefulness; and by reason of the contrast the everlasting life provided for man (made in God's image) will be the more appreciated. Since summer and winter are to continue (Gen. 8:22) we may know that the flowers and all vegetation will likewise die and revive perennially, reminding restored and perfected man of the blessed change that came to him by divine grace through Jesus, his Redeemer and Lord.

These conditions prevailing in the animal and vegetable worlds will bring no pain, neither sorrow nor crying (Rev. 21:4) because *all* of the former things will have passed away. Amongst these will be present *misconceptions* by which we are inclined to attribute to the lower animals human feelings and sentiments—some even carrying these mistaken notions to flowers—loving and talking to their flowers as others do to a pet dog—imagining reciprocal feelings and sentiments.

Restitution will not only bring to men greater knowledge but also sounder minds, in harmony with the divine mind,—so that their loves and hopes, like the divine promises, will measurably pass by the lower creatures and think and plan for and be absorbed in uplifting man—"the groaning creation." And already those who receive a knowledge of the divine plan and with it the spirit of the Lord, find themselves no longer disposed to *waste* valuable time and affection upon dogs, flowers, etc., while the Lord's "brethren" *need* sympathy and aid and counsel in the narrow way, and while mankind in general are in so deplorable a condition as at present—mental, moral and physical. And such a change of sentiment is an evidence of their attaining more of "the spirit of a sound mind."—See 2 Tim. 1:7.

THE WAR SPIRIT GROWING

For years Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Russia have had military fever, as is well known; and now the same has spread in virulent form to Great Britain and her colonies and to the United States. Just what bearing this may have on the great time of trouble impending is somewhat difficult to prognosticate, but it forcefully reminds us of the Prophet's pronouncement respecting our day: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up [to battle]: beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong." The context following clearly describes the great day of trouble in which the symbolic sun and moon shall be darkened and the voice of the Lord shall be heard in rebuke of evil and the present symbolic heavens and earth shall be shaken.—Joel 3:9-16; Heb. 23:26-29.

In the light of the Boer war and the resistance shown to be possible for a weak nation when well armed with modern weapons, we need not wonder if some of the small, weak nations now feel themselves comparatively strong, and if they will be proportionately independent—even to arrogance. Belgium for instance and Switzerland are amongst the weak nations now feeling themselves strong: and it is said that the latter is now spending on its military forces and armaments (pro rata to its population) more than any other nation of Europe.

Of course this war spirit may quiet down; but while it lasts—while every boy's heart is throbbing with military enthusiasm and every schoolyard is a drill-ground—when even the Sunday School scholars are organized into "Boys' Brigades"—when professed Christians are so infected with the fever as to be blinded to justice and love and pity,—things are not favorable to peace. It looks very much as tho the International Peace Congress cried Peace! Peace! when there is no peace—because the spirit of avarice controls the world and not the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love and benevolence. However, we who look from the Watch Tower can note these things with equanimity. In the world but not of it, we can sympathize with all the contestants, realizing that each nation is more or less blinded and misled by the spirit of pride which forgets or has never learned that only "righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."—Prov. 14:34.

Every evil course amongst men seems to be the result of the misdirection or perversion of a *good* quality; and so it is in this war spirit: it is the misdirection of *combativeness* and *destructiveness,*—two qualities absolutely indispensible to progress. But very few even of Christians have learned of the Lord's Word and spirit how to use these faculties properly—in fighting the good fight, in overcoming and destroying the forces of *sin in themselves* and in opposing error with truth, the darkness with the light—"Speaking the truth in love."

We pray that as the spirit of warfare rises in others it may be fully awakened also in the Lord's consecrated soldiers of the cross, that they may become valiant for righteousness, courageous for the truth as "good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ," and be zealous to the extent of enduring hardness—shame, contempt, evil speaking and general opposition from the world, the flesh, the devil and the nominal church which, blinded by false doctrines, Satan is so grievously misleading.

This thought respecting the Lord's soldiers, and the true nobility of character, and deadness to the world, and aliveness to God necessary to victory over self and the world, much impressed us recently on the occasion of our visit to the Washington City church. We found that, out of a total of twenty-seven professing full consecration to the Lord, three-fourths were "volunteers," and the other fourth desirous of being such and only hindered by circumstances they could not so far control. The Editor had the pleasure of joining these soldiers of the Lord in their campaign against error and for the liberation of "brethren" still bound in Babylon;—a campaign, a warfare for a purpose, a noble purpose, a loving purpose; a warfare *for* God and truth and liberty, which injures none and can offend none except the great adversary or those whom he has blinded. The Editor has longed to join in this service in Allegheny; but thus far has been restrained by the fear that harm rather than good might result because of his being known to be closely identified with the publication. It would be credited to a desire to "blow his own horn" rather than as the blowing of the Jubilee Trumpet, proclaiming the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets.—Lev. 25:9, 10; Acts 3:10-21.

We are thankful that we can record that *this* war fever is spreading as well as the evil life-destroying one. The soldiers of the cross are becoming more and more courageous and coming more and more to realize that, if "we ought also to *lay down our lives* for the brethren," this would imply our willingness to lay down any and every lesser thing—time, influence, etc. The Boston church (numbering about seventy) we understand has enlisted in this "volunteer" work almost without an exception. We have sent them 13,800 of the "volunteer" Towers which they are hastening to distribute before the warm weather thins the congregations they would serve.

What a privilege is here for such as have prayed God for opportunity to serve him and his cause! Counting that each of these double Towers represents four sermons, and that each should reach and be read by at least three persons, can any one point out any other method for reaching this same desirable class of "brethren" at the same low cost? If we know of no other method of reaching this class *at any price*, and if we know of *no other* way by which we could preach to them the true gospel, why should not all of the Lord's consecrated people who enjoy the light of present truth avail themselves of the privilege? The fact that it is a *new* method of preaching is nothing. It is surely a successful method, not only as respects the "brethren" we would aid, but also as respects those who have covenanted themselves as living sacrifices to the Lord and his cause. All who engage in this service as something done for and unto the Lord are sure to be correspondingly blessed. Let all who *can* secure a share in this blessing. See the item in our issue of April 15th, discussing the work, method, etc., Hearken to the joyful sound of the Jubilee Trumpet and become enthused with the spirit of this holy warfare.

PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION, JUNE 16-18

Short notice is not always a disadvantage, and we trust will not be in this instance. Arrangements for the Philadelphia convention had not been completed when our last issue went to press. The above date gives us the advantage of the low rates granted by all railroads to the Republican party convention—namely *one fare* for the round trip from all directions. The season of the year is very favorable and we anticipate a large attendance.

The convention will be held under the auspices of the *Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.* The church at Philadelphia, our hosts or entertainers for the occasion, have made bountiful arrangements as follows:—

(1) St. George's Hall, corner of 13th and Arch streets, has been secured for the use of the convention. It is one of the finest halls in Philadelphia.

(2) The Lincoln Hotel, No. 1222 Locust street, has been engaged upon moderate terms for the class of accommodation, namely, one dollar a day each person for lodgings. Meals can be had at various restaurants in that vicinity at fifteen cents and upward. It will be safe for those of limited means to reckon expenses at two dallars per day, for the hotel and convention hall are very centrally located, near to depots, and little street car fare need be expended.

(3) The convention will open Saturday morning, June 16. The forenoon will be devoted to meeting arriving friends, getting acquainted, etc. On that morning representatives of the Philadelphia church will be at the various railway depots to meet arriving friends, who will be expected to identify themselves by displaying conspicuously the front page of a Watch Tower. Should any fail to be identified they will have no difficulty in finding St. George's Hall as above, and there a reception committee (recognizable by a silk badge) will look out for their welfare.

(4) Any of the friends who can attend, but who cannot afford more than one dollar a day expense during their stay, will be assisted by others more able, out of a fund already provided: and any who cannot afford the modest sum of one dollar per day, if they can arrange their railway fare, will be provided for *gratis.* Come, all who can, who have the Lord's spirit and who seek more of it. The assembling of ourselves together for the consideration of our Father's Word will surely bring a blessing as he has promised.

(5) When purchasing your ticket, ask for—"Excursion ticket to Republican Convention at Philadelphia." The railroad people assure us that such tickets will be satisfactory to them.

(6) Decide about your going as speedily as possible, and if you decide to attend, at once address: *"Reception Committee," P. O. Box No.* 3084, *Philadelphia, Pa.,* stating by what road you will travel, and if possible the hour of your train's arrival on Saturday morning or afternoon. The convention program will be announced at its first session and posted up for reference. We cannot now announce the speakers, but among them, D. V., will be Brother Randle (formerly a missionary in China) and the Editor of this journal.

(7) An opportunity will be afforded (Monday afternoon, June 18th) for any confessing baptism into Christ's death to symbolize this in water baptism. Robes and towels will be provided, and the service will be preceded by a discourse defining and explaining Baptism and its import.

(8) No collections will be taken up, nor other solicitations for money made. Our assemblings are for spiritual refreshment and for the acquirement of heavenly riches for all.

(9) Only Christians, who trust in Christ as the *"ransom* for all," are invited to this convention. It is hoped and earnestly requested that all such who come will seek preparation of heart for a blessing—hunger and thirst after righteousness, truth, purity, holiness; and all who come humbly in this condition will surely not only *get* a blessing, but also *bestow* blessings upon others. To these desirable ends let us each make the convention and our own association therein a subject of prayer. We bespeak for it also the prayers of all of the Lord's consecrated people who cannot attend: and thus they will no doubt participate in the blessings.

Other conventions for this season will be as follows: At Chicago, about September 1; at Dallas, Texas, September 29, 30 and October 1. Particulars respecting the last two will appear later.

FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH

PSALM 23:6.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Saint Paul speaks of the full assurance of hope and of full assurance of faith as being the proper conditions for the Lord's people. (Heb. 6:11; 10:22) And this is the thought expressed by the Prophet, in our text—full confidence that he who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. (Phil. 1:6) But how few Christians, comparatively, have this full assurance of faith; how few can say, Surely, undoubtedly, goodness and mercy shall follow me henceforth through life, and by God's grace I ultimately shall gain the heavenly kingdom and the glorious things which God has promised to them that love him! The few who can enter fully into sympathy with the Apostle and Prophet in these expressions have therein a great joy, a great blessing, a great rest of heart which others do not possess. Let us therefore inquire why it is that the number who thus enter into the rest of faith is so small. What are the hindrances to the others, and how can those hindrances be removed, that a larger number of the Lord's people may enjoy their patrimony?

The hindrances are of two kinds: (1) Many who are on the Lord's side, and who have been greatly blessed of him, and who have made considerable progress in the knowledge of the truth, and who are trusting in the merit of the Lord Jesus' sacrifice as the only hope of a future life, and who are thus justified, have nevertheless failed to take the second step necessary to their full induction into sonship in God's family and into joint-heirship with Christ to all the exceeding great and precious promises which extend only to those who become his sons. This step, essential to becoming sons and joint-heirs, is the purpose of full consecration—the full surrender of our own wills, including all the aims and objects and purposes of life, and including also all that we have in the way of time, influence, means, reputation, etc. Not having taken this step, not having taken up the cross to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, this large class very properly feels that it is questionable to what extent the Lord's promises, either for the life that now is or for the life that is to come, belong to them. And in this they are right; for none of the promises, present or future, belong to them, nor to any, until they have come under the terms of a full self-surrender, consecration, presenting their bodies living sacrifices to God, holy, acceptable, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our advice to these, then, is that realizing the situation, they do not longer delay, but hasten at once to avail themselves of the greatest privilege that could possibly be offered, even by the Almighty. If they stand still they are, in the language of the Apostle, receiving the grace of God in vain—failing to use it. (2 Cor. 6:1) God's grace, as freely bestowed upon those who have come to a knowledge of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, is the grace of the forgiveness of sins, of justification through faith; and the very object of this grace is to *permit* or *qualify* us to become living sacrifices, acceptable to God's altar through the great sacrifice of our Redeemer.

Whoever, therefore, shall advance thus far and know of his privilege, and yet refuse to present his little all, has failed to be constrained by the love of Christ, has failed to appreciate the divine favor bestowed upon him, and manifests this failure by his neglect to use his opportunities, by his neglect to sacrifice the imperfect fragment of this present life, that he might obtain in exchange the great prize of glory, honor and immortality, and joint-heirship with Jesus in the kingdom: such receive God's grace in vain, profiting nothing by it over and above the world, which as yet lies in darkness and blindness.

What should such do? They should at once resolve that to render all they have to the Lord's service is not only a reasonable thing, but an offering far too small—far less than what they would like to render to him who has manifested such compassion and grace toward us. And we should feel thus, even if there were no rewards attached to such a consecration of ourselves. But inasmuch as God has attached great rewards and blessings, we should feel not only that a refusal to accept would be an indication of non-appreciation of divine mercy, but an indication also of a weakness of mind, of judgment, which is unable to balance the trifling and transitory pleasures of self-will for a few short years, with an eternity of joy and blessing and glory, in harmony with the Lord.

And more than this, the consecrated are the only ones who really fully and truly enjoy this present life, for they indeed have a peace of heart which the world can neither give nor take away—a condition which all the world is coveting and seeking after, but finding not because they seek it not in the Lord's way of full self-surrender to him. We urge, then, upon the class now addressed that they promptly make their covenant with the Lord, and thus become heirs of his good promises pertaining to the life that now is, and also of that which is to come, and that thus they lay the *foundation* for entering into "full assurance of the faith" and full assurance of the hope that God's mercy and goodness shall follow them all the days of the present life, and that they shall dwell in the heavenly home forever.

(2) But amongst those who are real Christians, and who have made a full covenant of sacrifice unto the Lord, we find many who say, and more who think it without saying—"O that I could feel sure that God's goodness and mercy would continue with me all the days of my life, and that I should attain unto his kingdom! O that I might have a full assurance of faith, a full assurance that I am accepted of the Lord, and that by his grace I shall ultimately be an overcomer!" What is the difficulty with this class? Why is it that these do not possess this full assurance of faith? We answer, that their difficulty is a lack of faith in God, and such a lack of faith is not pleasing to God, for "without faith it is impossible to please God." Such lack of faith, moreover, is a constant hindrance to their overcoming, as it is written, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." The Christian who has not the shield of faith, and a large one, is continually at disadvantage before the adversary.—Heb. 11:6; 1 John 5:4.

What must be done to overcome this lack of faith, and to have an increase of faith? We answer, that like the apostles of old he should pray, "Lord, increase our faith." And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, each should *cultivate* faith in his own heart: (*a*) By refreshing his memory continually with the divine promises, becoming very familiar with these in the Father's Word. (*b*) He should seek more and more to remember that having made his covenant with the Lord these promises are his, and in his heart and with his lips he should claim them as his before the Lord in prayer with thanksgiving. He should claim them as his in his own thoughts, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

When trials or difficulties or perplexities arise, he should think of these promises, remembering that they *belong* to him—because God has promised them to such as love him—who have made a covenant by self-sacrifice. (Psa. 50:5; Mal. 3:17) He should resolve henceforth to trust the word of the heavenly Father implicitly. Thus, if some seeming accident befall him, let him call to his mind the promise that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose," and assure himself that the seeming accident would not have occurred had God not seen a way to make it the channel of a needed lesson or blessing. Let him refresh his mind with the thought that he comes under the provisions of this promise because he loves the Lord, and so loved him as to make a full consecration of himself to him; thus he is assured that this promise was intended for him.

Let such also remember the language of the Apostle, that if God loved us while we were yet sinners, so that he provided for us the great salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, much more does he love us now, since we have been justified through faith in the great atonement, and have made a full consecration of ourselves to him, and thus come under the terms of adoption into his family. Let him remember, too, that he who has begun the good work changes never, and that if our hearts are still in harmony with him, if our faith is still clear and firm in the great atonement, if our consecration is still full and complete, so that we seek not our own wills but his will to be done in our affairs, then we may indeed have the full assurance of faith, because knowing that God is unchangeable, and knowing that we are still in line with his promises and arrangements, we know that all of his gracious providences are still being exercised on our behalf. This is full assurance of faith—full confidence in the Lord.

(3) It is possible, however, for the true Christian who has taken the step of justification and the step of consecration and adoption into God's family, and who has had the blessing of full assurance of faith—it is possible for such to lose this, if he become overcharged with the cares of this life, cold and indifferent as respects the Lord, his kingdom, his brethren, his cause, etc. Such, of course, should not have a full assurance of faith; God does not intend it for them, but rather intends that if we leave the proper consecrated attitude we should also lose the joys and consolations which belong to it. And this is not merely as a retribution or punishment, but designed specially to awaken us to a realization of what we are losing, to the intent that such as have "lost their first love" may be revived, may renew their consecration vows, and thus return to the Lord, who will abundantly pardon and restore unto them the joys of his salvation.

So then, reviewing our text, we say that this assurance of faith that God's goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our lives, and that we shall ultimately by his grace attain to the kingdom, is for the class mentioned in this Psalm, viz., the Lord's sheep—those who are following him, and who are having the experiences outlined in this Psalm. One of these experiences is that following the Shepherd they are not left to hunger and thirst, but are bountifully supplied in the green pastures and by the still waters of the truth. Moreover, it applies to those who experience the Shepherd's care, his rod and staff, correcting, reproving or guiding them. Such sheep as learn to love and have confidence in the Shepherd and in his guidance, and to take comfort and blessing out of all the afflictions and trials of life which may be permitted to come upon them, realizing that they are providential, and for their blessing—such continue to follow the Shepherd, continue to have the experiences of sheep, and may rejoice with full assurance of faith that he who began the good work of shepherding them and leading them out from the byways of sin and of selfishness into the full blessing of the heavenly Father, will continue this work and complete it, if they abide in him.—John 15:4-6.

"GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD"

Matt. 6:11; John 6:5-14.—June 17.

Jesus and the apostles, entering a boat, sailed across the northerly end of Lake Galilee. The boat was in full view of the shore for probably all of this distance, and the multitudes, not only of those who had heard Jesus, but other multitudes on their way to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of the Passover, going by slow journey afoot, saw the boat and judged of its objective point, and many, desirous of seeing the great Prophet Jesus, of whom they had heard many things, deviated their course toward the point of the boat's landing. And so it was that after Jesus and the disciples had reached their destination (and he had been for some time instructing them in things pertaining to the kingdom) looking up they beheld a vast concourse of people approaching the spot.

Jesus of course knew that with the vast majority at least the object in coming was merely curiosity, not faith nor desire for instruction. Nevertheless, as always, his generous heart was full of sympathy. He beheld them as sheep having no shepherd, as following Moses and the Doctors of the Law in a blind, almost irrational manner, and having comparatively little capacity or hearing for the good tidings which he had to give. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the fact that they were not in a condition to receive spiritual truths such as he could give to his disciples, he proposed to give them a general object lesson which might do them good physically at the time, and which might be a channel for blessing in the future, as they would look back and remember the event. He proposed to feed the multitude with natural food, and to do it in such a manner as would impress them favorably, and besides, teach a great lesson of faith and trust to his apostles, who would need in future times the faith and confidence inspired by the miracle which he intended to work.

Philip, one of the apostles, resided in a city not far from where they were; hence it was with special appropriateness that our Lord addressed to him the question of supplies—where sufficiency of bread could be obtained, etc.; not, as the Apostle explains, that Jesus was in any question on this subject, but that he wished to stimulate the thought of Philip and the other apostles, and thus to prove or test them and develop their faith in him. Philip, however, took the question in a purely practical form, and replied that it would require two hundred pennyworth ($34) of bread to satisfy even partially so large a company. But Andrew, apparently thinking of our Lord's power, but scarcely able to realize so great a miracle, suggested that there was a beginning of the supply at least, in the five barley loaves and two small fishes possessed by one of the company.

Combining the testimonies of the different Evangelists we might suppose the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples to have been about as follows:

Jesus.—"Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"

Philip.—"Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little."

All the apostles.—"Send the multitude away that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge and get victuals." (*Luke.*)

Jesus.—"Give *ye* them to eat." (*Luke.*)

All the apostles.—"Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread and give them to eat?" (*Mark.*)

Jesus.—"How many loaves have ye? Go and see." (*Mark.*)

Andrew.—"There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?"

Thus did our Lord prepare the minds of his disciples to appreciate the miracle he was about to perform, and then instructed them to seat the people for the proposed meal. This was a comparatively easy task, because it was a grassy country, we are told, and the people were accustomed to a certain method of arranging themselves in groups of fifties and hundreds for general feasts.

The fact that our Lord Jesus gave thanks for the bread and fish should be an important lesson to all who seek in any degree to be his followers. If it was appropriate that he should render thanks to the heavenly Father for some plain barley bread (the poorest and cheapest sort), and for some dried fish, how appropriate it is that we who by nature are sinners and under condemnation, and only permitted to call God our Father through the reconciliation that is in Christ Jesus—how appropriate that we should lift our hearts and voices in thankfulness to the heavenly Father as the author of every good blessing and gift which we enjoy!

We cannot understand how any Christian dare neglect to render thanks for his daily food, and we thoroughly believe that those who do neglect this propriety are great losers thereby. God, of course, loses nothing, for giving does not impoverish him, neither would withholding make him rich; but the Christian who has learned in everything to give thanks, and to make acknowledgment to the heavenely Father, has learned to appreciate and to enjoy his blessing more than others. To such thankful hearts the plainest of food will be more appreciated, more happifying, more satisfying than to others. And it is undoubtedly a fact that a peaceful, thankful, happy mind is not only a blessing of itself, but additionally an aid to digestion and to the obtaining of good benefits from the food which we eat. How many dyspeptics know that it is possible to eat without satisfying, and to have plenty, and yet be unable to derive therefrom comfort and proper nourishment! And perhaps there is no better antidote to dyspepsia than a thankful, grateful heart, which acknowledges divine blessings and seeks to use them, not only with thankfulness, but with contentment, and thus has great gain.

True, God does not resent failures to acknowledge him in all our ways, but continues to cause the sun to shine upon the evil and upon the good, and to send the rain alike upon the just and the unjust, and to permit many of the blessings of this present life to continue with those who make no proper acknowledgment of them. Nevertheless, such cannot hope to grow in divine favor, as they might if in all their ways they acknowledged God and sought to see in all the affairs of life his providential care.

These remarks, however, apply not to the world in general, nor to mere nominal believers, but only to those who have become the Lord's people by entering into a covenant with him through Christ. As for the world in general, who are not seeking to be the Lord's people and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, it would seem that their offering of thanks, or prayers of any kind, would be inappropriate, as we read: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes; or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing that thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee." (Psalm 50:16, 17) In a word, then, there is just one right way to begin to be the Lord's followers, and those who do not wish to begin according to the Lord's direction, in self-consecration, have no right to suppose that outward acts of formalistic piety are acceptable or pleasing to God. We must first become the Lord's before we can hope that any worship or service from us will be acceptable to him through Jesus.

The faith of the apostles is well demonstrated in the fact that they proceeded to seat the people, according to the Lord's instructions, and then proceeded to divide to them the, at first, very limited quantity of food. Without faith in the Lord they would undoubtedly have refused to take any part in the proceedings, fearing that it would bring reproach and ridicule upon themselves. The lesson which they learned in this connection no doubt went with them through subsequent years, teaching them that they could do all things by the power of Christ, if laboring under his command. And the same lesson comes forcefully to us all. Neither our duties nor our privileges are wholly measured by our own abilities. A proper faith in the Lord permits us to realize his omnipotent power, and that if he be with us, for instance in the distribution of spiritual food to the hungry, the little of means and ability and opportunity at our disposal may be so blessed as to accomplish marvelous things. Indeed, have we not this very experience today in connection with the spread of the harvest message? Out of the little of means and talent, opportunity and ability, what God hath wrought! How many have been fed and are being fed!

The miracle was all the Lord's, and yet a great blessing came to the apostles, in that they were privileged to be coworkers with the Lord. And similarly here, in the dissemination of the harvest message, we recognize that it is all of our Lord, the present Bridegroom, King, Reaper, and yet that he is pleased to use as disseminators of the truth all those who have faith in him and who gladly accept his service. As our Lord could have performed the miracle of feeding the five thousand without the instrumentality of his disciples, so now he could feed the hungry Israelites indeed—who are famished, not for bread and not for water, but for the hearing of the Word of the Lord (Amos 8:11)—without our aid. Let us gratefully thank him for the privilege of being co-workers in any capacity, and let us the more zealously do with our might whatsoever our hands find to do.

Another great lesson taught by this miracle was that of economy; for the apostles who distributed the food were required to gather up for their own future use the suitable fragments which remained, and each one accordingly filled his basket or haversack, which they were accustomed to carry in their journeys. The miracle would have had only half its weight without this closing lesson of economy. The disciples and the multitude might have learned to think of God's powers in an improper light, and to have expected such provision as would compensate for their carelessness and prodigality. But the gathering of the fragments showed, first of all, the immensity of the miracle, and, secondly, it taught the lesson that we are to use the means which God has put into our hands, and not to expect unnecessary miracles.

How many of the Lord's dear people need to learn this lesson of economy? How many are wasteful of the daily food which the Lord provides? How many would be the more blessed by learning to practice careful economy, not only that they might have in the future, but also that they might in emergency supply to others spiritual or natural food as opportunity afforded? Let all who are disposed to be extravagant and wasteful well consider this lesson from the great Teacher, that nothing is to be wasted, that we have a responsibility in respect to all that God has provided for us, either directly or indirectly, and that after asking divine blessing upon our affairs, and thus signifying our appreciation of them, we are to seek to wisely use them, as we think would be pleasing in his sight, and frugally, economically.

The same lesson might be applied also to our spiritual food. The fact that the Lord has given us bountifully "things new and old" does not mean that we are to treat those blessed truths carelessly, when we have eaten thereof and found satisfaction to our souls; rather, we are to be careful of all the fragments, and are to gather and preserve them for further and future use, esteeming them none the less the Lord's provision than when first we received them from his hands.

REVIEW OF THE QUARTER'S STUDIES

"Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

Reviewing the studies of the quarter we find that nearly all of them are closely related to our Golden Text.

(1) We had the beatitudes—the conditions of heart and character essential to our participation in this kingdom class that God has declared he is selecting from the world, and which by and by he will glorify with the King Emmanuel in his Millennial kingdom.

(2) We had certain precepts, promises and warnings respecting how this kingdom class must make development, not in sitting in judgment upon others now, but rather by judging nothing before the time, when they shall be granted the powers of judgment in such glorious measure as will permit their judging to be a blessing to the world, and that thus this kingdom class must seek the narrow way to glory, honor and immortality.

(3) We had the miracle of the awakening of the daughter of Jairus, an illustration of the great work of the kingdom when it shall be set up, and when all mankind shall be released from the prison-house of death.

(4) We had the healing of the centurion's servant, another picture of restitution blessings which are to be general at the time that our Lord's prayer, in our Golden Text, is realized, and God's kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

(5) We saw how the faith of John the Baptist was tested by reason of the fact that the kingdom work did not come in his day just as he had expected it would, and we saw how carefully our Lord explained to him wherein his expectations had been partly erroneous, and indicated how events as they were in progress were in full accord with the testimony of the prophets. And so we have learned in respect to the establishing of the spiritual kingdom now, to trust not to our own imaginations, but to go rather to the Word of the Lord, and to see what therein is written, and so doing we are able to note today what we would not otherwise be able to discern how that our Lord's great plan is grandly progressing in harmony with what was written aforetime.

(6) We saw, in our Lord's denunciation of Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida, how possible it is for some in our day to have great privileges, as those cities had great knowledge, great opportunities of coming into accord with the Lord's kingdom, and yet through lack of faith to fail utterly—to fail more miserably as respects pleasing God than did such heathen cities as Sodom and Tyre and Sidon. We saw, nevertheless, that the full number of the elect church or kingdom class would be found in God's due time, and that then will commence the great Judgment Day of the world, in which it will be tolerable for all, under the righteous judgment of the great

King, but more tolerable for such as Sodom and Gomorrah than for those who have had the greater privileges and knowledge and misused them.

(7) We found, in the case of Simon and the woman that was a sinner, that some who occupy important positions in the nominal church may be much further from the kingdom of God as respects their hearts than are some others who have outwardly been living a less correct life, and that some of the latter, reforming, may become more zealous toward the Lord and more acceptable with him, and hence more eligible to the kingdom.

(8) The parable of the sower showed us the importance of having our hearts in a correct attitude toward God, not full of worldly ambitions and cares, which as "thorns" would choke the very best seed, but freed from these that we should be ready to receive "the good seed of the kingdom" into our hearts, and to be exercised thereby into seeking first the kingdom of God.

(9) We saw various parables of the kingdom, illustrating to us the church's present experiences, while waiting for the completion of the elect number and the full inauguration then of the kingdom glory and power to bless the world. We saw the true Christians represented by the "wheat," the outgrowth of pure doctrine, the good seed of the kingdom. We saw false Christians represented by the "tares," and the false doctrines which produce such, which were sown by the adversary. We saw the growth of the nominal church represented as being very great, but as resulting in inviting into it the fowl—"every unclean and hateful bird." We saw that the spiritual food provided for the Lord's household had been corrupted by the "woman" everywhere predominant throughout the Scriptures, the wine-cup of whose abominations have made drunk all nations.—Rev. 18:2, 3.

(10) We have seen that the sending forth of the twelve apostles was with the same message, the same Gospel of the kingdom, that the Master declared, and that similarly whoever is sent out of the Lord today as a servant of the truth has the same message, the Gospel of the kingdom, under which, when it is established, God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

(11) The lesson of Herodias and her wicked ambition and sinful course, in which Herod shared, taught us that earthly ambitions lead downward and sinward, away from God and into degradation, but that the ambition set before the church, viz., to be God's kingdom, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, is the lawful ambition which leads upward and is elevating in its every influence and purifying as respects our hearts and lives.

(12) Finally, in the feeding of the multitude, we see illustrated our Lord's compassion for the people, which compassion during the Millennial kingdom will have fullest sway, when the bread of life shall be broken to all of the hungry, and when all shall be privileged to share in the blessings which the Lord's kingdom will bring, and that then those who have followed him in the present time shall be associated with him in the work of blessing the multitude under the glorious kingdom conditions.

We may well pray from the heart, in the language of our Golden Text, Lord, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

WHEN PERSECUTED, FLEE

Question.—How should we understand and apply Matt. 10:23—"When they persecute you in this city, flee ye to another; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cites of Israel till the Son of Man be come?"

Answer.—These instructions were given primarily to the twelve Apostles, and doubtless were understood by them to mean that their mission was not to stay long in a place, but that as persecution arose, and the people were unwilling to hear their message, they were to go to other cities and villages, full of the conviction that the time for their special testimony of the kingdom at hand was limited, and that they would not more than have accomplished their proclamation in all the cities of Israel before the Son of Man would be presented as King, and the testing of the nation reach its climax. This climax was reached when, at the end of his three and a half years' ministry, our Lord rode to them on the ass, as their King, and failing to be received (in harmony with the prophecy) declared their house henceforth left desolate.—Luke 13:35.

But while this was the primary signification of the Lord's words, we believe that like most of his teachings to Israel after the flesh it had a still larger meaning than was then due to be understood—an application to the parallel closing of this Gospel age. As there was a "harvest" in the end of the Jewish age, in which natural Israel was tested, so in the end of this age there is a "harvest" in which spiritual Israel will be tested. And as there was a proclamation of Jesus in the flesh, as King, so there must be correspondingly a proclamation of Jesus, the new creature, as King of Glory. And as in that "harvest" some were sent forth with the harvest message, and it was to reach all the Israelites within the borders of the promised land, so now we understand that in the present harvest the message is going forth, "Behold the bridegroom," and the further announcement to Zion, "Thy God reigneth." (Matt. 25:6; Isa. 52:7) This harvest message is also to be understood as limited in time, and the bearers of it are not to dally, but to exercise diligence, realizing that the time is short, and that they shall have time and no more to go over all the cities of spiritual Israel, before the grand consummation shall be reached, and the Son of Man shall have completed the first part of his work, the collection of his saints, the "jewels," the "little flock," and thus the kingdom be set up in power.

OF WHOM AND FOR WHOM DO WE SPEAK?

Question.—When in the Watch Tower and Dawns and *Old Theology Tracts* we read "we believe," "our views," etc., are we to understand that a church or society or creed so teaches? If not, how shall we understand such expressions?

Answer.—No; we speak for no party or sect or creed or confession, but merely for ourself—the Editor. Long ago we adopted the plural pronoun in referring to our personal views as being much more modest than the frequest use of "*I* said," "*I* think," "*I* expect," "*I* believe," *I* find, etc. And this custom is followed in the ablest newspapers and journals of our land.

Of course, incidentally, we voice the sentiments of many of our readers when voicing our own; because they and we recognize the Bible as a divine revelation, the only standard of truth, and endeavor to keep close to its letter and spirit. But "we" will neither bind others to "our" convictions nor permit any to bind "us" to theirs. The only *fixed* creed we recognize is the simple and fundamental one—that God sent his Son, who died for our sins; and that through faith in this, and obedience to him, to the extent of our ability, we shall be saved. All who so confess are "Christians" and are to be treated as "brethren." They should be assisted to grow in knowledge and grace, but should be accorded fullest liberty—"The liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." Neither directly nor indirectly has any one a right to make a creed for them nor to otherwise speak for them and then imply their "disloyalty" and "heresy" if they attempt to resent misrepresentations.

Watch Tower readers are supposed to be, and urged to be, the Lord's freemen, and at the same time the Lord's bondservants; and to call no man master; because one alone is their Master and Lord—Jesus. This liberty, however, does not hinder them from appreciating one another as "brethren"—

> "Whose kind designs to serve and please
> Through all their actions run."

Each is *free* to love and esteem each other for their work's sake, and to seek to note how the Master is pleased to use one and another in serving "the body of Christ." Each *free* one, loyal to the Lord, is pleased to recognize as special servants of "the body" those whom the Lords specially uses. Those who are not *free* with the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, are enslaved to decisions of men and to customs and theories, and are not at liberty to follow the leadings of divine providence and the testimonies of the divine Word.

WHEN WILL SATAN BE BOUND?

Question.—In the Dawns you have intimated that the binding of Satan in the end of this age will be accomplished by the increase of general intelligence—light, etc. Is this the only sense in which you consider that he will be found?

Answer.—By no means. The binding of Satan with the great chain, and the putting of him into the abyss mentioned in Rev. 20:1-3, is all figurative; but the figures are all meaningful. To us they signify a *complete restraint* of Satan and all his powers of evil. The great chain represents restraint. The word abyss, in our common version rendered "bottomless pit," represents oblivion. The seal upon it represents divine care that none shall interfere with God's arrangement, but that it shall all be carried out strictly in accordance with the divine prearrangement. Our suggestion respecting the influence of the increased light of the present time is that a preliminary restraint of evil results from turning on the light of present truth, which makes the evil the more manifest and the less able to deceive. But this is not all, by any means. The thought is that the great King, who is now about to take full control of the world, has full power to bind, to restrain Satan and every evil power and influence, that nothing may hurt or injure that which is good throughout the Millennial age, as has been the case during the present age, when the kingdom of heaven (the church in its incipient state) suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force, misusing the members of the body of Christ, even as they misused also the Head of the body—our Lord.

Whether Satan and his associates, the fallen angels, will remain associated with this earth we do not know, but it is quite sufficient for us to have the Lord's assurance that they will no longer be prince and powers of the air, able to misrepresent and deceive mankind, as at present. Some have surmised that Satan and his angels would be deported during the Millennial period, but while there is no Scripture that we are aware of which would settle this point, our view is to the contrary of this. We believe that they will not be deported but remain, powerless to deceive. Our reason for so supposing is two-fold:

(1) This earth has been the scene of their original transgressions and subsequent misdeeds, and it would seem proper that they should *witness* the marvelous transformation which will ensue after the Prince of Light, the Prince of Peace, Emmanuel, shall assume the reins of power, and bring blessings to all the families of the earth.

(2) The Scriptures assure us that the work of the glorified church will not only be to give trial to or "judge the world" of mankind during the Millennial age, but that it will include also the judgment or trial of these fallen angels: and if both mankind and the angels are to be judged, during the same period, it would seem entirely reasonable that both should be associated with the earth and its atmosphere.—1 Cor. 6:3; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6.

"I THAT SPEAK AM HE"

JOHN 4:26; 9:37.

She came, the thirsty one, to fill her pitcher,
And found a stranger sitting on the brink;
And while she poured for him the well's refreshment,
He gave the precious cup of life to drink.
And when she wondered at her life's revealing,
And if Messiah deeper depths could see,
He graciously her rising faith encouraged,—
"I that speak to thee am He!"

And so when we, blest Master, come, all empty,
To fountains, we but drink, and drink in vain;
Be thou with satisfying waters waiting,
That we may drink, and never thirst again.
Our wayward hearts' true inwardness disclosing,
Constrain our timid faith to hope in thee,
And let us hear again the gracious message—
"I that speak to thee am He!"

They turned him from the synagogue accursed,
Whose gift of sight the Savior had bestowed;
And, burning under grief and indignation,
He sought again the well-remembered road.
And while he mused upon his kindly patron,
And if he could indeed Messiah be,
Lo, One with beaming countenance addressed him,
"I that speak to thee am He!"

And so, dear Lord, when our dim eyes are opened,
And one-time friends thy healing power desspise,
Be thou anear with words of cheer and comfort,
To grant our saddest hour a glad surprise.
And when life's subtle mysteries perplex us,
Unlock to us with faith's unfailing key,
That we may hear from out the open portals,
"I that speak to thee am He!"

The proud and haughty still a sign requiring,
In vain the zenith and horizon scan,
While walks among them One with vesture girded,
To wield the purging and discerning fan.
But he who humbly treads the path of duty,
With eyes unsealed shall his Deliv'rer see;
His trial hour shall brighten with this token—
"I that speak to thee am He!"

R. B. HENNINGES.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THOUGHTFUL WORDS OF AN ABLE MAN

An exchange quotes epigrammatic statements from various addresses delivered before the "Ecumenical Mission Conference," held recently in New York City, and among them all none impressed us so much as the following by Mr. Benjamin Harrison, ex-President of the United States:

"The natural man lives to be ministered unto—he lays his imposts upon others. He buys slaves that they may fan him to sleep, bring him the jeweled cup, dance before him, and die in the arena for his sport. Into such a world there came a King, 'not to be minister unto, but to minister.' The rough winds fanned his sleep; he drank of the mountain brook and made not the water wine for himself; would not use his power to stay his own hunger, but had compassion on the multitude. He called them he had bought with a great price no more servants but friends. He entered the bloody arena alone, and, dying, broke all chains and brought life and immortality to light."

THE ANOMALIES OF "ORTHODOXY"

The "Ecumenical Conference" on missions recently in session in New York City, considering ways and means for preaching the gospel to Brahmins, Buddhists, Confucians, Greek Catholics and Roman Catholics—in its very name ignoring Romanism as anti-Christian, since its missions were not recognized or included under the comprehensive term *Ecumenical*—was of course "orthodox." At the same time there was in session in the city of Boston another and quite different convention or Religious Congress, which being under the lead of the famous "orthodox" preacher, Heber Newton, supported by many other notable reverend gentlemen and Doctors of Divinity, also "orthodox," must be considered equally as "orthodox" a conference as the one which met in New York City. Yet note the wide difference in these applications of the term "orthodox;" for the Boston Convention accepted and heard all religions—Christian, anti-Christian, Buddhist and Brahmin, Confucian on a common level.

As a matter of fact this word *orthodox*, which signifies "*correct* or *sound* doctrine," is claimed by everybody; for no one could conscientiously hold to anything he considered unsound or incorrect. But in applying the term to others is the difficulty: how for instance can a Methodist agree that Presbyterian doctrine of foreordination and predestination is correct or "orthodox" and still refuse to accept it? Or how can a Presbyterian agree that Methodist doctrine is "orthodox" when it differs so radically from his own? And how can "Disciples" and "Baptists" recognize as "*orthodox*" or *correct* and *sound* other doctrines which ignore water immersion, which Baptists and Disciples strenuously claim is absolutely essential to a membership in the church of Christ, and to the salvation which they claim is provided *only for the church?*

The fact is that the various sects were much more consistent when they each denied that the other was "orthodox" and each claimed that itself alone was the "orthodox," the *correct* and doctrinally sound church.

What brought about this change? We answer. Two things conspired to produce the present inconsistent condition.

(1) Religious doctrinal *convictions* have softened, though the *professions* continue as hard and stout as ever. Instead of

conviction has come uncertainty, doubt, skepticism and the general feeling that "nobody knows—*we* may be right, *you* may be right or *all* may be wrong."

(2) Not knowing who is right we will simply stick to *our own church* [not to Christ's one, true church, "whose names are written in heaven"] as being as good as any other man-made church, and merely recognize all others claiming the name of Christ and having influence, wealth and numbers as being also "orthodox," correct also—for all we know to the contrary. But in preventing any advanced thought being known as "orthodox" all are agreed—they have already sufficient confusion unavoidably covered by that term—*unavoidably*, because to deny the term "orthodox" to any popular system would be to invite it to denounce yours as "unorthodox," and thus to raise a doctrinal discussion which neither cares to risk before the people, lest the weaknesses and fallacies of all be disclosed to those now "at ease in Zion," dozing, if not sound asleep, on all such subjects.

This is the meaning of the general opposition of all denominations to what we are presenting from the Scriptures as present truth: they see that it is a *positive* doctrine and that those who receive it have *convictions:* they see, too, that these appeal to the Bible and apply its statements in a manner that brings order out of the hitherto confusion and babel of the sects: they perceive, too, that it is *reasonable* (which they know none of the others are) and they each individually and all collectively fear that if heard upon its merits it would sweep all theories before it into oblivion. It is therefore "Self-preservation, the first law of nature," which incites the so-called "orthodox" against the glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. For just the same reasons the various sects and parties of the Jews, however diverse, united against the true light as God revealed it in the close of the Jewish age.

We of course claim that the WATCH TOWER presentations are orthodox, correct, sound doctrinally—otherwise we would not promulgate them. And we go farther and deny that the various inconsistent, unreasonable and unscriptural doctrines of Babylon are orthodox. We claim that although almost all the creeds of Christendom contain some grains of truth, they contain much more error, which quite beclouds and nullifies their elements of truth.

Nevertheless, we claim that our standard of "orthodoxy" is not narrow when applied to Christian people, though it is so exclusive as respects all the creeds of Christendom. It is just as broad as the Bible will permit; and who that acknowledges its authority has a right to ask for more or to accept less?

Our standard of orthodoxy as applied not to sects but to Christians, personally, recognizes as *correct* and *sound* in doctrine all who acknowledge the following points: (1) That he is by nature a member of the fallen, condemned race and hence a child of wrath even as others, and justly under the divine sentence of condemnation. (2) That Christ died for the ungodly, for Adam and all his condemned race; and hence God can now be just in justifying him and all who believe in Jesus. (3) That his justification is the basis of his call to full consecration in self-sacrifice, and that he has thus devoted his *all* to the Lord, in exchange for the share in the Millennial kingdom which the Lord has promised to all such "overcomers."—Rev. 2:26; 3:12, 21.

All the above described class are properly recognized as "orthodox" and "brethren," however they may differ on minor details in the correct knowledge of which they may be expected to grow under the Lord's guidance; building one another up in [the details of] their most holy faith, as revealed in the Word of the Lord, which, as they come more and more to understand it, will make them wiser and wiser respecting the good and acceptable and perfect will of God—unto salvation—until salvation actual, the "crown of life," with glory, honor and immortality, shall be the grand outcome of the finished race.

Who knows any fault to find with this Bible standard of "orthodoxy?" No one! But this is the chief ground of objection to it in the eyes of churchianity: it antagonizes and would speedily destroy not only one but all sects: hence all oppose it—the far-seeing preachers leading their ever-confiding flocks into the battle against the Lord and his truth, in which through temporary success they eventually are the sad losers.

METHODISM AND HIGHER CRITICISM

It was expected that the General M. E. Conference would be asked to take some stand for or against "higher criticism;" but so far we have seen no mention of it. The expectation was based upon the protest made by a few students against "Higher Crticism," Evolution, etc., being taught at the M. E. Boston Theological Seminary. The students resigned, intending to go to other M. E. colleges presumed to be *sound* on the Scriptures; but to their surprise they found a solid denominational front against them, which conspired so successfully that they were refused admittance to any. This means that infidelity to the Bible, under the name of "higher criticism," is being impressed upon every M. E. minister now issuing from these seminaries. And it means that the greatest power of Methodism, its ministry, scattered all over the land, is to be exerted to the gradual undermining of the faith of Methodists. And, "like priest like people," it means that Methodism will soon be fighting God's Word stealthily, covertly, from the inside—inside the house of its *professed* friends. However, this will only awaken some of the Lord's true saints in that house and show them that it is high time for them to come out from Babylon—and from its confusion of false doctrines.

Zion's Herald publishes the results of an investigation respecting the number of "*conversions*" made by two hundred M. E. ministers, educated in the Boston Seminary since Higher Criticism and Evolution began to be taught there fifteen years ago. The results are reported with great satisfaction as giving evidence that Methodism is prospering exceedingly under the diet which repudiates the doctrine of the ransom and makes void the Word of God. These two hundred ministers report 6,023 "*conversions*" during the six months preceding March 1, 1900. The argument drawn from this is that M. E. prosperity lies in that direction, and that the sooner the old fogy believers in the Bible and the Cross wake up and abandon these the more rapidly will Methodism prosper. Hence it was taken as beyond question that the General Conference would certainly not raise its voice to interrupt successful procedure.

But to *what* were these 6,023 persons "converted?" To Methodism! Possibly a very few of them may have been converted to the Lord. Yet when one remembers that nearly all such so-called converts are children of from eight to fifteen years, it seems amusing to credit their "conversion" to either truth or error or to call them "conversions" at all.

Principle seems to be disappearing in respect to religious matters. Churchianity of all denominations seems to be getting to be a *business* governed by "rules of trade" and "laws of supply and demand." What do the people want? What will draw the crowd, add to the church list and treasury? Evidently these are the queries which cause preachers most of their anxious thoughts rather than—What message does the Lord's Word give me for his people? What is the Truth and how can I best make it plain to the Lord's sheep?

But then again, how could we expect these wise "higher critics" to lay much emphasis on the words of our Lord and the apostles and prophets when they have concluded themselves to be wiser than they—claiming that our Lord and the apostles made numerous and grievous mistakes in quoting from Moses, David, Isaiah and other prophets, words which these modern wise men declare were never uttered by these prophets. The conclusion is that if the Lord and the apostles erred in these matters they were not infallibly inspired respecting others: and if they, the "higher critics," could correct them on these points they could give them general instruction, and are surely more competent authorities themselves.

Alas for the poor sheep! How many may be expected to follow the pernicious ways of these false shepherds! None too extravagant is the prophetic declaration, "A thousand shall fall at thy side"—only the sanctified in Christ Jesus, copies of God's dear Son, will be able to stand complete in him. These will be the "very elect," and it will not be possible for them to be deceived and ensnared; for God will give his messengers a charge [a message] for them [present truth] and thus these "feet" of the body of Christ shall be upheld that they stumble not.—Psa. 91:1, 7, 11, 12.

EDUCATED WHITE SAVAGES

That education is valuable no one will dispute, nor is it to be denied that it frequently puts a refined polish upon the actions and words of men and women who are therefore known as *gentle*-men and *gentle*-women. It is a mistake, however, to confound this kind of surface polishing with the "begetting of the spirit," "a new heart." The one is a gilding of the surface manners, the other a transformation of the entire being affecting the sentiment as well as the conduct.

As a painful lesson on this subject, proving that fine education may leave men still savage at heart and only needing opportunity to develop it, we quote below an article from the *Literary Digest*. It relates specially to college bred men of two nations, both of which combine religious and secular education—Protestant Germany and Roman Catholic Belgium: the representatives of the former probably were three-fourths

Protestants and one-fourth Catholics and of the latter all Catholics, corresponding to the populations of those countries. Both *claim* to be "Christian nations," kingdoms of God, and their coins declare that their rulers reign "by the grace of God." We are glad that we hope for a very much better kingdom for which all the more we pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be *done on earth even as it is done in heaven.*" The article follows:

''The White Man's Savagery in Africa''

"While it is customary to speak of the African natives as 'savages,' and to deplore the cruelty of the Sultan of Turkey, who permits the slave trade to flourish between his dominions and the east coast of Africa, late revelations prove that men of more civilized nationalities can be quite as cruel. The Brussels *Petit Bleue* relates the following:

" 'The rise of the Bundja tribes against the Kongo authorities was caused by Belgian tyranny. Hundreds of men died with Lothaire and other Kongo agents in defense of the cruel practices there. The agent Moray says: 'The rebellion of the Mongalla region is due solely to the cruelty with which the natives are treated. Rubber is the booty of the white invader now. If, in a village of 100 male inhabitants able to work, only fifty appear with the required amount of rubber, soldiers are sent to kill the other fifty. The 'loyal' natives are used to fight against the 'disloyal,' and as all are man-eaters, it is easy to reward the loyalists by promises of feasts on the corpses of the slain.'

"The following statement which appears in the continental papers speaks for itself:

"CONGO STATE, DISTRICT BENGALA:—Before me, Agent of the Antwerp Trading Society, appeared at Mandika, the sergeants Massamboko and Mulanda, and the privates Mutuana and Ponga, all of the Station of Mandika, who swore as follows:

" 'White Man! We have returned from the war. We marched thirty hours' distance with the white man Imela (Van Eyken). He ordered us to enter the villages, to see if the inhabitants had gathered enough rubber. If they had not, we were to kill them. In one village we told him we had fulfilled his orders. He told us we had not done enough. He told us to cut up the men, placing the pieces on poles; the bodies of the women and children we were to put in a big scaffold in the shape of a cross. Returning through N'Dobe we found all the natives treated like that. We swear that this is true. Follow marks and agent's name: Moray.'

"According to other reports hundreds of natives have had their hands chopped off because they did not furnish the required quantity of rubber. Similar cruelties are reported from the French Sudan. Several high officials formerly in the German employ have also been punished as offenders of this kind. The Dutch papers remark that the French, English and Spaniards have a great advantage in the patriotic discipline of their newspapers, for while the Dutch and German papers will report an outrage of their countrymen immediately, Frenchmen and Englishmen will exercise patriotic prudence."

"KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD"

JUDE 21.

We cannot keep ourselves in this love unless we have gotten into it. And that all men do not possess it, or are not in this condition of heart, is not only manifested to our senses through the experiences of life, but testified to by our Lord Jesus, who said to some of the holiness people of his day, "I know that ye have not the love of God in you."—John 5:42.

We are to distinguish then between natural love and the love of God. All mankind has some share at least of natural love—self-love, love for family, love of friends. Our Lord, speaking of this kind of love, implies that it is not the love of God, saying, "If ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also do even the same." (Luke 6:32) The love of God, therefore, is a different kind of love to that which is common to the natural man, and we need to be directed into it, and to grow or develop in it, as the Apostle testifies, saying, "The Lord *direct* your hearts into the love of God." (2 Thess. 3:5) We are directed into this love through the divine Word which brings to our attention the peculiarity of God's love as distinguished from that of the natural fallen man. While love in the natural man is more or less selfish, even in our very best exercise of it, on behalf of friends, God commendeth his love toward us as being of a superior kind, in that while we were yet sinners, aliens, strangers, enemies through wicked works, under his gracious, loving plan Christ died for us. This kind of unmerited, sacrificing love is wholly different from anything that is known to fallen humanity. As our Lord Jesus said, the greatest love amongst men would be that a man should lay down his life for his *friends*, but to lay down his life for his enemies is certainly a much higher type of love—unselfish, gracious, heavenly.—John 15:13; Rom. 5:7.

The first blessing that comes to us, as the eyes of our understanding open and we come to some knowledge of the divine character and love, is that we perceive or discern or come to realize this higher type of love—the love of God. As the Apostle says, "Hereby *perceive* we the love of God, because he [Christ] laid down his life for us." "Herein was *manifested* the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him."—1 John 3:16; 4:9.

It is after we have thus perceived the love of God that it begins to operate upon us, if we are in a favorable condition —if our hearts are good ground, prepared under divine providence for this knowledge. Of such the Apostle says, "The love of Christ constraineth us"—draws us, awakens a reciprocating love in our hearts, so that in turn we love God. Not that we first loved God, but that his love attracted and developed ours. (1 John 4:19) The effect of this love upon the good-ground heart is that very shortly it decides that it could do nothing less than love similarly in return, and thus be willing to lay down life itself in God's service. It esteems that this would be but a reasonable service, a reasonable recompense for divine favors.

The Apostle Paul sums up this transformation from selfishness to the love of God in a few words, saying, "We ourselves also were at one time foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another; but when the goodness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared he saved us [delivered us from this evil condition of heart], not on account of works of righteousness which we had done, but according to his own mercy, he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the holy Spirit, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour."—Titus 3:3-6.—See *Diaglott.*

This newness of spirit, this new mind, this mind in accord with the love of God, the Apostle assures us is not received except by those who receive the holy Spirit. Those who merely take the step of justification may to some extent experience a reformation of life, so that instead of living an openly evil course they will seek to live at least moral lives. But none can expect to receive the begetting of the holy Spirit of love, and thus to become possessed of "the love of God," a self-sacrificing love, unless he takes the step of consecration to the Lord, which brings him into the condition in which he may indeed have the holy Spirit, the spirit of divine love, shed abroad in his heart. Let none then hope to obtain the love of God in any other way than the way which God has provided. Undoubtedly in the Millennial age it will be made possible for the natural man to come into "the love of God" through a process of restitution; as he shall more and more attain to the perfection of human nature in that time he may to that extent more and more become possessed of the love of God until, when finally perfected, he may possess this love of God in full measure—because humanity, in its perfect condition, is a fleshly image of the invisible God. But now, while we still have these mortal bodies that are imperfect, and while restitution has not commenced, there is only the one way of attaining the love of God—by obedience to the call of this age, to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, through Jesus our Lord.

The new creature is to grow and to be more and more filled with the holy Spirit—more and more filled with the love of God; hence we may expect that there will be differences of attainment in this matter, and we should know what to look for as evidences of our growth in grace and of our attainment of this love of God. The Apostle John declares, "This is [proof of our possession of] the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and *do not find them grievous.*" (1 John 5:3) He who keeps the Lord's commandments, but who finds them grievous, has thus an evidence that he is not in heart-harmony with them, that he has not made a full consecration of himself to the Lord—the obedience of such an one would be no proof whatever of the possession of "the love of God." But whoever of the Lord's people is so in harmony with him that they delight to do his will, have in this an evidence that the love of God is dwelling in them richly and abounding. This is the same thought which the Apostle again expresses, saying, "Whosoever keepeth his word [loves the word of God, and takes pleasure not in turning, twisting and endeavoring to avoid the force of that Word, but who keepeth or cherisheth it, loveth it, and seeketh to conform thereto] in him verily is the love of God perfected."—1 John 2:5.

This reminds us of our dear Redeemer, in whom verily the love of the Father was perfected, and who is represented by the Prophet as saying, "I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:8) And our Lord marked out the same spirit, as being essential to those who would be his disciples, saying, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." (John 15:10) There is no suggestion in any of these or in other Scriptures that mere outward formalistic obedience and piety count anything with the Lord. The Lord "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth"—such as have the spirit of righteousness, love for righteousness, love for truth, love for all the qualities of the divine character, and a desire to conform thereto in thought, word and deed.

Nor are we to make the mistake that some have made, of supposing that the commandments referred to by our Lord are the Ten Commandments upon which hung the covenant which God made with the Jews. We are not Jews, and hence have nothing whatever to do with their covenant, given through Moses, its mediator, at Sinai, nor with the Law upon which it was based. We are Christians, and have to do with a better covenant, sealed with the precious blood of Christ our *Mediator, and based upon a still higher law than the Decalogue —a law which instead of saying, "Thou shalt not" do this, "Thou shalt not" do that, is positive, and declares what we shall do, saying, "*Thou shalt love* the Lord thy God with all heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength; and *thou shalt love* thy neighbor as thyself." This is a higher law, of which our Law-giver, Jesus, said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love," and of which the Apostle said, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The Apostle John says, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God; he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love."—1 John 4:8, 16.

Altho the first evidence of the possession of "the love of God" is a love for God, nevertheless the Scriptures distinctly point out to us that an additional requirement is specified, viz., love for the brethren—for those who have the spirit of God, especially, but in a general way at least a sympathetic love for all mankind. Thus the Apostle says, "If we love one another, [it is an evidence that] God dwelleth in us, and [that] his love is perfected in us." (1 John 4:12) The same Apostles emphasizes this same point, saying, "Whosoever hath this world's goods [interests, affairs], and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:17) The intimation is that such a lack of love and sympathy, and such a restraint of assistance from a brother in need, would imply that the love of God either did not at all dwell in such an one, or that it was but slightly developed—far from being perfected.

Nor does this love merely exercise itself toward the brethren in matters of temporal necessities; rather, it affects all the affairs of life, leading the one who enjoys it to "walk in love," "forbearing one another in love." (Eph. 5:2; 4:2) And even were it necessary to speak an unpalatable truth, the spirit of the Lord, "the love of God," will dictate the speaking of the truth in love, which the Apostle assures us is essential to our growth in Christ.—Eph. 4:15.

Knowledge is valuable, but only incidentally; of itself the Apostle assures us knowledge would be inclined to puff us up, make us vain and boastful, and thus quite out of harmony with the spirit of God, the spirit of love, meekness, gentleness. Knowledge might make us merely tinkling cymbals, giving out a sound, but possessing no real merit in the Lord's sight. But knowledge, when it serves its proper purpose, brings us to the appreciation of "the love [that is] of God" and to a realization of the wisdom of copying his character, that we should seek so far as possible to be like our Father which is in heaven, copies of his dear Son, our Lord. The Apostle brings this position clearly to our attention when he says, "That ye being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know [appreciate] the love of Christ . . . and be filled with all the fulness of God."—Eph. 3:17-19.

Undoubtedly love is the principal thing to be studied, to be appreciated, to be copied and practiced in our lives. We trust that a large proportion of the Watch Tower readers have already become partakers of this "love of God," and that all such are seeking to have it perfected in them, and to be rooted and grounded in it. We have the Apostle's assurance that only those who take this standpoint can make permanent and thorough progress in grace and knowledge. Those who have entered the school of Christ, and who refuse to progress in it toward perfection, may assuredly expect that sooner or later their knowledge of the divine plan will slip from them; while those who do make progress in this proper direction may expect that the lengths and breadths of the divine plan will continue opening before them, and that their growth in knowledge will keep pace with their growth in love.

Finally, in harmony with our text, let us remember that this is not a matter that God attends to, but a matter which requires our own attention. God has made all the provisions whereby we may know of his love, and may be constrained by it, and may be accepted into it, but it devolves upon us to keep ourselves in the love of God: and we can only thus *keep ourselves in his love* by seeking to practice in the daily affairs of life the principles of his love: permitting the love of God to constrain us daily to sacrifice ourselves in the Lord's service, for his honor and for the spread of his truth; permitting the love of the brethren to so fill our hearts that, as the Apostle expresses it, we may be glad to "lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16); permitting a sympathetic love for mankind in general, the "groaning creation," in all of its trials and difficulties, to exercise our hearts so that we shall more and more feel kindly and generously toward all with whom we have contact and to make us helpful to them as we have opportunity; permitting this love even to extend to the brute creation under our care, so that we will not be negligent of their interests; all this seems essential to our keeping ourselves in this love of God. Let us more and more practice, and thus become more and more perfected in this love, which is the spirit of our Father, the spirit of our Lord, and the spirit of all who are truly members of the body of Christ.

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* See issue July 15, 1916, "Mediator and Advocate Contrasted."

JESUS WALKING ON THE SEA

Matt. 14:22-33.—July 1.

"Of a truth thou art the Son of God."

Our last lesson, respecting the feeding of above five thousand persons with five barley loaves and two small fish, and the twelve haversacks of fragments gathered, and the illustration this afforded of divine ability to care for the Lord's people, and at the same time the propriety of frugality on their part, was followed that same night by another miracle and another lesson. After the multitudes had been fed, toward the close of the day, they evidently were loth to leave the company of one so able and willing to care for their necessities, and probably it was to expedite their dispersion that our Lord urged the apostles to start in their boat for Capernaum.

Our Lord, after dispersing the multitudes, sought the solitude of the mountain in prayer. Though he sometimes prayed with his disciples in their hearing, so that they recorded the words of his prayer, it is evident that he was not content with merely these opportunities, but frequently sought the Father alone, as he has counseled his disciples to do, saying, "Enter into thy closet [private apartment] and pray to thy Father in secret." (Matt. 6:6) All Christians of experience have realized the value of such secret personal communion with the heavenly Father, nor are we surprised that our Lord Jesus felt the need of a similar communion. His knowledge of the Father, and his fellowship with him before the world was made, so far from satisfying him and rendering prayer unnecessary, rather stimulated his desire for further fellowship and communion, especially as he was alone in the world —even his beloved disciples, not having yet been begotten of the Spirit (John 7:39), could not enter into fellowship with him in respect to spiritual things, nor appreciate the trials which came to him as a perfect man, in a way in which they do not come to fallen humanity. He needed such fellowship with the heavenly Father for the refreshment of his own zeal, for the keeping warm of his own love and devotion, which was the basis of his consecration and his daily sacrificing of himself as a man, even unto death.

There is no intimation given that our Lord spent much time at prayer, morning and evening, yet we may reasonably suppose that he never neglected to seek the Father's face; but these brief seasons of worship and prayer daily were evidently supplemented by occasions like the one mentioned in this lesson, in which our Lord spent, apparently, considerable of the night in prayer and communion with the Father. There is a lesson in this for the Lord's people. The duties of life, pressing upon us daily, are not to be neglected; each is to feel, as our Lord expressed it, "I must be about my Father's business," and this would imply, ordinarily, short prayers, which our Lord commended, saying, "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think they shall be heard for their *much* speaking. Be ye not therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." (Matt. 6:7, 8) And the example of a prayer, given his disciples, is brief. Nevertheless, in proportion as we feel the importance of the great work in which, by the Lord's favor, we are privileged to be co-laborers with him, our hearts should be and will be drawn to seasons of spiritual communion; not necessarily a prayer in the sense of making *requests* of the Father, for much of such seasons will doubtless be devoted to thanksgiving for the mercies and favors already experienced, and for the gracious promises upon which we base our faith for the future, and communion with the Lord, in the sense of pondering his will respecting us, and how we may most acceptably serve and please him.

While our Lord was thus holding communion with the Father, the apostles rowing the boat were having difficulty to make headway, a strong head-wind having arisen, which made the lake very rough, boisterous, billowy. John, who was one of those in the boat, tells us that they had only gotten about twenty-five or thirty furlongs (two and a half to three miles) from the shore, in the several hours they had been rowing. This was what is termed the fourth watch of the night, viz., between three and six o'clock in the morning. While thus rowing hard, worn and sleepy, they saw the figure of a man near them, walking on the water, and apparently intending to pass their boat. (Mark 6:48-50) Some of them cried out in fear, thinking that they had seen a supernatural being, and that it foreboded some calamity, but it was Jesus who spoke to them, and set at rest their fears.

The boldness of Peter's faith was then most strikingly illustrated by his request that the Lord should bid him walk on the water; and having received the permission, his faith was so strong that he did walk for a few steps, until seemingly appalled by his own temerity and the boisterousness of the water, he began to sink, and cried to the Lord for help, which may impede and weary us are amenable to his control. miracle of the loaves attested the superhuman authority of our Lord, so likewise did this manifestation of his power attest the same; and if the former illustrated his power to protect his people from want and to supply all their necessities, this last manifested that divine power is unlimited and able to preserve his people in all the storms and difficulties and trials of life.

This is a good lesson for us to apply individually, realizing, as we all must, that our Lord has supernaturally fed us with spiritual food, and that during the darkness of the nighttime which precedes the Millennial dawn and sunlight there will be storms and difficulties arising which would overwhelm us without the Lord's aid. We are to remember that not only the natural winds and waves obey his power and command, but that all the storms and billows of trouble and persecution which may impede and weary us are amenable to his control. The more we are able to realize this, the more of joy and peace we will experience, because the stronger will be our faith in him who is able to succor us and who has promised eventually to do so, and that meantime all things shall be overruled for our highest welfare, if we abide in him.

But the boat and the twelve toiling rowers, and the storm and darkness of the night, all picture still more perfectly the experiences of the Lord's people as a whole—not the experiences of a sectarian church, but the experiences of the one true church, of which the Lord is the Head, the "church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23) This true church has indeed had a stormy time since parting with her Lord who ascended to the Father. The darkness came down upon them—darkness of error and superstition; and the great adversary, through the anti-Christ and many less anti-Christs, has aroused all through this Gospel age a great storm against the Lord's faithful few. The difficulties of their position have caused them to bend every effort to make progress against such fearful opposition, of which one of the apostles declares, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood [merely], but against principalities, and against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against wicked spirits in high positions." (Eph. 6:12) This battle against adverse influences has continued throughout the night-time of this Gospel age, and yet the church has not reached the harbor nor has the storm abated.

As our Lord came to the disciples in the midst of the storm, in the fourth watch of the night (that is, in the early morning), so his second coming in the Millennial dawn is to the church and to "help her," rescue her from her toil and weariness and peril, as the Prophet says, "The Lord shall help her early in the morning." (Psa. 46:5) And as the manner of our Lord's coming to his disciples was different from that they had expected, so the manner of his second advent differs from what has been expected, and Peter would seem to represent a class living now, in the end of the age, who being fully convinced of the Lord's presence are privileged to walk to him by faith. But as Peter's faith was unequal to the occasion, except as the Lord came to his rescue, so all of the faithful now will need the Master's hand stretched to their relief, otherwise they would sink in discouragement, because of the lack of faith.

Is there not a good lesson here for all who have been faithfully laboring in self-control, and in the Lord's service, to bring all their thoughts and words and doings into full accord with the will of God in Christ, and who experience from the world and the flesh and the adversary serious opposition as the Lord's people? The lesson here, in harmony with its presentations elsewhere in the Scriptures, is that little progress can be made by the Lord's people until the Master himself shall join them; and that then their blessedness and privileges will be proportioned to the measure of their faith. How strongly this speaks to us, then, of continued faithfulness and of growth in faith, not in ourselves but in the Lord, and of his ultimate deliverance of all who put their trust in him.

In John's account we learn that as soon as the Lord and Peter got into the boat, immediately the wind and storm ceased and the ship was at the harbor. So it will be with the Lord's people, the "little flock;" so soon as their faith has been fully tested at the Lord's second presence, he will join their number, and immediately the trials and storms, difficulties and oppositions will be at an end, and the desired haven of heavenly condition will have been reached, the kingdom will have come. Courage, then, dear brother mariners, on the sea of experience, seeking to make your calling and election sure! Let us note carefully the Master's words to Peter as especially applicable to ourselves, viz., that all that will hinder us from walking out to meet the Lord is lack of faith. "O thou of little faith; wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Let us learn to trust the Lord, not only in the matters which pertain to his church and all of its interests and affairs, but also in all of the matters and interests of ourselves and families. The lessons will be profitable to us, and prepare us for larger measures of divine favor, and for the joys of the kingdom. And all this faith is based upon a clear realization of our Golden Text, viz., that our Lord Jesus is truly the Son of God. If the Son of God, he is true, and if he is true then all the exceeding great and precious promises which he left for us may be relied upon, built upon, anchored into; and such reliance in them will give us the faith requisite for the overcoming of all the difficulties and obstacles of life, that we may come off more than conquerors through him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood.

Thy ship is toss'd by wind and wave,
But there is one whose power can save;
Across the sea he hastes to bring
Both rest and peace,—the Lord is King.

Yes, Jesus walks upon the sea,
And in the storm he comes to thee;
Then trust in him, rejoice and sing;
He calms the waves,—the Lord is King.

He stretches out his hand to thee,
And from thy fears he sets thee free;
Beneath the shadow of his wing
He keeps thee safe,—the Lord is King.

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE"

JOHN 6:22-40.—JULY 8.

Some of the multitude who dined on the five loaves and two fish were evidently very deeply impressed with the miracle, and inspired with great respect for Jesus. A number of them (we cannot suppose very many) concluded that they would follow this great Teacher, possessed of such wonderful powers, feeling assured that becoming his disciples would at least safeguard them from want; and this, to a people of their kind and under those conditions, was evidently quite an inducement. However, when they found the Lord on the other side of the lake, at Capernaum, and expressed to him their interest, and how it had led them to follow him, he told them plainly that theirs was a selfish or mercenary interest, and not the kind that he desired to cultivate, namely, an interest in the truth.

Taking advantage of the situation, our Lord gave, not only to these but also to his disciples and to us through them. a most valuable lesson on the proper things to be sought after; pointing out that the chief aim and desire and object of life should not be the meat that perisheth, earthly food, earthly comforts, earthly pleasures, which at very most can be but transitory, but that on the contrary the chief aim of all should be to attain life eternal, beyond the present dying condition. He points out that God's provision for his creatures is not merely earthly for the sustenance of our natural bodies for a little time, but much more important, a spiritual nourishment, of which, if we partake, we shall attain eternal life.

He would have them see that the miracle which he had performed, and whose blessing they had shared, was merely an illustration of a greater gift, of a more valuable bread of life, that he, the Son of God, was alone able to give them—and the same is true of us and of all. By way of assuring them that he was able to provide the bread of eternal life as he had shown himself able to provide the natural food, he declared himself to be the Son of God; and that the heavenly Father had sealed him, marked him, granted him the evidences and proofs of sonship in the powers conferred upon him. The seal was the holy spirit, the holy power of God, which acting upon our Lord Jesus enabled him to turn the water into wine and to increase the broken barley loaves and two little fish so as to feed the multitude. These powers were the evidences or outward manfestations to men that God's holy spirit was with him, the mark or seal of his relationship to God as an honored representative, a Son. On the strength of these evidences, the witnesses having the right condition of heart should have been prepared to heed our Lord's testimony, as a message from the Father.

The discourse was not without its effect: the hearers felt the force of the suggestion that the important food to be sought after was that which would give the life eternal, and as Jews they had before their minds the further thought that God had made a covenant of works with their nation, with promises of eternal life attached thereto—the Mosaic Law Covenant. Hence their inquiry, What works shall we do that would be pleasing to God, and that thereby we might have eternal life? Give us whatever message you have that will help us in this matter.

Our Lord's answer may at first seem to us a peculiar one, in that he declares that to believe on him would be a *"work"* —the work most acceptable before God—the only work that could possibly make them acceptable to God. What is meant by this we will consider further along. His hearers evidently understood exactly what he meant, *viz.*, that the thing most pleasing in God's sight would be that they should acknowledge him as the Son of God, the Messiah, coming into the world according to divine promise, to establish the kingdom of God, and to begin the blessing of all the families of the earth. But now they asked a *sign* of his Messiahship, instead of realizing that they had already seen the sign or signet or seal of God upon the Lord Jesus, as manifested not only in his spirit of love, kindness, generosity, goodness, purity and truth, as well as in his doctrines, but additionally that they had seen outward manifestations and evidences of the divine power upon him, as shown, for instance, in the miracle of the day before. This was because they were hard-hearted, as the Scriptures elsewhere express the matter (Mark 3:5; John 12:40), that is to say, they were in a faithless attitude, not readily impressionable but rather inclined to be skeptical: hence these signs or evidences of the seal of God upon Jesus were not sufficient for them.

We can readily see, however, that if sign upon sign had been given, the same "evil heart of unbelief" could reject ten signs as well as it could reject one. Just so it was in the case of Pharoah: he was really more impressed with the first sign given by Moses than by the succeeding ones, each of which being received in an improper spirit tended to make his heart the harder, until the last. Just so, it is with some today in respect to the Lord's promises. They incline to ask, Did the Apostle say this, that is contrary to my prejudices? And if convinced of the fact they would want to know whether any other Apostle had said it, and thirdly, whether the Lord himself had said it, and fourthly, whether any of the prophets had said it,—seeking not so much to believe as for an *excuse* for disbelieving. Such persons usually, if they had all of these evidences, would be no more convinced by the multiplicity of testimony. On the contrary, he who really believes the Bible to be God's Word believes its every authentic testimony, whether by the Lord or an apostle or prophet,, and whether stated once or many times reiterated.

The working of skepticism in the minds of our Lord's auditors is evidenced by their statement. In substance they said, "We cannot acknowledge that your miracle was so great or so wonderful as necessarily to imply that you are the Son of God, for we remember that Moses exercised a power something of this kind; in fact, he provided bread enough for our forefathers, the whole nation of Israel, for quite a long time in the wilderness, and that without any loaves and fish to begin with,—we refer to the manna."

Our Lord's response is that the manna was not produced by Moses, that he had nothing whatever to do with sending it; that it came directly as a provision of the heavenly Father, Moses not being even an agent in the matter. And then our Lord pointed out that the manna given in the wilderness was typical of the true Manna, the true bread of eternal life—himself and the truth he proclaimed—which he now desired them to receive at his hands.

They did not yet get the thought that he referred to himself, but rather were getting a crude and natural thought, that as God had given manna from heaven that sustained their fathers in the wilderness, so now this great Teacher, Jesus, was telling them of a still higher class of manna, the partaking of which would yield eternal life, and hence they exclaimed, "Lord, evermore give us this bread!" Our Lord then explained the figure or parable, declaring, in the language of our Golden Text, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

It is evident that in the words "cometh to me" our Lord did not mean to approach him as his hearers had done, coming across the lake. The expression "cometh to me" must be understood, therefore, as coming to the Lord with hunger and thirst for righteousness, with a desire for the life eternal, and hence for the bread of life by which it might be attained. All who would thus come to Jesus, in this proper attitude of heart, would find him to be indeed a satisfying portion. Likewise the expession, "He that believeth on me shall never thirst," must be understood to mean more than merely believing that such a person lived, for it is written that "devils also believe and tremble:" to "believe," therefore, must be understood to signify accepting the Lord, not merely intellectually, but with the heart, as it is written, "With the heart man *believeth unto righteousness*" [to a change of heart which aspires to righteousness.] He who thus believes in the Lord from the heart, recognizing him as the Son of God, through whom are to be fulfilled all the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word, receives such a refreshment, such a slacking of thirst, such a satisfaction, as will never end so long as he maintains this faith. (Rom. 10:10) Such find the divine provision in Christ so abundant that they could not ask for more, and exclaim,—"It satisfies my longings, as nothing else could do."

And now we see the meaning of our Lord's words of verse 29, "This is the *work* of God [the work which God would be pleased with], that we *believe* on him whom he hath sent." There is a *work* connected with believing;—not a work with our hands, but a work with our heads and our hearts: and no work that we could do with our hands would be as acceptable in the Lord's sight as this. Indeed, when we realize that in our fallen and imperfect condition it is impossible for us to do anything perfectly, when we remember also that God is perfect, that all his work is perfect, and that he cannot therefore be in sympathy with imperfection, or any degree of sin, we can readily see that the very best works we could offer him aside from *faith* would be unacceptable.

But God has proposed to do a great work for us—he has done that great work in that he has provided the Redeemer, through whom the ransom-price has been paid for our race: and now God can be just and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Hence, while no work that we can do could be accepted of the Lord so long as we are under condemnation, yet he can, by his own provision, accept our *faith* in Christ, and justify us through that faith: this, our first work possible, is therefore what God calls for. He will accept no other work, except it is preceded by this one and based upon this one. O that all could realize the importance of faith in the Lord's sight! "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and the more faith we exercise the more do we please him: not credulity, not a belief of something which God has not said; not a belief in our own imaginings or those of other men; but a belief in what God has said, and a firm, confident trust therein: this is acceptable with God, and becomes to all who exercise it the ground or base of justification, that *"being justified by faith* we might have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. 5:1.

The Lord did not here discuss the further step to the high calling of this Gospel age; hence we will not discuss it now. He is dealing merely with our first necessary step in approaching God,—justification. The thing necessary, in order to justification, is the acceptance of Christ as the Bread of Life —which must be preceded by the realization that we have no life in ourselves, death having passed upon all of our race through father Adam's transgression; and that the Lord Jesus was made flesh in order that he might meet the penalty that was upon father Adam, and thus upon the race; and that *now*, therefore, whoever accepts this free grace of God in Christ, whoever appropriates to himself the merit of Christ's sacrifice is thereby eating, partaking of the great benefits and blessings provided by God in the Anointed one, who gave his life for the life of the world, a ransom price. Whoever mentally accepts this fact, and feeds upon it in his heart, is represented as feeding upon the flesh of the Son of Man—partaking of the human rights, privileges and blessings of restitution [or in this age justification] provided in him.

Our Lord pointed out to his hearers the fact that their slowness to receive him, and the slowness of the people of Israel in general, was not an evidence that he was not the Messiah, but rather was an evidence that they were not in a condition to receive the Messiah. And further, that it was not God's purpose that he should attract the whole Jewish people, but merely that he should draw to himself, by the gracious words which should proceed out of his mouth, and by the miracles or evidences of power of the Lord in him, such as the Father had "given" him—such as were pleasing to the Father, such as were ready to receive a further blessing through this channel which the Father had provided. And he assured them that while not expecting all to be thus drawn to him, nevertheless all who would be drawn thus of the Father he would most gladly welcome, because he was not in the world on a mission of his own merely, but to fufil the Father's purposes,—with which he was in full harmony.

TWO CLASSES OF SAVED ONES

In the two verses following, our Lord seems to distinguish between the two classes of saved ones, verse 39 referring to the elect class of this Gospel age, and verse 40 to the general blessing upon mankind to follow this age, during the Millennium—and to the opportunity that will then be afforded to every creature to be blessed with this great gift of eternal life, purchased by our Lord at such high cost as his own life.

The elect are frequently, as here, spoken of as specially *given* to Jesus, while the whole of mankind are referred to as his because *bought* with his own precious blood. The Father draws to the Son during this age a special class, and gives such a class to him to be companions, joint-heirs in his Milliennial kingdom—these are sometimes called his "brethren," as when it is said that Jesus was "the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8-29); and again, they are designated his bride and joint-heir, in contradistinction to the saved of the world of mankind, who will be recognized as the children of Christ, and of whom he will be the "Everlasting Father."—Rev. 21:9; 22:17; Rom. 8:17; Isa. 9:6.

Our Lord declares it to be the Father's will that all whom he has "given" him shall be saved, shall be raised up—not one of this class shall be lost. Who, then, are these thus sure of salvation? We answer that the Apostle Paul adds a word of explanation along this line, informing us of the class whom the Father has elected and predestinated: they are such as receive the Lord Jesus now by faith, and who hearing the invitation of this Gospel age, the "high calling," are so impressed with it that they lay aside every weight and run with patience the race set before them in the gospel;—and so doing, under divine providence and direction they are molded and fashioned as respects their characters so that they become "copies of God's dear Son."—Rom. 8:29.—*Diaglott.*

The heavenly Father fixed the marks and conditions of his predestination of this class, not so much in respect to all who shall *hear* the good tidings (altho he has to do with sending the message); not so much in respect to who all shall be *drawn* by the message of his grace in Christ (tho he has to do with the drawing, and in the present time is drawing only a particular class); not so much with reference to the *call* that goes forth to all who accept Jesus, inviting them to run the race of self-sacrifice in his footsteps (tho he is interested in this call, and supervises the affairs of those who accept this call, causing that all things shall work together for their good); but especially he has predestinated in respect to the *number* who shall constitute the bride of Christ, and to the *character* of all who shall be in that company: that it shall be composed of such and such only as shall during this Gospel age, while in the school of Christ, learn thoroughly the lessons of faith and obedience, developing characters of like pattern to that so gloriously manifested in Jesus, whom the Father sent forth to be not only our Redeemer, but also our Pattern.

It is the Father's will that every one who thus obeys the leadings of divine providence, and attains to the likeness of the Lord Jesus in his heart, his will, his intention (not perfection of the *flesh*), shall everyone of them be saved in this great salvation, and be sharers with Jesus in the "first resurrection," and in the glory, honor and immortality to which it leads. Not one of these shall be lost; every one of them shall be raised up to that glorious station at the appointed time— "the last day," the seventh of the great week of thousand-year days,—the Millennial day. And as the Prophet declares, it will be early in that day for "God shall help her [Zion] and that right early [in the morning]."

MILLENNIAL AGE DRAWING TO YIELD LARGE RESULTS

The 40th verse does not refer to those whom the Father specially gives to the Son to be companions and joint-heirs in the kingdom, and whom he draws through his providences during this age: it refers to the remainder of mankind whose ransom price our Lord Jesus has paid, and who, according to the Father's program, our Lord Jesus himself is to draw unto himself, during the Millennial age; as it is written, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." But even as the Father's drawing is not a compulsory drawing, so likewise the drawing of the Son will not be compulsory. But since we may assume that the majority of those who now resist the Father's drawing do so because of blindness, ignorance, etc., because the prince of this world is now reigning and deceiving, we may reasonably suppose that when our dear Redeemer's Millennial kingdom shall have been established, and when Satan, the prince of this world, has been "bound" (Rev. 20:2), and when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth,—then the drawing influence upon the world of mankind exerted by the Redeemer himself and by the church, his body, associated with him in glory, will be a drawing which will yield much larger results, so that many will yield to it and come to the Lord truly and heartily, and receive of the blessings which God has provided in him;—all except those who wilfully love sin and refuse the terms of the kingdom, faith and obedience.

Of this class our Lord declares (verse 40), that it is his Father's will that all such shall see the Son (their blinded eyes being opened in that Millennial day, as the Lord has promised through the prophets.—Zech. 12:10) Their eyes of understanding being then opened, they will be able to appreciate, as they cannot now appreciate, the Lord and the covenant of eternal life which he offers to all who obey him. They will not thus see him, however, until the god of this world, who now blinds the eyes of their understaning, shall be bound for the thousand years, and his baneful influence offset with the light of the knowledge of God which will then shine out to the world from the great Sun of Righteousness.— the Lord and the glorified church, his body.

It is God's will that all who shall accept Christ then shall have everlasting life too; and that they shall be raised up by the Lord Jesus to perfection also,—tho theirs will be an earthly, and not like the others a heavenly, perfection; and their raising up will also be "at the last day," but not at its beginning as with the "elect" of the "first resurrection." The overcomers of this Gospel age, the body of Christ, will be perfected in his likeness in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and then subsequently, throughout that age, the work of raising up the world of mankind out of sin and depravity and degradation will go gradually and grandly forward. until by the close of the Millennial age all the willing and obedient shall have eaten to their fill of the bread from heaven and shall be fully raised up, out of sin and death, to life eternal—in the image and likeness of God as was Adam before sin, but with characters perfected and tested in righteousness by their Millennial experiences.

ATTENTION, WATCH TOWER READERS!

We have learned recently of some readers of this journal who have not read the Millennial Dawn volumes entire. This is a great mistake. None can rightly understand or appreciate the precious truths presented herein unless he first have a clearly outlined view of the great divine plan of the ages: and hence we urge upon all that they begin this study *at once*.

All on our list are supplied the Dawns at wholesale rates (to assist in their wide circulation through loaning, etc.) and any too poor to pay even this small sum will be supplied *gratis* for their own reading if they will let us know, requesting under this offer.

In view of the fact that our "earthen vessels" are so leaky we all need to replenish our stock of grace and truth continually; and hence we advise repeated readings of the Dawns. When reading them you are really reading the Bible; for they are merely an arranged and systematized Bible. It is for this reason that like the Bible they do not grow old to the truth-hungry.

"LORD, HELP ME!"—Matt. 15:25

Mark 7:24-30.—July 15.

After our Lord's discourse on the bread from heaven (we know not how long after) he and his disciples went westward to the border of Phœnicia. There, entering into a house with the evident design of secluding himself from general notice, and possibly to gain quiet and rest, the Lord was quickly discovered by a Syro-Phœnician mother, whose daughter was possessed of a demon, and who availed herself of this opportunity to importune the Lord for her daughter's deliverance. The fame of Jesus and his miracles, in healing of the sick, etc., had evidently extended throughout that region, yet it must also have been known that Jesus was a Jew, and that his miracles and favors were confined to his own race.

We can readily see that there were numerous obstacles to the woman's faith, and the strength of faith which surmounted them compels admiration.

(1) She was a foreigner, a heathen, for whom God had manifested no favors, "without God and having no hope in the world." (Eph. 2:12) Hence, coming to Jesus she not only had to overcome the prejudices of her own heathen ideas and instruction from infancy but had also to overcome everything akin to pride and the fear of being despised and rejected as one unworthy of the favor she sought.

(2) As a poor and uneducated woman she would naturally have great diffidence in approaching a learned man, especially one so notable as this great Prophet of Israel, of whom no doubt she had heard much.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, her love for her daughter, and her confidence in Jesus, were so great that she sought him out; and after the manner of that time and place, in a loud voice and probably with weeping, "cried" to the Lord for compassion and assistance, in her trouble, saying, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, thou son of David: my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." She met with a rebuff at the very start, for according to Matthew's account (15:23) our Lord ignored her entirely, not answering her a word. To many this would have been sufficient to have discouraged faith, and sent them away weeping; but not so with this woman; she kept up her cries and importunities. She was confident that the Lord had the power to assist her, and had not yet refused to do so, and hence her faith continued to cling.

The disciples seem to have been annoyed with her cries, which probably kept up for some time, and Jesus and the disciples had evidently left the house in which they were lodging and proceeded on their journey, the woman still following and crying out for assistance. The disciples came and besought him, saying, "Send her away, for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Our Lord's answer to the disciples would seem to indicate that the meaning of the apostles' words was that he should grant her request and send her away; and his answer shows why he delayed so doing. The blessings he had to give were for God's covenanted people, the typical seed of Abraham, and this woman was not of that nation to which God had granted much favors every way; she was of a heathen nation, with whom God had not entered into any covenant relationship whatever, and for whom as yet he had done nothing. Our Lord explained this to the disciples, and in the hearing of the woman, not merely for their benefit and hers, but also, we may presume, for our admonition.

Altho our Lord would seem to have been resisting the woman and unwilling to grant her favor, we consider it not unreasonable to suppose that he thoroughly understood the case from the beginning, and that he adopted the method he did to draw out her faith, preparatory to the giving of the blessing desired.

And herein we have a lesson respecting persistency in entreating the Lord for relief from the power of the devil, however exercised, whether in our friends or in ourselves. As the woman knew that the case was a hopeless one as respected relief from any other quarter, so we know to hope for relief from the adversary only through the Lord's interposition. Like this woman, therefore, our faith should be equal to the emergency, and should persistently hold on to the Lord for the blessing which, with a greater knowledge than she, we may be sure he will be pleased to grant in his own due time and way. "Shall not the Lord avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, tho he bear long with them?" (Luke 18:7) If in our case the Lord shall not see best to grant a prompt response to our prayer, "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (Matt. 6:13), we may be sure that it is not from lack of interest in our welfare, for has he not manifested his interest by redeeming us, and by calling us to joint-heirship in the heavenly kingdom? If then the response shall not come in the way or at the time we had inclined to hope, let faith still hold her anchorage in the divine goodness and power, and in the exceeding great and precious promises, and let us remember that according to these the time, at very farthest, will not be long, until the Millennial kingdom, when the great adversary shall be bound, and deliverance full and complete from his power shall be granted, not only to ourselves and those immediately dependent, but also to all of the "groaning creation" now under his baneful influence.

The hearing of the reason why she had been ignored, so far from discouraging the poor woman seemingly convinced her the more that Jesus had the power to help her, and, quite probably in front of him, she prostrated herself at his feet, after the custom of the East, so expressive of humility, dependence and entreaty, accompanying this with the plea, "Lord, help me!" (Matt. 15:23-25) When finally our Lord addressed the poor woman prostrate at his feet, importuning his assistance, his words were again a rebuff, calculated to dishearten one of little faith, but correspondingly to strengthen a great faith. His answer to her was not one of disdain and contempt, nor of indifference to her woe; for indeed we well know that our dear Lord had no such feelings toward any. It implied interest and sympathy, but explained to her a reason why she was not a proper subject, namely, that as the children of a household would be provided for first, before the dogs, so it was proper that the Lord's covenant people, the Jews, should be ministered unto, healed, taught and blessed, first,—before these blessings should in any manner or degree be extended to the Gentiles, who in comparison were as the dogs of the household. And, by the way, we should notice here that altho dogs amongst the Jews were spoken of frequently with great disrespect, as for instance, in Rev. 29:15, "Without are dogs," etc., referring to the wild dogs which roamed the country and were pests, yet the Jews were in the habit of having house dogs which were esteemed and petted by the family, and the word that is here used by our Lord and also by the woman, signifies these house dogs or little dogs, pet dogs, and not the objectionable kind.

The woman triumphed over the obstacle of the Lord's argument, and with wonderful keenness and humility she acknowledged that she was not one of the children who had a right to the Father's blessing, but was merely one of the dogs under the table, desiring a stray crumb of divine favor. Then our Lord, appreciating such great faith and earnestness, said, "For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter," and that the woman's faith was of the proper kind was demonstrated by the fact that she believed the Lord's word, ceased her importunings, and went to her home, to find the matter even as Jesus had said.

How different is our case in many respects from that of this poor woman! So far from resisting us the Lord has graciously called us to a knowledge of himself and of his gracious plan, and we who were once aliens and strangers and foreigners have not only been redeemed with the precious blood, but upon making a covenant with the Lord have been adopted into his family, have been privileged to surround his table, and he has set before us as "meat in due season" in great abundance, all the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word. We need not to importune for these; they are ours for the taking. We simply need by faith to accept them and to use them. And if the poor woman of this narrative could exercise such faith in the Lord, and could get so great a blessing, it evidences to our minds what is abundantly stated elsewhere in Scripture, that nothing that we have or could offer to the Lord would be more acceptable in his sight than faith—faith in him, in his power, in his love and in his promises. Whoever will not exercise faith in these things cannot grow in knowledge of the Lord, cannot make development, cannot be overcomers, gaining the desired victory, for, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," and "Without faith it is impossible to please God."—1 John 5:4; Heb. 11:6.

There is little that any of us possess that we could reasonably hope would be acceptable to God outside those mercies which he has bestowed upon us through Christ—faith, trust in God, is one of those heart-qualities which we can bring to the Lord, that he will not despise; honesty of heart is another; humility, realizing our utter dependence upon him, and confessing it, is another. These various sentiments were expressed by the woman in the narrative, by her actions and by her words, and as these brought to her divine favor, even before it was due to come to the Gentiles, much more should our humility, faith and candor prevail and make us endeavor to do that which is pleasing to God, who has already accepted us in the Beloved, and with whom he is well-pleased in proportion to the measure of our accepting through the Lord all the exceeding riches of his grace, which he has promised to them that love, reverence, trust and obey him.

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"THE SERVANT OF THE LORD MUST NOT STRIVE, BUT BE GENTLE UNTO ALL"

2 TIMOTHY 2:24-26.

We commend this text and its context to the careful consideration of all—especially do the "Volunteers" need to remember it in connection with the service they are seeking to render to the Lord's true sheep still in Babylon. All thus engaged are "ministers" and "teachers" and hence amenable to the same instructions as Timothy.

Some have exposed themselves to rebuke and criticism *justly*, by intruding into church property uninvited. It is usually best to keep off the pavement fronting a church where there is any reason to think the service would give offence;—and to apologize if asked to move off it. If possible it is desirable to keep at such a distance from the building as to avoid *seeming* to want to serve its attendants more than other passers-by.

Especially make sure that your heart is so full of the love of the Lord and his brethren that it will shine out in your face;—then it will not be necessary to urge your gift, but merely to say—Accept a *free* paper! Lay stress upon the word *free*, because some refuse thinking that either a *price* or *donation* will be expected in return.

"LOVE AS BRETHREN; BE SYMPATHETIC; BE COURTEOUS"

"Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and showeth favor to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

1 PETER 3:8; 5:5, 6.

The Apostle has been addressing the elders of the church, exhorting them to give attention to the feeding of God's flock, and pointing out what should be the constraining influence to such a service. That they may feel his sympathy with them he points out that he also is an elder, and then warns them against a tendency, natural to all fallen humanity in any place of influence, to misconstrue their position, and to think of themselves as lords of God's heritage rather than as servants of the flock.

In our day, the natural tendency in this direction is greatly accentuated by the long established custom of all denominations of Christians to regard the ministers or servants of the church as of a different class from the others of the flock,—a class vested with authority from God, and not amenable to the same regulations which govern all the members of the body. But how great a mistake this is! The Apostle distinctly points out that a servant is not a ruler, that a servant has no authority. Indeed, so far as the true church is concerned, the only authority in it is the Lord, the Head of the church, and his Word, and the words of those whom he specially chose to be his mouth-piece, the apostles.

Where these speak, all of the body of Christ are to give attention to hear. Where these are silent, no one has authority to speak.And while an elder should be chosen to the position of serving and feeding the flock because of special aptness to teach (to point out the instructions of our Lord and the apostles upon any subject), and while such an elder should, therefore, in this way be specially helpful to the body of Christ in drawing the attention of all to the inspired authority of the Word, nevertheless any member of the body of Christ has the same privilege—not of exercising authority, but of calling the attention of his fellows to the Word of authority. The Apostle exhorts the elders that so far from in any manner or degree exercising a lordly or authoritative position in the church, they should rather be "*ensamples* to the flock." They should be examples in the matter of meekness, in the matter of patience, in the matter of brotherly kindness, in the matter of courtesy, so that the more any of the brethren would copy these elders the more would the spirit of the Lord prevail in the flock, and the fruits and graces of the spirit be manifested. On the contrary, we know that if the elder or leader of a little company of the Lord's people be self-assertive, dogmatic, imperious in manner, tone or look, the effect upon the company under his influence is to produce bickerings, rivalries, ambitions, strifes as to who is greatest, etc.

Manifestly, whoever occupies the position of an elder amongst the Lord's people, however small the group may be, occupies a position fraught with responsibilities to the Lord and to the flock, as well as with besetments to himself. Great care should therefore be exercised by every company of the Lord's people, to so far as possible select for the position of leaders or elders in the church such persons as would not be likely to be injured by the privilege of service—such as occupying this post would indeed be ensamples of the flock in humility and in all of the graces of the Lord's spirit. It would seem to be with reference to the special trial of such as occupy this position of service in the church that the Apostle speaks, saying, "Be not many of you teachers, brethren, knowing that we [occupying such a position] shall receive, the severer testing."—James 3:1.

It may not be amiss that here we notice the fact that altho the word "Elder" has the significance of "older," yet amongst the Lord's brethren it is not merely years of natural life that is to be taken into consideration; in the Lord's family we sometimes see "babes" with gray hairs. Nor can we even count eldership according to the number of years that have elapsed since the begetting of the spirit, for some grow rapidly and mature quickly; others who receive the truth permit the "thorns" of cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches to choke the word, and hence never get beyond the position of "babes,"—never bring forth the ripe fruits of the spirit.

Nor can we reckon this matter of relationship merely according to the degree of knowledge of the divine plan attained; for, as the Apostle assures us, it is possible for some to have much knowledge and yet be but "tinkling cymbals" according to the Lord's standpoint of estimation. While therefore an elder, in order to be "apt to teach," must have attained to some considerable degree of knowledge of the divine plan, nevertheless the real evidence of his fitness for the service of an elder must not be determined by his knowledge *merely*, but additionally must be measured by his growth in grace. So then such of the brethren in any place as possess clear knowledge of the divine plan and are "apt to teach," and who additionally give unmistakable evidence that they have grown in grace and are bearing in daily life the fruits of the spirit of the Lord, in considerable measure of maturity, may be considered qualified to be elders;—and such may properly be chosen to the eldership by their brethren, regardless of their age according to the flesh.

According to the flesh Peter and several others of the apostles of our Lord were his elders, but according to the spirit our Lord is the Elder Brother of all accepted to the family of God. According to the flesh both Timothy and Titus were young men—young in years—so that the Apostle needed to write to one of them, "Let no man despise thy youth." (1 Tim. 4:12) And yet these young men the Apostle recognized as elders in the church, who, because of their *spiritual development and knowledge* of the divine plan, *and aptness to* teach, were well qualified to feed the flock of God and to be overseers in it—but not lords, not rulers, not masters, and not vested with any *authority*—merely privileged to call to the attention of the flock the voice of the great Shepherd and his twelve chosen assistants, and to lead them to the green pastures and still waters of divine truth.

It was after specially enjoining modesty and humility upon the ones most advanced and most capable of the flock that the Apostle, in the language of our text, urges that each one of the Lord's sheep, so far from seeking to be a leader in the sense of a ruler or lord or master, should seek to be subject one to another—to hear gladly from the humblest of the flock, and to be willing to yield his own preference, so far as his judgment and conscience would permit. A church operating under this spirit would not be likely to be rent with contention, for each would be so anxious for the interests of the cause and so willing to condescend to the wishes of others, that even the will of the majority would not be considered satisfactory, but rather all would seek, if possible, to reach such a modified conclusion as would meet with nearly or quite unanimous approval.

The Apostle most distinctly points out that the quality essential to such proper conduct on the part of elders and on the part of all, is humility. How beautiful is his exhortation, "Be clothed with humility." The thought would seem to be that outside of every other adornment of character, and covering all others, should be this robe of humble-mindedness, the opposite disposition to pride.

By way of clinching his argument, the Apostle reminds us of the principle upon which our Lord deals with his flock and with all;—that he disapproves of pride, and that all who are actuated by pride may be sure that the Lord, so far from receiving them, fellowshiping them, leading them, blessing them, will resist them, push them from him. The natural inference is that thus resisted of the Lord, the tendency of such as come under the influence of a spirit of pride and ambition will be not toward the truth nor toward any of the fruits and graces of the spirit, but further and further from these. "The Lord resisteth the proud, but supplies his favor to the humble." Come then, dear brethren, says the Apostle, let us cultivate this humility which the Lord so loves and appreciates and promises to reward. Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time.

The Lord's mighty hand has not yet been stretched out to take hold of mankind in general and its affairs, to bring order out of confusion; but it is stretched out over his church, his flock. He has called us to be his "sheep," and we have responded and have put ourselves under his care, under his powerful hand for guidance, for direction, etc., that he may ultimately make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," "joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

Seeing that we are under this mighty hand of God, and that too by our own volition, how shall we act? Shall we yield ourselves to his will, and permit him to "work in us both to will and to do his good pleasure" and our ultimate exaltation, or shall we resist the Lord's power, resist his Word of instruction, resist the example set us in the meek and lowly Lamb of God, and seek to exalt ourselves and to be somebodies, either in the world or in the church? Nay, let us remember that it would be folly to attempt to work against the divine arrangement; we might indeed to some extent seemingly succeed, and bring upon ourselves, and perhaps upon others also, more or less of separation from God through such resisting, on account of a wrong spirit; but in the end we should utterly fail of God's favors, both as respects the fellowship of the spirit now and the fellowship of glory by and by, for these he assures us will be bestowed only upon the humble. Every proper incentive and inducement speaks to us, saying,—Humble yourself: become more like a little child, forgetful of self, devoid of selfish ambition: be actuated merely by a desire to serve the Lord, to serve his flock, and to serve his cause, the truth; forget self entirely.

Perhaps, as a result, the Lord may increase our opportunities and responsibilities in service in the present life, and perhaps he may not; but no matter for this. It is not for the present life that we are seeking and striving, but for the glory, honor and immortality which the Lord has promised to them that love him;—that love him so much that they hearken to his Word and seek to develop those elements of character which are pleasing in his sight, seeking to become more and more copies of God's dear Son.

The Apostle adds, "Casting all your care upon him." All true saints of God are care-full. They have an interest in the Lord's work; they have a care in respect to it. They cannot be indifferent to the interests of Zion. Altho their hearts and affections and cares have been lifted from a sectarian channel, it is only that they should be placed upon true people of spiritual Zion, whose names are written in heaven. Of course, therefore, every elder in the church must feel such a care, especially for the flock in connection with which he has been appointed to service, "to feed the flock of Christ:"—not to shear them, not to frighten them, not to club them, not to exercise authority and lordship over them, but to *feed* them.

This care, affecting the chosen elders (and all the elders or advanced ones in the church), altho it is a right sentiment in itself, might easily be so perverted as to be dangerous. The elders, either individually or collectively, might become so nervously careful of the flock as to destroy their own peace and joy in the holy spirit; and it might also lead them to take various improper steps, as in their over-zealous judgment necessary for the welfare of the flock. Many in times past have been led, under the influence of such a care, to in various ways take away the liberties of the flock in this or that or another matter: fearful that these liberties would be injurious to the cause. We see such a spirit of carefulness and over-solicitude marked prominently in the past by the various creeds and regulations and restraints put upon the Lord's flock, contrary to the Scriptures and to the liberty wherewith Christ makes free his people. The motive undoubtedly was in some respects a good one; the difficulty was that some Elders, some advanced sheep, caring for the interests of the flock, forgot that they were only *its servants*, and that they were not authorized to make any laws or restraints whatsoever for the flock. They forgot that the Lord himself is the Good Shepherd of his flock still, that he has not given over his care of it, nor his authority to anyone, to permit such to exercise lordship or to make laws of any kind for it, he having made all the laws and regulations necessary, and desiring that his sheep shall be free, with the liberty wherewith he made them free, in the fullest sense of the word.

The remedy for all such unauthorized over-carefulness for the interests of Zion is pointed out by the Apostle, saying,—"Casting all your care upon him [the Shepherd of the flock], for he careth for you [all]." Each sheep is to remember that the Shepherd's mighty hand (mighty power) is still in the midst of his people, and that because of his care we do not need to *overburden* ourselves with care, nor to feel that we must make *changes in his plans* and arrangements to meet what we might fancy to be new exigencies in the case. All such over-carefulness leads to fear, and fear indicates a lack of faith, a lack of confidence in the Shepherd; and is generally used by the great adversary as one of his most powerful levers to lead the Lord's people into a wrong course.

Let us all, then (all of the advanced or elder class), have a care for the flock; yea, a deep solicitude; but let us cast the weight of this care upon the Lord, and let our faith trust him that he who has been working out so grand and glorious a plan as his Word reveals to us now, "the plan of the ages," has made full provision for every feature, every circumstance, every condition; and let us thus be ready to co-operate with him in harmony with his Word, but not to run where we are not sent, nor in any manner to take our Lord's place, nor attempt to do his work. But only the humble-minded are likely to receive any lasting blessing, present or future, at the hands of our Lord; for he resisteth the proud and showeth favor to the humble.

PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION ECHOES

All will rejoice to know that the Philadelphia Convention, June 16-18, was a blessed success; so far as we have heard all who attended got a blessing, as we had hoped. Indeed, quite a few expressed themselves as so much refreshed and profited that, the Lord permitting, they would also attend the next Convention, at Chicago.

The attendance was about two hundred, except on Sunday, when it ran up to about four hundred. The three cities which have been leading in the "Volunteer" work were best represented at the Convention;—Boston 19, Washington City 13, Scranton 13. Thus it is always those most awake to note and use opportunities for serving the truth are the most blest of the Lord every way,—warmer in their love and service, they are less exposed to the besetments of the adversary: laying down their lives in the Lord's service in fulfilment of their covenant they are in the way which leads not only to fellowship in the sufferings of Christ but also in the glories to follow.

Nineteen states were represented—Maine, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Wisconsin, Nevada, California and District of Columbia;—and Great Britain was represented by Brother Randle, who, after doing a little further "Pilgrim" work here, will for a time make England his home and laborfield.

At the baptism service thirty-nine adults, after making a good public confession, symbolized their consecration to the Lord, even unto death, by immersion in water. It was an impressive service to us all, and the entire congregation gave hearty thanks to God for the privilege of witnessing and participating. The janitor of the Baptist church remarked that not only had there never been such baptism service in that old church, but that never before had it contained a congregation all of whose faces were so happy looking. We were glad that the inner light of truth and its spirit of love was manifest to others. We trust that they took knowledge of us that we had been with Jesus and been "illuminated" by his holy spirit.

We cannot present the subjects discussed, but in a word would say,—It was the old, old story of God's love exhibited in Jesus, and the coming glory of the church and blessing of the world: the story that is as fresh as ever to all in heart-harmony with the Lord, and which daily becomes more precious in the light of present truth;—things new and old.

None, we believe, were more blessed than the Philadelphia brethren who so kindly and efficiently and generously entertained us. They provided a splendid hall for the meetings, paid for the use of the baptistry, looked after the arriving friends and saw to their comfort, and provided free entertainment for those of the visitors too poor to pay their own way. May rich blessings of spiritual kind be their reward for all their services to the Lord's body. By an oversight we neglected to call for a united vote of thanks from the convention; and as this was owing chiefly to the fact that the last meeting was a Question Meeting, we think to remedy the matter by having the closing service of future conventions a "Love Feast."

A USEFUL STONE VERSUS A STUMBLING STONE

MATT. 16:13-26.—JULY 22.

"If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Peter, the apostle, was a grand character, as this lesson well illustrates; yet, like all strong characters, he had proportionate opportunities and liabilities to misuse his strength for evil. This lesson, relating considerably to him, points a moral respecting the necessity for meekness, humility, and wise direction of those who possess strength of character.

The incidents of this lesson transpired toward the close of our Lord's ministry, probably about six months before his crucifixion. For about three years the Lord had, with his disciples, been proclaiming the kingdom near at hand and working miracles which testified that he was Jehovah's Anointed One. Meantime, his fame had of course spread in every direction. Herod, who had beheaded John the Baptist, seems to have started the suggestion that Jesus was John risen from the dead—probably having little information respecting Jesus while he had considerable knowledge of John. Others wishing to properly credit our Lord's wonderful works and mighty acts, claimed that he was the Elijah prophesied to precede Messiah's coming. Others thought of him as Jeremiah or some of the great prophets risen from the dead; but very few seemed to have thought of him as the Messiah,—expecting Messiah, when he would come, to be very kingly, very great, and of very high standing with the nation and the ruling class. They no doubt thought they greatly honored Jesus in crediting him with being the forerunner of the Messiah. And apparently our Lord had not particularly expressed the matter of his Messiahship during these years, leaving it rather to be recognized by those who should obtain the opening of the eyes of their understanding. He spoke of himself as the Son of God; he spoke of his relationship to the Father, and testified that his mighty works were done in the Father's name and power, but he said little, if anything, respecting his being the Messiah until now.

Now the proper time had come that the disciples should recognize definitely his office, and his question regarding what people in general said of him was merely to introduce the matter to the disciples, and give the opportunity to ask them, "Whom say ye that I am?" Then it was that Peter displayed not only the strength of his faith in the Lord, but also his own strength of character and his zeal, answering promptly, "Thou art the Christ [Hebrew, the Messiah], the Son of God— the Living." And altho we may safely assume that Peter spoke for all of the apostles, in harmony with our Lord's question, nevertheless, the fact that he was the spokesman would imply that he was the most thoroughly imbued with the sentiment that he expressed. His statement is quite comprehensive, too: not only did he recognize Jesus as the Messiah, but he recognized his divine authority and paternity; and while it is possible that Peter meant to say "the Son of the living God"— the Son of the God who is the author of all life—yet it is probable that he meant more than this. It is probable that he meant, Thou art the Messiah, the Son of God, the Living One,—the one who has a right to life according to the law, while all others, being imperfect, are under condemnation of the law and under sentence of death.

Evidently it was a refreshment of heart to our Lord to have this full and frank statement from Peter. One, at least, of his disciples had profited by the lessons of the preceding three years, and had come to the point of full assurance of faith in him: and the others, while less expressive, were probably making progress nevertheless, and would be greatly helped and strengthened and built up by this good confession.

PETER A USEFUL STONE IN GOD'S HOUSE

Our Lord's response, "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jona," does not so much signify, I wish or will grant a blessing upon you because of this confession, but rather, You have been blessed of God greatly in that you have been enabled to discern this great truth, hidden from so many. Flesh and blood (mankind in general) do not so believe, and could not have so taught you nor convinced you; you have been drawn of my Father in heaven, and through responding to the leadings of his providence the eyes of your understanding have been opened that you are thus able to see and appreciate this great truth.

Then followed a blessing, a prophecy of coming usefulness, partly, at least, the result of this good confession, as it was the result of a proper condition of heart;—"Thou art Peter [*petros*, a stone, a rock] and upon this rock [*petra*—this great stone or rocky mass—the great truth which you have confessed, namely, my Messiahship] will I build my church."

The Lord did not propose to build his church upon Peter, but upon the great truth which the Father had laid as a foundation for his plan and had revealed to Peter and which Peter had so nobly expressed. But Peter, indeed, might be one of the living stones of the spiritual temple erected upon this great foundation-fact. Peter himself gives us this interpretation of the matter in his Epistle (1 Pet. 2:4-7), assuring us that the whole church as a building of God is growing more and more complete through the addition of each member, who, as a living stone, is built up into and under the headship of Christ, the great chief corner-stone and capstone of the whole—the figure being that of a pyramid.—See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., Chap. V.; VOL. III., Chap. X.

The same thought is given in the description of the New Jerusalem, in which Peter is represented by one of the Twelve Foundation Stones, the other apostles being equally foundation stones, and all the faithful in Christ being built upon the foundation of the divine plan, and upon the testimony of these twelve apostles. Rev. 21, see verse 12.

This was probably the first intimation the Lord had given of his intention to *build* a church, or that any period of time would elapse between the work he was then doing and the establishment of the kingdom. This was a gradual way of bringing great matters to the attention of the apostles,—matters which necessarily would conflict with many of the ideas and hopes that already had taken possession of their hearts.

It cannot be claimed that our Lord referred to any of the Christian sects when thus speaking of his church: all are forced to admit that these earthly systems are entirely ignored, not only in this statement, but in every other statement which our Lord ever made respecting his church. He never recognized more than one, nor did the apostles; and both Jesus and the apostles reckoned that every true sheep, every true grain, every wise virgin, and every faithful servant of this Gospel age would belong to the *one* church of Christ, of which the Apostle says that "their names are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23) They need no earthly record, and such of them as are rightly informed will want no sectarian name, but will be thoroughly satisfied with the name of their Lord; and they will want no earthly creed-fences to separate them from each other, but will desire more and more to be one in *fact* and in *theory*.

The church of Rome, as being the oldest of all human church systems, claims the name of Christ, and holds that Peter was its founder, but it can produce no evidence to this effect, for there was no Roman Catholic church in existence until centuries after Peter's day. The primitive church, authorized by our Lord and built upon the testimony of the apostles and through their ministry, after the day of Pentecost, was a very different institution from any of the present-day man-made, creed-bound and clergy-lorded systems. We understand that the Lord is now calling his true people out of this Babylon or mixed condition of present-day "churchianity" into the light, the liberty, the fellowship, with him and with all who are his, which properly belongs to the one flock, which has but "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Our Lord's declaration that "the gates of hell [hades, the death state] shall not prevail against" his church, is worthy of careful notice, especially in view of his words following this declaration, to the effect that all who would be his disciples must follow him in sacrifice into death. This must have been an astounding thought to the apostles, as they had, so far from expecting death, expected some kind of transformation to glory, honor and immortality. Our Lord's declaration, therefore, that the gates of hell, the gates of the grave, shall not prevail against his church, signified not that his followers should not enter those portals of death, but that eventually those prison-doors of death would open,—would not be permitted forever to prevail against the faithful. As a matter of fact, the gates of hades did close over our dear Redeemer himself for portions of three days, but they did not prevail. On the contrary, God's power prevailed and he arose from the dead, he left the prison-house, he came forth a victor. And so likewise throughout this Gospel age, the gates of death closed behind the apostles one after another, and after all the faithful of the Lord's people, as well as others, and our Lord's assurance then is still comforting to his followers, that the prisonhouse of death, with its strong bars and gates, the grave, shall not prevail, shall not in the end conquer, but that he who was raised from the dead by the power of the Father will raise us up also, making us also victors over death and over the grave, so that eventually we can say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" But we cannot say this so long as we are subject to death, nor so long as we are under death's power; but only when the deliverance shall come in the resurrection.

Altho our Lord does not here speak of others than the church prevailing against the gates and bars of the tomb, he does elsewhere give us the assurance that through his prevailing and our subsequent prevailing through his name and assistance, ultimately the whole world of mankind, or so many of them, at least, as will accept of the favor, will be delivered from the power of death into perfection of life: and then shall be brought to pass, in the fullest, most absolute sense of the word, the prophecy just referred to. (Isa. 61:1-3) Adamic death and its victory over the human family will then be completely annulled, through the atonement accomplished by our Lord, and the restitution which he, with his church, will accomplish as a result. And any who shall fail of eternal life shall not fail because of the present prevalence of so-called Adamic death, but will be the victims of their own wilful sin, and will experience its penalty, the second death, whose bars and gates will never open, and against which they can never prevail, for Christ dieth no more and will release none from the second death.—Rom. 6:9; 2 Thess. 1:9; Acts 3:23.

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

The apostles, of course, could not understand our Lord's words at the time, as they did afterward, and as we now understand them. (John 7:39) Nevertheless, these various declarations respecting the future immediately followed, our Lord declaring, "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." What a riddle this must have seemed to poor Peter and his associates! They would doubtless conclude that it meant that in view of Peter's confession he would make him grand treasurer of the kingdom, or something of that kind; and only in the light of their fulfilment in subsequent events can we judge accurately the meaning of these words But looking through the experiences of Peter and the church, we find that there were two doors which required to be opened, and that Peter was used of the Lord in opening both of them, and hence that it was properly stated of him that he had the keys, the power, the opportunity, the authority to do the work in both instances, and he did it.

Our Lord himself did not open the door into the kingdom, in the full sense of the word. He merely called out faithful laborers, who should afterward in his name open wide the doors. Indeed, the doors into the kingdom could not be opened to any until first of all the great transaction of Calvary had been accomplished. Our Lord came to give himself a *ransom* for mankind, because a ransom was necessary before mankind could be released from the Adamic condemnation, or have any part either in the kingdom proper or in the hoped for blessing promised through the kingdom to all the families of the earth. Hence the apostles (whom the Father had specially given to Jesus, and of whom none were lost save the son of perdition, whose place was subsequently filled, through the Lord's appointment, by the Apostle Paul—John 17:12; Rom. 1:1), did not and could not receive recognition from the Father until after our Lord Jesus had finished his sacrifice and had arisen from the dead and had ascended up on high to appear in the presence of God on their behalf,—and on behalf of all men for whom he died. So soon as the sacrifice for man's sin was presented to the Father, the evidence of its acceptance was indicated to mankind by God's acceptance of the faithful apostles and of all who then were in the proper condition of heart, to the plane of sonship and their begetting of the holy spirit to a new nature,—and this was marked or indicated by the outpouring of the holy spirit at Pentecost, accompanied by "gifts" of the spirit.

It was then that Christ's kingdom was established in those who had received him; and then began the work of declaring the good tidings of great joy, which must eventually be to all people, but which at first was restricted for three and a half years to fleshly Israel, in fulfilment of God's covenant with them, that favor should continue to the full end of seventy weeks mentioned by the prophet.—Dan. 9:24. See Millennial Dawn, Vol. II., Chap. III.

In this work of *opening the door* of the kingdom to Israel we find, according to the record, that Peter took the first, most prominent and initiatory part, as we read: "Peter, standing up with [the others of] the eleven, lifted up his voice and said." (Acts 2:14) Peter was the spokesman, Peter used the "*key*," Peter opened the door, the other apostles co-operating and assisting.

The other of the two "keys" was not used for three and a half years afterward, because not until then could the door of favor be opened to the Gentiles. But when the time came for opening the door, we find that it was Peter who was specially designated of the Lord to do it, being sent from Joppa to Cornelius, to tell him words which should be to the saving of his house—the opening to him of the privilege of membership in the kingdom of Christ, he being the first Gentile converted, the first one to whom the Lord authorized the preaching of the high calling of joint-heirship with Christ in his kingdom. And the Apostle Peter referred to this matter subsequently, saying, "Ye know how that a good while ago God made choice amongst us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel."—Acts 10; 15:7.

BINDING AND LOOSING IN HEAVEN AND EARTH

Our Lord further said to Peter, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." This statement has given rise to the claim amongst Romanists that Peter was the first pope, and that he had an authority superior to the other apostles; but we find that very nearly the same words were used to all the apostles as recorded by the same Evangelist. (Matt. 18:18) Again, a very similar declaration was made to them all, as recorded by John, saying, "Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." (John 20:23) We understand these declarations not to be general and applicable to all of the church, but chiefly to the apostles, on the strength of our Lord's words. (John 6:70; 15:16; Rev. 21:14) We deny that the popes of Rome, or any other persons, ever have been apostles, or ever have exercised apostolic authority. In a word, we deny the central claim of Romanism and Episcopacy, viz., "Apostolic Succession."

We understand this investment of Peter and the other apostles, with special authority to bind and to loose, to remit and to hold, to signify that God would specially control their utterances, so that their decisions and writings might properly be considered authoritative. Not that God bound himself to do and to decide according to the imperfect judgments of the apostles, but that he has guaranteed us that he would so guide and providentially overrule in the affairs and in the language of these chosen and faithful ones that his people might rely upon it that such things as the apostles fixed had the divine approval. For instance, it is at their mouth that we learn that we are justified from all sin through faith in the redemption; they did not make it so, but under divine direction they were guided in the stating of it so; and we may implicitly rely upon their statements, which, moreover, we find to be in full accord with the principles of righteousness and the various declarations of the divine Word.

They inform us also that certain sins can be remitted or forgiven— sins of weakness and of ignorance, traceable to our fallen nature, which we have received by heredity, and the penalty for which our Lord has already borne. They inform us also that other sins, viz., wilful sins, are not forgivable, and may be indeed sins unto death, unto the second death. And we see herein reasonableness also; for we perceive that Christ did not die for any except the Adamic transgression, and those sins which directly or indirectly may be traceable to it; and that wilful, deliberate transgressions cannot therefore be forgiven, but must be expiated—if committed with considerable light, but not full light, the expiating penalty may be "stripes," but if committed with full wilfulness and against full light the penalty could be nothing short of death —the second death.—1 John 5:16; Luke 12:47, 48; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26, 27.

CAST NOT PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

Following this conversation with the disciples, our Lord charged them particularly not to make his Messiahship generally known to the people. This corroborates the thought that neither the disciples nor our Lord had previously been enunciating his Messiahship, but rather preaching that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, near at the door, without saying precisely who was to be the King. The command not to make the matter known was evidently because the result of such a program would have been to have aroused at least a party spirit amongst the people, some of whom accepted his miracles, etc., and would have espoused his cause, while others, with the Pharisees, would have opposed, and thus an insurrection would naturally have followed;—besides it would have interfered considerably with the program which our Lord saw marked out for him in the divine Word,—his death as the sin-offering. He did not need to proclaim his Messiahship, for he already knew, as he had stated, that whosoever the Father would draw would come, and that those not drawn of the Father, and not disposed to become his disciples, should not be specially drawn by the proclamation of his Messiahship and the prospects of the kingdom.

PETER A STUMBLING-STONE, AN ADVERSARY

Having prepared the minds of the disciples, by the foregoing declaration, that *hades*, death, would not be permitted to triumph over his church, etc., our Lord from that time forward began gradually to break to them information respecting his own decease and his resurrection from the dead. It was then that the same noble Peter forgot himself, as we would say, and undertook to correct the Lord and to outline for him other things. He was moved to this, not merely by selfish motives of prejudice and hopes of sharing in the kingdom, and avoiding the ignominy, but doubtless also by his love for the Lord and his desire to see him honored and exalted, rather than to be set at nought and killed. But, as on another occasion this noble Apostle said things "not knowing what he said," so now he evidently did not realize the import of his language, and how, if it were followed, it would mean to our Lord the rejection of the Father's plan and the substitution therefor of a plan more agreeable to the flesh.

The text says that "Peter took him," and this we may understand to signify that Peter took him apart from the others—it was a private interview and exhortation, and no doubt Peter intended to bring in various supporting arguments; for instance, that the disciples would be discouraged with such talk, etc. However, he only "began," and did not get to finish his argument, the Master being so full of the spirit of loyalty to the Father and his plan that he could not even endure a suggestion to the contrary, and must needs hasten to repudiate such a disloyal suggestion. His answer was a severe rebuke to Peter, yet doubtless was a blessing to him so long as he lived, and probably helped him afterward to be much more modest in the matter of opposing his plan to that of the Lord.

When our Lord said, "Get thee behind me, Satan," he did not mean that he considered Peter possessed by the adversary: rather, the word Satan in the original is "adversary," and was properly used in respect to any person taking a position adverse or in opposition to another. *The* adversary is called Satan, that word being used for him as a proper name. Our Lord turned from Peter at this time, and addressed his words so that all the apostles might hear him, that the matter might be the more impressive and all the more a valuable lesson to them: that they might all know that their Master never compromised his Father's will in any sense or degree. "Get behind me, adversary; thou savorest [partakest] not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men"—you are viewing matters not from God's standpoint, but from the standpoint of fallible, fallen men.

So it is to-day, and ever has been with the church, the body of Christ; if they are intent upon following the footsteps of the Lord they must expect adversaries to arise who will seek to turn them away from the path of sacrifice and duty: to make it seem too difficult, or to attract their attention to other plans or methods less costly—more in harmony with the fleshly mind. We should remember the Master's course and take a similar one, and point out to these, if they be friends, and in the truth (and such they frequently are, as was Peter), that their influence is being exercised in a wrong direction, against the truth, against our best interests, against the divine plan and hence that they are not only adversaries to us, but also adversaries to the Lord. We should thus seek to reclaim them and to help them to walk in the same way with us,—instead of leaving the narrow way to follow their kindly meant but pernicious influence.

The word here rendered "offence" would more properly be translated, as in the Revised Version, "a stumbling block," or a stone of stumbling. Thus we see that it was the same Peter whose noble confession had so refreshed the Lord and blessed the disciples and himself, and who on this account was designated a stone, indicative of strong character, that was now, by reason of the same strength of character, strongmindedness, strong will, in danger of becoming, not a stone in the Lord's temple but a stumbling stone. And should some of the Lord's people, strong in character, become stumbling stones to us, we have here our Lord's illustration of our proper course—to turn from them, refusing to be stumbled, refusing to be lead away from the consecration which we have made.

Our Lord took this occasion to lay pointedly before his disciples the fact that if they loved the present life, with its advantages, etc., more than the future one, with its present disadvantages, they had no business amongst his disciples: that anyone who would be his disciple should reckon self-denial, self-negation, absolutely necessary to discipleship; and should be prepared, with no uncertainty of mind or purpose, to follow after Jesus with a cross,—not a literal cross, but the crossing of human self-will with the divine will.

Then come the terms of discipleship very clearly stated. All who become disciples, and who hope for life in the kingdom, must expect to sacrifice the present life, and whoever does not sacrifice the present life shall not find that glorious eternal life which God has in reservation only for the overcomers. But, our Lord reasons, what would a man be advantaged were he to gain all of this world, all of its advantages and riches (which none could hope to do) if thereby he should lose his own being, his own soul, his life, his existence; or what would a man not be willing to give in exchange for the perpetuation of his life eternally. (The word *soul*, in this verse, is *psuche*, the same Greek word rendered *life* in the preceding verse.) Surely anyone possessed of a sound mind and able, therefore, to rightly weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the present life, as compared with the eternal life in God's kingdom of righteousness, must confess that it would be a bad bargain to gain the whole world in every sense and to lose his own being.

It is in view of the logic of this argument that our Lord and the apostles urge all true followers of Christ to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and their reasonable service;—to lay down their lives for the brethren, that by these means they may attest their devotion to the Lord and attain to his kingdom and life everlasting.—Rom. 12:1; 1 John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; Phil. 3:10, 11.

A VISION OF COMING GLORY

Luke 9:28-36.—July 29.

"This is my beloved son—hear him."

Continuing his lessons to the apostles, showing them that his glory and kingdom could not come until after his suffering and death, our Lord declared, "There be some standing here who will not taste of death until they see the Son of Man coming in his royal majesty." (Matt. 16:28; 17:1) Then, six days later (or eight days, counting the one in which this was uttered and the one in which it was fulfilled) our Lord took Peter, James and John, the three apostles most advanced in faith and zeal, into a high mountain, and while praying with them the transfiguration scene of our lesson ensued.

It was a further lesson of instruction in harmony with what he had already explained, viz., that the Son of Man must be set at naught by the chief priests and the elders, and must be crucified, and must rise from the dead, ere he could enter into his glory;—the kingdom in which he had promised them a share. The transfiguration scene was therefore a picture or "vision" of the Lord's glory in his kingdom, and was intended to assure the apostles respecting the certainty of the kingdom, notwithstanding the apparent failure of all kingdom-hopes in our Lord's crucifixion. And this vision was doubtless essential as an assistant to the apostles' faith in Jesus as the promised Messiah, since the course of events which would follow in the next few months would be so different from everything that they had expected.

Peter, one of those present on this occasion, fully substantiates this view—that the transfiguration was a vision of Christ's dignity and glory in the kingdom—for writing respecting it he says: "We have not followed cunningly devised fables in making known to you the presence and power of our Lord Jesus, but were eye-witnesses of that majesty, for he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory—'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount."—2 Pet. 1:16-18.

The several accounts show that our Lord entered into the mountain to pray, and that the apostles fell asleep during the prayer, but subsequently awakened and beheld the vision, the Master's face shining like the sun, and his garments glitteringly white, and in his company two persons who, for some reason, they recognized as Moses and Elijah, altho of course they had never seen either of these men, and would not have known them without assistance. These they overheard talking with the Lord, the subject of the conversation no doubt being intended for the ears of the disciples—to convince them that the matters which would occur before long in Jerusalem and on Mount Calvary would all be features of the divine plan, harmoniously working out the blessed results promised and longed for, through the kingdom. "They spoke of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."

What is the interpretation of the picture? is a proper question. We reply, that it represented, first of all, that altho our Lord Jesus must suffer death, even the death of the cross, in harmony with the divine plan, "being made a curse for us" (Gal 3:13), nevertheless, he was still the Son of God, whose glorious majesty and kingly power would later on be fully shown forth. And Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the Prophets, illustrate how the death of Christ was fully attested beforehand. Moses spoke of the sufferings of Christ in all the arrangements of the Law, its sacrifices, etc., and the prophets declared not only the coming glories, but also the sufferings which must precede them, as our Lord subsequently pointed out to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, saying, "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Messiah to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—Luke 24:25-27.

Again, this picture may be understood to represent the kingdom during this Gospel age—the kingdom as recognized by the Lord's people, but not recognized by the world. In this view of the vision, our Lord's race shining as the sun, and his garments glistening white, would represent him in his present condition, as no longer the man Christ Jesus, but the risen, glorified Son of the Highest, a spirit being. In this view of the matter, Moses might be understood to represent the faithful of the past ages, and Elijah the faithful of this Gospel age, the body of Christ in the flesh,* who are to be associated with him in the glory of the kingdom, and who meantime behold his glory with the eye of faith, and recognize the great transaction of Calvary as the basis for all kingdom hopes and blessings.

In harmony with this view is the fact that at the same time that this vision was taking place the other disciples of the twelve at the foot of the mountain were contending with the adversary, seeking to cast out the devil from the young man. Thus the Lord's people of the present time are still in the valley of conflict, still contending with the will of the flesh and the devil; yet their eyes of faith behold at the top of the mountain the glorious Lord, with all power in heaven and in earth, their Friend, their Teacher, and soon to be their deliverer, who will cause them to share in the glories of his kingdom into which he has already entered.

We have called this scene on the mountain a vision, and so indeed our Lord calls it, in the account given by Matthew (17:9): "As they came down from the mountain Jesus charged them saying, Tell the *vision* to no man until the Son of Man be risen from the dead." And indeed a vision was just as useful to the purpose as a reality could have been. Thus it was that the Lord showed many things later on to one of these three witnessing disciples on the Isle of Patmos. He showed him in vision, angels and thrones and crowns and multitudes and dragons, etc., in a manner which served the purpose equally as well as tho all those beasts, dragons, etc., had been actually created for the purpose. So in this vision: Our Lord's transfiguration was merely an *appearance—actually* he had undergone no change. He appeared like as spiritual beings are described, bright, shining like the sun, etc., yet he was not yet a spirit being, and did not become such until his resurrection from the dead; he was still "the man Christ Jesus." But in the "vision" his countenance and his garments were caused to *appear* to be bright, glistening, etc., and the *appearance* served every purpose. Likewise, Moses and Elijah appeared to be present, but they were not actually present, because it was merely a "vision." The Apostle distinctly informs us that Moses and Elijah and the others of the ancient worthies are not yet made perfect—and that they cannot be made perfect until after the church, the body of Christ, is complete and glorified with the Head, "God having provided some better thing for *us*, that *they* without *us* should not be made perfect."—Heb. 11:40; John 3:13; Acts 2:34.

As a part of the "vision" came a misty cloud of light, which enveloped the group, including the disciples, who were fearful as they entered the cloud. This cloud as a part of the vision, might properly be understood as saying to the apostles and to us, Altho the glory and majesty of the Lord Jesus are unquestionably his, as testified to by the Law and the Prophets, and as a result of his faithfulness unto death, nevertheless that glory will in a considerable measure be hidden, covered, obscured for a time, so that you will see your glorious Lord and King only with the eye of faith, which, altho more or less cloudy, will nevertheless be bright to those who look unto him. And the voice of God speaking in that cloud and testifying to Jesus as the Son of God, and instructing that we should hear and obey his word, would seem to represent how that all through this Gospel age, while the misty cloud surrounds the glory of the Lord, we will have great need to continually hearken to the Word of the Lord, and to repose faith in its declaration respecting the Son of God, our Redeemer.

After the vision the Lord and the apostles descended from the mount to engage in the duties of life—to complete the lessons of faith and obedience, battling against the world, the flesh and the devil; and yet, as the quotation from the Apostle Peter's letter clearly shows, the influence of this vision continued with the apostles through coming days, as it still encourages us today. And may we not learn a lesson to the effect that as this vision was granted when Jesus and the disciples were at prayer, so all those who seek God in prayer may, to a large extent, with the eye of faith realize this same blessed vision of the kingdom—the glories to come—and may, to some extent, with the hearing of faith recognize the voice of God saying, "This is my beloved Son"—to some extent be enabled to realize that as members of the body of Christ their sacrifice must also be accomplished in actual death before they can enter into his glory, since it is written that "if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him."

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* See Millennial Dawn, Vol. ii, Chap. 8, "Elias Shall First Come."

We cannot build tabernacles on the mountain heights of faith and hope, and expect to dwell there in enraptured vision always. We must remember that the duties and trials of present experiences in conflicts with sin and with self and with the adversary are essential to our development and part of our covenant, but like the Master we should frequently seek the heavenly Father's blessing in prayer; and in proportion as we use this privilege will our hearts and our faces shine; and proportionately we will be enabled to "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," and who has shined by his grace into our hearts, "to give the light of the knowledge of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.

LEAST AND GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM

MATT. 18:1-14.—AUGUST 5.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such [like]is the Kingdom of God."*

The Golden Text chosen for this lesson is most inappropriate and misleading. It was spoken respecting children, and as indicating our Lord's sympathy and love for them. Indeed, we cannot think of any truly great man or woman who would not look upon childhood with loving sympathy and interest; and viewing the blank pages of the life represented in them be awakened to tender feelings respecting the trials and difficulties and disappointments which must lie before them in the path of life, and with hopes and good wishes respecting their possible victories and attainments of desirable characters, as a result of these experiences and conflicts. That Jesus loved children, yea, loved everything guileless and pure, is not to be questioned, and our Golden Text substantiates this conviction.

The kingdom of God will not be composed either wholly or in part of infants who died without either knowledge, experience or character attainments. Had such been God's purpose it would not have required nearly nineteen centuries to complete the "little flock" of "one hundred and forty-four thousand;" nor would it have been said that a good fight must be fought and victory achieved and graces of the spirit attained by "patient perseverance in well doing," and that all in all it must be through much tribulation to the flesh, voluntarily and joyfully accepted, that any can enter into the kingdom. Infants can have no share under this Gospel call; but they will surely share the great world-blessing that will speedily follow the completion of the Church and its glorification as God's kingdom.

This text is misleading, in connection with this lesson, because in the latter the expression "little ones" is used in a figurative sense, not literally;—the Lord referring to his humble and trustful disciples as God's little ones, God's children, whom he pities and cherishes as do earthly parents their little ones. Nor is this an exceptional case, for we find that repeatedly in the Scriptures the young Christian and the less developed are likened to babes, to children. Thus the Apostle Paul exhorts: "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be ye men." And the Apostle Peter exhorts the brethren, "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby."—1 Cor. 14:20; 1 Peter 2:2.

It was apparently after the journey back from the Mount of Transfiguration to Capernaum that the discourse of this lesson occurred. Comparing the accounts as given by Mark and Luke, we gather that the apostles on the way had a discussion respecting who of their number were the greatest, and who would be the greatest or most honored in the kingdom which the Lord had promised and in which they hoped to share. This discussion quite probably was instigated by the fact that only three of their number had been specially favored by being with the Lord in the mount. The discussion between them, altho carried on probably in subdued tones, not intended for the ears of Jesus, had become animated as the various sides and claims were advocated. It was a little later that our Lord inquired of them what had been the subject of their earnest and animated converse as they followed him in the way. According to Luke's account they were reticent, not liking to answer his question and to tell of their dispute, no doubt feeling rather ashamed of it. But, realizing that they could not hide the matter from the Lord, and some of them evidently anxious to have his decisive word on the subject, they asked him to settle the question for them.

Our Lord desired just such an opportunity for presenting to his faithful ones a needed lesson along this line; and according to his usual custom he illustrated it. Calling a little child, and seating it in the midst, he made the astounding declaration that only such as would become childlike could enter the kingdom at all. As natural men, and most of them rather unlearned, the disciples had no doubt been aiming as far as possible from childlike simplicity, and striving rather to assume the dignity of mind and of bearing which would suggest itself to the natural man as being appropriate to those who hoped soon to share regal honors in the kingdom of God. What astonishment it must have caused them to learn that the Lord was looking rather for simplicity, meekness, teachableness, child-likeness, than for astuteness, wisdom, dignity, etc.!

Yet our Lord's words were not merely a condemnation of the spirit which they had been cultivating, but a lesson of instruction regarding a change in this respect, his words intimating not merely the possibility, but the necessity of a change of course on the part of those who desired a share in his kingdom. If, instead of reading our Lord's words as in the Common Version, "Except ye be converted," we read them as in the Revised Version, "Except ye turn," more will get the true thought our Lord wished his followers to learn, the word "convert" having lost its primary meaning to many by reason of misuse. They must turn their ideas on the subject, and study and practice lessons in the opposite direction—lessons of meekness, of humility, of child-likeness: and our Lord's declaration that those who attain to the greatest development in meekness and simplicity of heart will be greatest in the kingdom, implies that those who strive after simplicity and meekness will be granted a share in the kingdom, but that none who are self-seeking and boastful will have part or lot in this matter.

Having thus defined the humble-minded and unostentations amongst his followers as those upon whom he would bestow the highest honors and dignities of the kingdom, Jesus proceeded to give a general lesson respecting such "little ones" of his followers, saying that all who receive such humble disciples in his name will be reckoned as having received him, and whoever stumbles or injures one of these humble or "little ones" will thereby commit a crime so serious that it would be better for him to have lost his life—better that a mill-stone were fastened to his neck and he be cast into the sea, and thus all hope of saving his life effectually destroyed—better that this great calamity should come upon one than that he should do an injury to one of the Lord's "little ones"—one of the humblest of the disciples, child-like, meek, following in the way of the Lord.

As we thus see how great a value the Lord places upon humility it should encourage all true disciples to cultivate this quality daily, that thus they might grow more and more guileless, honest, truly humble, and in the sight of the great King become more and more great, more and more fit for the high exaltations of the kingdom to come. Seeing that without this meekness none can enter into this kingdom, we need not wonder that the Scriptures everywhere exhort the Lord's people to humility—"Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God [now] that he may exalt you in due time" in the kingdom. Yet notwithstanding all these exhortations of the Scriptures the perversity of human nature seems to be such that those who become the Lord's people and who engage to run in his way seem to find more trouble, more to contend against, in this matter than in any other. And some who feel themselves to be little enough seem very anxious that others of the brethren shall esteem them very highly. Would to God that all of the Lord's dear people, and especially all who seem to be leaders, and who have some natural qualifications for leading, and helpfulness in the church, would study well this lesson, and learn from it how to advance themselves in the Lord's favor, and how to be truly great according to his standard, which alone shall prevail.

The word rendered "offend" in verse 6 and onward would be better rendered "stumbled," the thought being that of placing a stumbling-block in the path. The Lord intimates most distinctly that there will be plenty of such stumbling-blocks in the way of those who are truly his, and that, too, in proportion as they are "little"—humble. He declares it necessary that these difficulties, these trials, these "offences," shall come. It is necessary, because it is the divine will that all the elect church shall be thoroughly tested and developed in character, that thus they may become strong characters, copies of God's dear Son, willing to suffer for the truth's sake, and that gladly, joyfully, the loss of earthly things, that thereby they might please the Father which is in heaven, —thus developing humility and obedience, that by and by they may be ready for the exaltation which he has promised to those only who faithfully follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Yet however necessary that the stumbling-blocks shall be in the way, and that the church, the body of Christ, shall be tested thereby, this does not lighten the responsibility of those who, as the agents of the adversary, lend themselves to his influence in placing those stumbling-blocks before the feet of the saints; and our Lord's words, without indicating exactly the nature of their punishment, assure us positively that such evil-doers will have a reward from him who says, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay."

In all probability many today are putting stumbling-blocks before the Lord's little ones, his faithful little flock, who do not realize what they are doing,—just as Peter unconsciously became a stumbling stone, a rock of offence, to the Master, when he attempted to dissuade him from the performance of his consecration vow. Those who place stumbling-blocks before the Lord's "little ones" now similarly seek to lead them from the narrow path of full consecration and self-sacrifice—seeking to persuade them that another and an easier way, a way less humbling to the natural man, a way more politic, more crafty, more wise, according to the course of this world than the narrow way, is just as good as or a great deal better than the narrow way. Such testings are necessary, and it is also necessary that all who do not walk closely in the footprints of the Savior shall be sifted out, for the Lord seeketh only a little flock,—all of them copies of his dear Son. But there is a great responsibility upon those who aid in turning aside any of the flock—who to any extent are stumbling-blocks, causes of stumbling or "offence" in the pathway of the Lord's people.

Following this line of thought, that offences or trials and testings must come to all, our Lord urges that tho these tests mean the sacrifice of pleasure or hopes or aims or customs or privileges, precious to us as a right eye or a right hand, or useful to us as our foot, they must nevertheless be overcome, if we would enter into the kingdom. This is another way of saying what he at another time expressed in the words, "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the kingdom." Whoever has gotten the thought that the kingdom is to be granted merely on condition of *believing* in Jesus has gotten a wrong thought that is not imparted by the Scriptures. Faith is necessary to our justification, before we can do anything in the nature of self-sacrifice that God could accept; but whoever stops with the faith without the works, without the self-sacrifice, loses every hope and privilege in connection with the kingdom. To attain it we must "strive," must "fight the good fight," must "endure hardness as good soldiers," must be willing to cut off, not only sinful pleasures, but all things that would interfere with our full devotion to the Lord's service and our fulfillment of our covenant to be dead with him; must "work out our salvation with fear and trembling,"—assisted by divine grace sufficient for every time of need, and by the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

We are not to understand that any may be lacking a foot or a hand or an eye in the kingdom; but rather we should understand that as the offending eye represents besetments which appeal to our natural tastes as beautiful and likely to charm and attract us to earthly things, and as the offending hand would represent the doing of things that would be contrary to our highest spiritual interests, and as the offending foot would represent the going into forbidden paths of sin or self-gratification, so the lopping off of these would properly signify that it would be better that we should enter the life eternal and into the share in the kingdom without having enjoyed certain earthly privileges and gratifications, than that having enjoyed all the earthly gratifications we should thereby have missed our calling and failed to make our election sure.

The "everlasting fire" and the "hell-fire" mentioned are equally symbolical with the other parts of the figure, and undoubtedly refer to the destruction which is the wages of sin to be visited upon wilful sinners—"everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." That fire is used here and elsewhere in the Scriptures to represent not torture, but destruction, is clearly set forth in a pamphlet entitled, "What say the Scriptures About Hell."*

Branching out further along the same lines, our Lord gives the general caution to us all: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones"—these humble ones that belong to the Lord. They may seem humble and insignificant when viewed from the worldly standpoint, but they are God's friends; yea, they are God's children, for whom he cares; and hence whoever does injury to them is insulting and antagonizing their Father which is in heaven. Moreover, our Lord assures us that each of his little ones, his faithful, humble little flock, have a constant representation in the Father's presence. There is a guardian angel for each of the Lord's people, and we are to get the thought that there is no delay in the bringing of any and everything which pertains to their welfare and interest before the attention of the great King. What a thought is here for those who are inclined to be heady and to despise or in any manner override or mistreat the humble ones of the body of Christ! And what a lesson is here also for the humble ones—that they are the special objects of divine care and providence, for whom, therefore, all things must work well, because they belong to the Lord!

The remaining four verses seem not to be properly a part of this lesson, and inasmuch as they will come up in another lesson later on and in their proper connection, we omit the discussion of them here.

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* We will supply these free to applicants who *so* request.

BATTLING FOR THE TRUTH

Dear Brother Russell:—At a recent meeting of the church here the 28th chapter of Isaiah was brought up, and it seemed plain to us that this is an exact description of the condition of the nominal church of the present time, from the prophets and seers, who err in vision, down to the tables which are full of vomit, the bed which has become too short and the covering which is too narrow.—See Millennial Dawn Index references.

Now in regard to that part of the chapter which refers to those who drive back the battle to the gate, the thought was expressed that possibly this might refer to the present "volunteer" work, and that the volunteers are pressing back the battle to the gate, and that the word "gate" might possibly be a symbol of dominion, representing Satan's stronghold, and that this stronghold is the doctrine of eternal torture, against which doctrine the present ammunition of the volunteers seems to be specially directed. Then again it was thought that this gate (or doctrine) might represent the restraint which the enemy has exercised over the race of mankind during all these centuries, lest the glorious light of the gospel should shine into their hearts.

Do you think the interpretation correct? And if so, do you not think that if the attention of the brethren were called to this chapter at the present time it would serve to strengthen those who are already in the volunteer service and encourage others to enlist, inasmuch as the same chapter promises strength to those who drive the battle back? With best wishes,

Yours in the service of the King,

Conrad Kuehn,—*Ohio*.

[In reply: We certainly do understand this chapter to portray events of our day; and while all true soldiers of the cross are now battling for the truth against error we concede that none are doing more valiant service than are the "volunteers." Nor do we know of any other service or method so likely to yield the desired results.

As to turning the battle at the gate: it might be viewed aggressively, as you suggest, or defensively. Really we are on the defensive—the stronghold Zion is attacked by enemies from without and within. The Bible is attacked by so-called Higher Critics, and the cross, the doctrine of the *ransom*, is attacked by Evolutionists and hosts of others, and the long entrenched errors of doctrine are now stumbling many who want to be on the Lord's side of this battle—the side of truth. The enemy of truth, Satan, and his deluded followers must be shown up and driven completely outside Zion's walls that now at last "wheat" may be distinguished from "tares." We know of no better aid in this conflict than the "Volunteer TOWER." It is an inspiring scene to see the Allegheny church volunteers going forth every Sunday morning, and it must be still more so to witness the larger company of the Boston church—about 80 per cent of the entire church, we understand, are "volunteers." The influence of such preachers and their message is bound to tell on the right class.—EDITOR.]

BIBLE READING INDISPENSABLE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I can hardly appreciate the advice given by you in the last WATCH TOWER, under caption of "Attention, Watch Tower Readers!" inasmuch as I am always benefited by a re-reading of the DAWNS, but permit me to say that I believe there are some who may misconstrue the last two sentences of the above article and think into them a meaning it is not intended they should contain, viz., that you are advocating the reading of the DAWNS exclusive of God's Word. I have learned from observation that those who merely read the DAWNS without examining the context of Scriptures quoted do not become well established in the truth, so that when the fire that tries every man's faith becomes more intense, they are unable to endure the ordeal. It has further been my experience that those who state that "they" have the Bible to read, and that it is sufficient for them without reading the DAWNS, never come to a clear knowledge of the truth, because they thereby ignore the instrumentality that God has been pleased to honor in setting forth his truth in these last days. And in ignoring the instrumentality they ignore not man, but God, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" and hence, as long as they maintain such an attitude, they cannot hope to be led into all truth. But happy are those who keep their minds in a receptive condition for truth, willing to receive it through whatever agency the Lord may be pleased to send it to them. May the Lord enable each one of us so to be.

Before closing I must tell you that I was greatly encouraged by the article, "Keep yourselves in the love of God." How it has refreshed me in spirit! I appreciate more fully now the fact that it is one thing to possess the "love of God" and another thing to maintain it to the end of our course. How much effort on our part is implied in the word "keep!" —continuous effort, yet ever mindful of the fact that the Lord is the "author" as well as the "finisher of our faith." It is to "pray without ceasing," to "quench not the spirit," to "despise not prophesying," to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good."

Some three years ago, when I began to appreciate the beauty of "present truth," I realized I had lost much presious time, and desiring to make the best of the little I had left, I thought over several plans and finally decided on this one, "Every day I will try to become a little more like Jesus, and then he will make plain to me those things I do not now understand." And I find that my knowledge of the "deep things of God" has ever been commensurate with my progress in becoming more and more like God's dear Son, but herein I became aware of the greatest struggle of my life, a struggle to the death of the old nature, and oh, what a struggle it is, only those who have tried to stem the current of a fallen and depraved nature know. I found arrayed against me the world, the flesh and the devil, but "thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" How appropriate are the words,—

"Keep striving: the winners are those who have striven
  And fought for the prize that no idler has won;
To the hand of the stedfast alone it is given,
  And before it is gained there is work to be done."

Enclosed find order for DAWNS. With much Christian love, I am,

Yours in our Redeemer,
E. J. COWARD,—*Texas.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

IS THE CHINA TROUBLE PROPHETICALLY SIGNIFICANT?

Apparently a serious crisis in the world's affairs is being reached in China. For the past sixty years Europeans have been intruding themselves upon the Chinese, ostensibly for the benevolent purpose of blessing the Chinese with European civilization, but really for commercial purposes,—supplying their needs for a money consideration. Subsequently, about forty years ago, under compulsory regulations forced upon the Chinese, Christian missionaries were permitted to enter the Flowery Empire to contradict its religious and moral ideas cherished for centuries. The new religion brought family strife—especially because it taught the people that their ancestors (whom the Chinese worship as demi-gods), not being believers in the only name wherein is salvation, were lost eternally—doomed to everlasting torments.

These missionaries, and all foreign merchants who lodged with them, were specially protected by treaty laws and regulations, and thus were exempted from Chinese laws and became a favored people, possessed of greater privileges and liberties than the natives. Moreover, the missionaries (especially the Romanists, from all accounts) attempted to extend these special treaty rights to such Chinese as professed conversion—the priests became the attorneys of their people, and by arguments and threats, etc., generally got their faithful free from charges brought against them.

Thus inch by inch the white man forcibly intruded upon the yellow man, until the war between China and Japan, which displayed to the civilized world the helplessness of China, the second greatest nation of the world numerically (400,000,000). Since then the white man's arrogance has increased, and the newspapers of the world have told the Chinese that it is only a question of time until their nation will no longer exist, being divided among the nations of Europe, who have grasped ports and whole districts, compelling a nominal acquiescence on the part of the Chinese.

The Chinese are a thrifty people and peaceably disposed and not specially patriotic,—else they would not have submitted to these intrusions so long as they have. Indeed, they are quite tolerant toward foreigners who will adopt their civilization, submit to their laws and mind their own business. Understanding the circumstances, we cannot so much wonder at the recent uprising against foreigners under the auspices of an athletic society called the "Boxers." It is worthy of note that the present outbreak, while it has extended to all missionaries and all foreigners, nevertheless began with Roman Catholics exclusively. Much as we must deprecate the killing of many missionaries and many native converts, we must admit that such an uprising would have occurred long ago among white men of any nationality. Lack of patriotic sentiment amongst the Chinese, and inferior armament, etc., accounts for the delay of this outbreak: the people have been kept so busy providing for life's necessities that love of money has crowded out love of country.

Europe is astounded at the late uprising, for two reasons. (1) It offers a suggestion that a patriotic feeling may yet take hold of the Chinese, which with their overwhelming numbers would make them a menace to Europe, for they could muster an army twice as numerous as could all Europe combined—an army accustomed to obedience, and very economical. (2) Even should the whites succeed in coercing the Chinese, and hold the kingdom as a vassal empire, or divide it amongst the "more civilized," the danger is that international jealousies over shares in the spoils, "spheres of influence," etc., would ultimately lead to great wars, far-reaching in their influence, and quite possibly involving all Europe.

It is from this standpoint that affairs in China are of special interest to those who know that we are living in the harvest time of the Gospel age, and who are instructed from the Word of God to expect this age to close with a great time of trouble—beginning with international complications, and ending with anarchy. From this standpoint we examine the Scriptures and note the following as seemingly pertinent, indicating that every nation of earth will be involved in the trouble, but that "Christendom," "Babylon," "Sheshach," will be the *last* to drink the cup of wrath. We quote from Jeremiah 25:15-33, as follows:—

"Thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me: Take the wine-cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. . . . . All the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.

"Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink ye and be drunken, and spue and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.

"And it shall be if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Ye shall certainly drink. . . . . for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts. . . . . The Lord hath a controversy with the nations: he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord. . . . .

"Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts [boundaries] of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried."

It is not for us to prophecy, but to seek to interpret and apply prophecy; and even then we are to learn from the past that it is not the divine purpose that matters prophetically revealed shall be understood in *detail* until during or after fulfilment;—and then by those taught of God. We therefore merely suggest that, in harmony with the foregoing Scriptures it will not surprise us if the Chinese are entering now their share of the great day of wrath upon all nations;—about to drink their share of the cup of divine wrath, which is to bring all nations low, as an experience preparatory to the great blessing of all the world under the Millennial kingdom. And if it was appropriate that Israel, the natural seed of Abraham, upon rejection of Messiah should be punished and destroyed nationally, eighteen centuries ago, will it be strange if other nations also be compelled to drink of the same cup of wrath?—See verse 29.

India has already been severely scourged with famine and pestilence, yet these may be only the beginning of her share in the cup of wrath, which we understand will be to every nation, as it drinks thereof, a time of trouble without precedent. Probably the trouble will extend from nation to nation during the next few years, until finally, despite every effort to avert it (verse 28), great Babylon's turn will come—probably within ten years from now, when she must drink the very dregs of the cup, suffering more severely than the heathen nations, even as she has enjoyed greater privileges and sinned against greater light. "Babylon — Sheshach — shall drink *after* them."—Verse 26.

As the "Gospel of the kingdom" was circulated throughout Palestine before its trouble and overthrow, so we believe the same Gospel of the kingdom will be preached *for a witness* to each nation before its trouble comes. China probably contains but few fully consecrated Christians, and these chiefly among the missionaries, and hence the "harvest" message might quickly reach them all. In this connection it will be interesting to note, (1) that under divine providence our dear Brother H. A. Randle sent a special personal appeal to each Christian missionary in China, and later many tracts and Dawns, about a year before this trouble broke out; (2) the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society sent tracts and booklets extensively to the same missionaries last year. True, we cannot say that many have received the truth, but we had no reason to expect that many would receive it. Yet the witness was given to all before their great time of trouble came. And who knows but what this interruption of mission work, backed by the truth, may set others to thinking in another direction —to looking and praying for God's kingdom to come, as the only hope of the world.

THE SHEPHERDS DISAPPOINTED AND CHAGRINED

Reverses in the mission fields of the world, one after another, will be very discouraging to ministers who have been preaching to themselves and others that a peaceful conversion of the world to Christ is near at hand: that thus the Millennial kingdom will be introduced. They will find that they have been uttering a false cry, saying, Peace, Peace, when there is no peace, and can be no peace satisfactory or lasting until the Prince of Peace, Immanuel, shall establish it through his kingdom, by breaking in pieces the nations as a potter's vessel, and establishing his kingdom on a different basis in their stead—on their ruins. Note now how the same prophecy refers to this despair of the pastors, etc., of nominal Christendom, at the spoliation of their pasture fields, as follows:—

"Howl, ye shepherds [pastors], and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersion are come; and ye shall fall [and be ruined] like a delicate vessel. And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape. A voice of crying from the shepherds [pastors] and an howling from the principal of the flock shall be heard: for the Lord hath spoiled their pasture."—See Jer. 25:34-37.

* * *

Lord Salisbury, the British Prime Minister, addressing *The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, recently said:—

"Just look at this Chinese matter. You observe all the people who are slaughtered. Do you imagine that they are slaughtered simply because the Chinese dislike their religion? There is no nation in the world so indifferent on the subject of religion as the Chinese! It is because they and other nations have got the idea that missionary work is a mere instrument of the *secular government* to achieve the objects it has in view. In the East they have the proverb, 'First the Missionary, then the Consul; then the General.'"

* * *

The London Spectator, commenting on the general dislike of Europeans by Asiatics, now being exemplified in China, says:—

"There is in China no race hatred, or color hatred, or, as we believe, hatred of creed for Chinese Christians. They could be tolerated quite well as mere idiots, but that those who dislike their ideas fear them also, and believe that unless those who propagate them are extirpated the ideas will win. The Europeans, they say, are already convincing many; they have almost persuaded our Emperor; year by year their views are advancing among the people,—if they and their disciples are suffered to live, our religion, our civilization, our social system, all are lost together. As for our literati, they will be ruined first, for they are our officials. People wonder that the harmless missionaries should be the objects of such a passion, that they should be disemboweled instead of merely beheaded; but think of the treatment of the Christians by the Roman Judges and we shall begin to understand the Chinese movement. Add but a little fear to the feelings already generated, and who would answer for the lives of Jews in France, or Germany, or Russia, or for those of Anarchists in any part of Europe? Asiatics in all ages have believed the amalgam of beliefs and social ways which constitutes their civilization, to be divine and unimprovable, and regard those who despise it, and preach against it, and shake it, as the intrusive Europeans certainly do, with a horror which of itself extinguishes the feeling of a common humanity. They have no more sense that slaughtering such is wicked, than the Parisians had when they massacred the Huguenots, or than English sportsmen have when they organize a battue of birds."

* * *

General Lord Wolsley, of the British War Department, takes a very pessimistic view of the outlook in China, which is corroborated by the accumulating evidences that since the China-Japan war China has been quietly drilling her troops and arming them with modern weapons, machine guns, etc. He said recently:—

"China possesses every requisite for overrunning the world. She has a population of 400,000,000, all speaking the same language, or dialect, readily understood from one end of the empire to the other. She has enormously developed wealth, and still enormous natural wealth awaiting development. Her men, if properly drilled and led, are admirable soldiers. They are plucky, and able to live on next to nothing. Moreover, they are absolutely fearless of death. Begin with the foundation of millions upon millions of such soldiers as those men are capable of being made, and tell me, if you can, where the end will be."

A Chinese gentleman of education explains that the present trouble is occasioned by the Chinese lack of conscience: that well-meaning missionaries are duped by many of those professing conversion. He says for instance,—

A Chinaman, an executor of a relative's will, may decide to cheat the orphans under his care. He arranges the matter readily with the Mandarin ruler by promising him one-half the booty. Later he concludes to give him but one-eighth, and to pave the way attends mission meetings, etc. Then he represents himself as terribly persecuted because of his new religion, and through the missionary secures consular protection which hinders him from being tried in a Chinese court. This step is taken months in advance of his refusal to give the Mandarin the promised one-half of his booty.

The missionary, unused to such duplicity, labors, as he supposes, for justice for the oppressed, but the result of his efforts may be summed up thus,—

"Net result: A misled missionary confirmed in his wrong-headedness; a would-be dishonest mandarin baffled and infuriated; two orphans robbed of their inheritance; food for nine days' gossip, and stirring up of hatred of 'foreign devils'; the whole a piece of rank injustice.

"Let me deliberately state that I am quite certain there is not one town in the whole length and breadth of China that has been visited by missionaries, in which you could not at this moment find indisputable evidence of a case similar in all essentials to the example I have given you."

We wonder how long it will require our dear friends interested in missions to learn that God is seeking as his "elect" not the lowest, but the highest types of man;—that now is not the Lord's time for judging the heathen—that as the Apostle declares, "God hath appointed a day [the Millennial day—2 Pet. 3:8] in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) When they learn this they will see the un-wisdom of attempting to forestall Jehovah's plan, and will coöperate rather in his great and gracious arrangement of first calling and preparing an "elect" church, which by and by shall, as God's "royal priesthood," with their glorious Lord, Jesus, as fully competent missionaries, bless the heathen with the gracious opportunity of salvation promised. Perhaps a signal failure of present missions, and spoiling of pastures, may be God's method for awakening his true servants now deluded and blinded by false doctrines contrary to the Word.

PROGRESS OF THE CAUSE IN GREAT BRITAIN

The Lord's blessing attends the British branch. Four colporteurs are at work there with good success. Brother Henninges writes of their work thus,—"The results of their labors for the last two months show that any one of average intelligence and activity can, with the Lord's blessing, sustain himself in the work. Give a clarion call from the WATCH TOWER for more laborers for this great field, advising would-be laborers to write to the British branch for terms, territory, etc."

Respecting the "Volunteer" service Bro. H. says,—"The Volunteer work is progressing well; particularly in this city (London), where we have so far put out 14,000 copies. The work is going on in four sections of the city. Yesterday was the first day on "double turn" (A. M. and P. M.) and the total number of copies of the Volunteer TOWER distributed was 4,000. At this rate we shall soon be obliged to call on you for funds for another 100,000 edition."

Our Society has just rented a very desirable meeting place where Sunday meetings will be regularly held. It is a public hall opposite the Great Eastern Ry. station, and near Wansted Park station of Midland Ry. The entrance is No. 79 Woodgrange Road, Forest Gate, London E. All who trust in the precious blood of Christ will be cordially welcomed. Seats free. No collections.

THE COLPORTEUR WORK AT HOME

We have had many additions to this service lately, but still there is room for consecrated laborers. The harvest is great, the laborers few, comparatively, and the time is short —"the eleventh hour." Write us for particulars if you have the desire and the opportunity to thus "preach the Word" by printed page.

THE MINISTRY OF COMFORT

"The Lord hath anointed me . . . to comfort all that mourn; to appoint [*promise*] *unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."*

Isaiah 61:1-3.

Our text is surely good tidings in a very broad and a very deep sense. Its message is one of "comfort," not only to Zion, the consecrated church, but to *all who mourn;* and as mentally we cast our eyes over the world we are deeply impressed with the thought that the vast majority of mankind are in mourning: as the Apostle expresses it, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." There are undoubtedly a few who are full, satisfied, and who mourn for nothing, and who, therefore, under these conditions, are excluded from any share in this promised blessing; but they are exceptions to the rule. Some of them are wealthy in this world's goods, and feel that they have need of nothing, and are kept busy with their efforts to enjoy themselves. There are others of the same full class who, tho not wealthy, have a very self-satisfied feeling as respects their moral status: they do not realize themselves as sinners; they do not realize their daily imperfections nor their need of a Savior; and are not mourning for anything, and not therefore in the way to be comforted with any of the comforting assurances and promises and provision which the Lord has made for those who mourn.

So far as the world is concerned, our Lord's ministry of comfort to them is chiefly a future work. We rejoice, however, that the time is sure to come when all that mourn, all the "groaning creation," shall be brought under the blessed influences and provisions of the Millennial kingdom, and shall there come to know the consolations which God has provided in Christ:—the balm for every trouble, every wound; the cure for every blight, every sin and every imperfection; and their privilege of profiting by these to the fullest measure by giving themselves unreservedly into the care of the Good Physician. But the poor world, blinded and deceived by the god of this world as respects the character and plan of Jehovah, can neither see, hear, nor appreciate now the wonderful provisions made for them, and hence they cannot receive the blessing, the consolation, the "comfort" now, but must wait for it until the establishment of the Lord's kingdom, the binding of Satan, and the opening of their understanding with the eye-salve of the truth.

But as respects Zion, the consecrated church, this comfort is now her privilege, and all children of Zion need to be comforted. First of all, they need the comforting knowledge that their sins are forgiven, and that they are no longer strangers and aliens and foreigners, but children of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be that they suffer with him. They need to be comforted, too, with the assurances of the Lord's Word that our God is very sympathetic, "very pitiful," and that if anyone be overtaken in a fault he may be restored, and "not be utterly cast down." If the children of Zion had no such consolations as these they surely would be utterly discouraged, disheartened, and faint by the way; hence the Lord has provided these comforting assurances, pointing out to them that having begun a good work in them he is desirous of completing it, if they will permit him to do so, and that to this end they must abide in Christ by faith, coupled with obedience to the extent of their ability. What Christian is there who has not shared these consolations, these comforts, and what Christian has not needed them, and realized that without them he would long since have been undone?

The Scriptures point out to us that our comfort comes through fellowship with the heavenly Father and with our Lord Jesus: we are comforted, not by believing that they are ignorant of our weaknesses and shortcomings, nor that they have a low standard of righteousness and a sinful basis of fellowship, but quite to the contrary of all this, they comfort us with the assurance that altho our every imperfection is known to the Lord he is yet very sympathetic, very merciful; and that having provided, in the great sacrifice at Calvary, a full propitiation (satisfaction) for all sins, the Lord is very pleased to apply, on behalf of each of his adopted children, in full measure, the riches of grace necessary to the covering and offsetting of every unintentional, unapproved error and failure. What comfort is here! What consolation! What privileges of fellowship with the Father and with the Son!

And this comfort, the Scriptures assure us, comes to us through the holy spirit—it is the channel, and, hence indeed, called the Comforter. (John 14:26) Those who have the holy spirit may have the comfort; those who do not have the holy spirit may not have this comfort, this consolation. It is only as we receive of the spirit of the Lord, the mind of the Lord, his disposition, that we are able to understand and appreciate the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of his love and compassion and provision for us, and to be comforted thereby.

Nevertheless, this comfort of the holy spirit (the channel of divine favor), reaches us through the Scriptures, for the Scriptures are the medium, or sub-channel through which the knowledge of God's grace and the comfort of all knowledge reach us; in the Apostle's language, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and *comfort of the Scriptures* might have hope."—Rom. 15:4.

Yet while this comfort is of the Father, through the Son, by the holy spirit, communicated through the Scriptures, we are informed that in great measure it is communicated by the members of the body of Christ one to another, as the Apostle, for instance, after relating certain features of the divine plan respecting the deliverance of the church, says, "Wherefore, *comfort one another* with these words." (1 Thess. 4:18) Similarly, the Apostle declares that he sent Timothy to the church at Ephesus, and again to the church at Colosse, that *he might comfort* their hearts. This, of course, signifies that he was to draw their attention to the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord's *Word*, and that thus they might drink in the holy *spirit* of all the promises, and that thus they might be comforted, not only with respect to the things promised, but with respect to the loving compassion and sympathy of him who promises them.

Writing to the Thessalonians, the Apostle says that he sent Timothy—"to establish you and to *comfort you* concerning your faith, that no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto: for verily, when we were with you we told you we should suffer tribulation, even as it came to pass and ye know. For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you." (1 Thess, 3:2-5) Here again it is evident that the comforting signifies and implies establishment in the faith once delivered to the saints, that all the terms and conditions of our covenant should be clearly held in mind, and that the promises of reward at the end of the journey might serve to comfort, strengthen and establish the children of Zion in their endurance of the tribulations as good soldiers. This comfort, again, was of the Lord, through the holy *spirit*, through the agency of Paul and Timothy. Again, the same Apostle, speaking in the same strain, says: "Wherefore, *comfort yourselves* together and edify one another, even as also ye do."—1 Thess. 5:11.

All of the Lord's people need to remember that in proportion as they are ambassadors of the Lord, and his representatives, it will be their privilege not only by and by in the kingdom to "comfort all that mourn," and to be the trees of righteousness, whose leaves will be for the healing of the nations (Rev. 22:2), but they should remember that in the present life they have a ministry of comfort to perform also, toward all who mourn *in Zion*—toward all of the Lord's people who are in any tribulation, physical or mental disquiet, dis-ease; and they should remember, too, that just in proportion as they are filled with this spirit now, it is their privilege to bind up the broken-hearted, and comfort the mourning ones. No one can have this spirit of helpfulness, this disposition to comfort and to strengthen, and to edify, and to upbuild the household of faith, except he have in considerable measure the spirit of the truth, the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love: and in proportion as each seeks to cultivate this privilege of brotherly helpfulness, in comforting and upbuilding and strengthening, in that same proportion he will find the spirit of love developing and abounding in his own heart, and that his likeness to the Lord Jesus, the Head of the body, is becoming more pronounced from day to day and from year to year.

Finally, in view of what we have seen respecting the Lord's goodness toward his people, and the methods by which he comforts them through the holy spirit, the Scriptures and the brethren, let us note one of the Apostle's expressions respecting the great comfort and consolation which God has provided for his consecrated, faithful people, saying:—

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, who *comforteth us* in all our tribulation, that we may be *able to comfort* them which are in any trouble, by *the comfort* wherewith we ourselves are *comforted of God*."—2 Cor. 1:3, 4.

So then, all of our lessons and experiences in life in connection with trials and difficulties and tribulations, if we are rightly exercised by them, should bring us larger experiences in the Lord's comfort, through the gracious promises of his Word and the spirit of the same; and should make us the more capable and efficient agents and representatives of the Lord, his Word and his spirit, in communicating comfort to others about us in their trials and difficulties.

"FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS"

Matt. 18:21-35.—August 12.

Apparently this lesson grew out of the preceding one on the necessity for guarding against stumbling the least of the Lord's little ones. It would appear that Peter had immediately attempted to put into practice the instructions of the previous lesson, and it was his inquiry as to how often it would be his duty to exercise forgiveness toward a repentant brother, that gave our Lord the opportunity to inculcate a lesson upon the subject of forgiveness.

The teaching of the Jewish rabbis on the subject of forgiveness was, that if the wrong-doer repented of his evil words or actions and came to the aggrieved person, acknowledging his wrong and asking forgiveness, he should be granted forgiveness as often as three times. They based their teaching on this subject on the statements of Job 33:29—margin, and Amos 2:4. Our Lord's teaching on the subject was, in many respects, the reverse of this, and required the offended one to go to the offender to make inquiry respecting the matter, and to show him his fault. This would require great humility on the part of the one who felt himself aggrieved, for it is much easier to resent and avoid the injurer, than to go to him according to the rule which our Lord has laid down. Peter seems to have gotten the impression that the Lord's rule, being different from that of the rabbis in this respect, would also probably be more generous and require that forgiveness be granted a larger number of times; hence Peter adds together the three and the four times mentioned by Amos, making seven in all, and inquires whether the Lord would have his followers be generous and forgiving to those who trespassed against them to that extent—seven times. What must have been his astonishment, and that of all the apostles, to hear the Lord say that forgiveness should be accorded, practically, times without number—seventy times seven.

The thought would seem to be that those who become the Lord's people, partakers of his Spirit, the spirit of love, will, in proportion as they are filled with that spirit and led by that Spirit, be so generous, so magnanimous, so loving, that they would not only be willing but glad to forgive a repentant brother;—glad to be first to extend the olive branch and to make his way back to reconciliation and harmony as smooth as possible. From hearts full of pride, envy, malice and other elements of the spirit of selfishness and sin, and merely topped off with a coat of benevolence and generosity, it will be impossible to dip out very much of the spirit of forgiveness, without dipping out with it some of the bitterness and hatred; and even with this mixture forgiveness could not be granted very freely by an unregenerated heart. But with a heart emptied of malice, and hatred and envy, and filled with brotherly kindness, meekness, patience, gentleness, forbearance, love, we may dip a cup of forgiveness on every occasion and as oft as it may be applied for, and it will be without a mixture of evil, bitterness, sarcasm, etc., but pure and unadulterated, generous, loving forgiveness.

We are to remember, however, that this holy Spirit which we have in our earthen vessels did not abound there at first, but with all was merely a surface coating, as it were, to begin with. Gradually, as the holy Spirit increased in our hearts and abounded, it displaced the wrong spirit; hence those who are able from their hearts to dip the cup of forgiveness repeatedly and without a mixture of evil thereby give evidence that they have been with Jesus and have learned of him, and that they have drunk deeply of his spirit, and that they have been purging out the old leaven of malice, and are being sanctified by the truth, being made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. We are to remember that this growth in grace, while it has a positive time of beginning, in our consecration vow, is nevertheless a gradual work, requiring patient perseverance in well-doing, requiring also that the old nature, with its evil disposition, be mortified continually—deadened —so that our minds may be be renewed under the transforming influence of the spirit of the truth, in which we are to grow daily.

The "seventy times seven," mentioned by our Lord, we would not understand to signify a limited number of times, but rather an unlimited number—that whoever has the Lord's spirit will be glad at any time to witness a repentance of evil-doers and to accord them forgiveness. This does not imply, however, that there may be no penalties attached with the forgiveness; as, for instance, in the dealing of a parent with a child, the moral obliquity of the misconduct may be forgiven, and the parent's indignation against the disobedience of misbehavior pass away immediately, and yet it may be proper at times to impose some penalty on the trespassing child. In every such case, however, it should be clearly understood by the child that this is not because of the parent's disfavor, which has ceased in the forgiveness, but that his peculiar parental duty requires that a lesson shall be taught which will be helpful to the child in the formation of character. In such a case the love of the parent will of necessity be generous, sympathetic, and careful that the punishment shall be only such as might properly be of benefit to the child —correction in righteousness, not in wrath. However, such corrections as this belong only to parents and guardians, and do not properly extend to brethren in the Lord's family, who are not commissioned to judge and to punish one another, but to assist one another,—the Master's words to such being most positive and emphatic, "Judge nothing before the time." "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath." "Remember him who hath said, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

> "Heir of the same inheritance,
> Child of the self-same God,
> He hath but stumbled in the path
> We have in weakness trod."

In the family of God, the saints, begotten of the holy spirit, are all to be recognized as brethren, and to be dealt with accordingly. It is the new creature, and not the old creature, that is the brother in Christ; hence we may love the new creature, and in some respects have very little love for the old, just as all have disrespect for certain blemishes in their own mortal flesh, as they realize its weakness and imperfection,—and the more so in proportion as they grow in the divine likeness as new creatures. If, therefore, a brother should trespass against us it should be our first thought that this wrong done us is not by the brother, the new creature in Christ, but by his mortal flesh, which for the moment has gotten the upper hand with him or to some extent blinded him. Accordingly, instead of feeling angry with the brother, we should feel sympathetic, and our hearts should go out to him, and our desire be strong to do him good and to help him to overcome the weaknesses of his earthen vessel.

It is in line with this thought that our Lord suggests that the proper course is for the aggrieved one to go quietly, without saying a word to anyone else, and have a kindly conference with the one who is doing him wrong, seeking to point out the merits and demerits of the question at issue, and if possible to gain the brother back to fellowship, righteousness, harmony with the Lord. If this shall be unavailing, the next step shall be still a secret one—the taking of two or three brethren of supposedly good heart and large experience, and that without attempting to prejudice their minds, and to ask these to hear the cause and to give counsel as to which one is in error. Whichever of the brethren is in error should be convinced by his fellow-pilgrims, whose arguments with him should be based upon the Scriptures and the spirit of love; but if differences still exist between them, and cannot be harmonized, then, as a court of last resort, the matter should be taken before the church—the consecrated—and after being heard by the church, its decision should be considered final, and be accepted by all. If either of the brethren still have doubts as to his receiving justice in the matter he may console himself with the thought that he will surely obtain a blessing by giving full and hearty assent to the Lord's arrangements, even if he have so large a measure of self-conceit that he still believes his side of the question to be right, notwithstanding the judgment of all the brethren to the contrary.

Whoever will thus humble himself in obedience to the voice of the church will have a blessing, and as we understand the Lord, it will be reasonable for him to expect that the voice of the church in such a matter will be supernaturally guided, that truth and righteousness may triumph. But amongst the Lord's people, let us not forget that this is the highest tribunal, and that brother should not go to law with brother in the worldly courts, however much he may feel himself aggrieved: if he have the forgiving spirit he certainly will rest the matter where the Lord directs, and that too without harboring any unkind or ungenerous sentiments. This will be the certain effect of the indwelling of the spirit of holiness, the spirit of love.

In respect to dealings with those who are without, in the matter of forgiveness, believing husbands dealing with unbelieving wives or believing wives dealing with unbelieving husbands or believing persons in business relationship with unbelievers: the same spirit of love and generosity and forgiveness will apply in every case but not exactly the same way. The believer should be generous toward the unbeliever — he should expect in himself a larger measure of generosity than he would expect from the unbeliever because he has had lessons and experiences in the school of Christ which the unbeliever never had; he has received the new mind, which the unbeliever knows not of. He should not only, therefore, be just in his dealings, but additionally, in proportion as he may be able, he should be generous, forgiving, not too exacting.

However, if an unbelieving partner has attempted a fraud, the believing partner, while exercising a spirit of generosity toward him, if the matter appears to have been wilful, should deliver the offender to the world's courts, which he acknowledges, not prosecuting in a spirit of anger or malice or hatred, but as doing his duty toward society for the suppression of evil-doers in proportion as the laws and arrangements of the world are reasonable from a Christian standpoint. And even if he should fully forgive, concluding that there were extenuating circumstances which would not require that he should deliver the guilty one to the judges of earthly courts, he might properly enough esteem it to be his duty to have no further dealings with such a person, whom he could not trust. This would not imply any lack of forgivness, but merely a reasonable and commendable prudence.

Indeed, the consecrated people of God are admonished by the Apostle not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, and this might not unreasonably be applied, not only to marriage, but also to business engagements and alliances. Similarly, the Apostle informs us that if the unbelieving husband or wife choose to depart from the believer, the latter may conclude that it is providential and for his deliverance from an unequal yoke, as the Apostle says, "Let the unbeliever depart"—permit *him* to cancel the marriage contract if he will.

THE PARABLE OF THE TWO DEBTORS

As was his custom, our Lord illustrated his teaching on this subject with a parable: the king, in the parable, first forgives one of his servants a very large indebtedness—that is, he permits him to go free, as tho he had no such indebtedness against him, that he might do what he could toward the payment of the debt. This servant in turn finds a fellow-servant who owes him a trifling sum, and who likewise promises its payment: but the unmerciful servant, not having the spirit of the king, is ungenerous and exacting, and refusing forgiveness attempts to exact it through force. The matter reaching the ears of the king, he is justly incensed at such conduct on the part of one who has himself been so generously treated, and, in consequence, he puts in operation the machinery of justice which will punish the unmerciful servant by now requesting of him the payment of his full debt; and our Lord followed the parable with the statement, "So likewise shall the heavenly Father do to you if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses."

Not only did our Lord address these words to the disciples and not to the multitude, but additionally he declared that the illustration was applicable to those reckoned members of his kingdom, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto" this parable. The parable, therefore, is not an illustration of the Lord's dealings with the world of mankind, but rather an illustration of his dealings with those who have become separated from the world through the forgiveness of their sins, and who additionally have become heirs of the kingdom through consecration of themselves to the Lord Jesus, to suffer with him, if so be that they may also reign with him. The parable, therefore, is to the church, and suggests to us that our original sin was not blotted out, not forgiven in the absolute sense of the word forgiven, but in the language of the Scriptures, "covered." "Blessed is the man whose sin is covered, to whom the Lord doth not impute iniquity."—Psalm 32:1, 2; Acts 3:19.

Our sins were *covered* from the Lord's sight, and we were treated as tho we owed him nothing, by his grace, exercised toward us through Christ Jesus and his atoning sacrifice; and this reckoned forgiveness will be made actual by and by, and the debt entirely canceled, if, according to the *New Covenant we have made with the Lord, we shall prove faithful in cultivating his spirit of love and in becoming copies of his dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,—forgiving others as we would be forgiven by the Lord, loving, sympathizing with and helping others as we have been treated by the Lord, etc.

The parable is but an illustration of the Golden Text of our lesson, taken from the Lord's prayer: it is only so long as we are willing to forgive our debtors that we may pray with confidence to our heavenly Father and hope for his forgiveness of our trespasses. If we forgive not our fellow-creatures, and that not merely in word, but in deed and from the heart, neither will our heavenly Father forgive our trespasses, and although he has generously covered them from his sight, and treated us as justified by faith, he would immediately remember our trespasses against us, and thus our justification would lapse or be abrogated, by a failure on our part to exercise the holy spirit toward the brethren and toward all men as we have opportunity.

From this standpoint the question of forgiveness of the brethren and forgiveness of all others is a very serious one to the Lord's people. It means that if they do not in a reasonable time develop this spirit of forgiveness, the spirit of love, the Spirit of God, the holy Spirit, they cannot continue to be recognized as Christ's disciples, they cannot continue to be recognized as children of God, they cannot be recognized as having their sins covered, but, on the contrary, will be treated as even more responsible than the world of mankind in general, and have executed upon them severer punishments than will be exacted from others who knew not the Master's will, and who have never tasted of his grace, and who therefore would be less culpable in the exercise of a selfish, uncharitable, ungenerous, unforgiving spirit.

We cannot suppose, however, that the Lord would expect perfection in this matter at once, from those who are still but "babes" in Christ. But his expectations are reasonable, that we should grow in grace as we grow in knowledge of him, and as expressed in the lesson of the Vine and the Branches; every branch which in due time, after due opportunity, does not bring forth the fruitage of the vine, the grapes of love (including forgiveness), will be cut off by the great Husbandman,—no longer recognized as a branch. So in this parable, the one who had experienced such great blessing from the king, and who had been reckoned for the time an honored member of his kingdom-class, ceased to be so regarded and so treated, and, on the contrary, was treated by the king without favor.

The statement that the unmerciful servant would be delivered to the tormentors, until he should pay the uttermost farthing of his debt, might be understood in either of two ways. First, we might understand it to represent the original debt resting against every member of the human family—the penalty of death—a penalty from which our Lord Jesus redeemed all, and from which he proposes to set free all who will obey him. In this view of the matter the unmerciful servant's penalty would signify a delivery to the second death. Or if the debt be understood as representing, in whole or in part, the obligations of his covenant as a new creature, then the penalty upon him for failure to develop and manifest the characteristics of the new creature during the trial-time might be understood to signify that such an one, tho an accepted servant of the Lord, would be required to comply with the full details of his consecration vow, by going into the great time of trouble, and there meeting to the full the demands of his covenant, and learning effectually the lesson of love and sympathy, and to appreciate the grace of God in the forgiveness of sins, as he never before appreciated it. However, we are inclined to think of this matter from the first of these standpoints, that the exaction of the uttermost farthing would signify a hopeless case, in any of the Lord's people who, after experiencing divine favor in forgiveness of their own sins, should fail within a reasonable time to learn to exercise mercy and forgiveness toward the brethren,—that such would, as a result, suffer the second death.

The Lord's people very generally find themselves in considerable trouble along the line of justice. We all recognize justice as the very foundation of all order and righteousness, and when we feel that justice is on our side, it is proportionately the more difficult to freely forgive the person whom we believe to have been acting from the standpoint of injustice. There is a general tendency to require others to measure up to our standard of justice, by some sort of penance, before we forgive them. It is against this very spirit that our Lord was teaching, and to counteract which he gave this parable. We are to remember that the Lord will require us to live up to the standards we set for others. If our standard in dealing with others be one of exact *justice*, we may expect no mercy at the Lord's hands. (See James 2:13) And what would this mean as respects the sins that are past through the forbearance of God, and what would it mean as respects the obligations upon us every day and every hour, to whose full requirements we are unable to measure? As we cannot come to the Lord ourselves on the score of justice, so we are not to deal with others upon that standard. As we must ask of the Lord mercy, grace, forgiveness, so we must be willing to extend to others mercy, grace, forgiveness, when they trespass against us; and as heartily, quickly and freely as we ourselves hope for.

The Lord has not laid down this rule in an arbitrary fashion, as simply saying, If you do not forgive others I will not forgive you. There is a deeper reason for it than this. He wishes to develop in us his own spirit, his own character, a likeness or copy of which was exhibited to us in the person and life of his dear Son, our Lord Jesus. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that we shall have the character he desires, or else we can never attain to the joint-heirship in the kingdom which he is pleased to extend. Hence we are to understand that this requirement or command of forgiveness, etc., is with a view to develop us as copies of his dear Son, in order that he may bestow upon us, in due time, all the riches of his grace, contained in the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

"WHO DID SIN, THIS MAN OR HIS PARENTS?"

August 19.—John 9:1-17.

Every traveler in eastern countries is sure to be impressed by the fact that blindness is much more common there than in Europe and America. Tabulated information on this subject, in *Encyclopedia Americana*, shows that in 1870 the proportion of blind in America was one in 1900 population; in Europe the proportion was larger, *viz.*, one in 1094; while in China the average was one in 400 population. According to no less an authority than Dr. Geikie, Egypt has one blind person to every 100 of population. Palestine lying near to Egypt, and having conditions very similar, especially amongst the lower classes, may be supposed to have had at least half as many, *viz.*, the terribly large proportion of one in every 200 of population.

Canon Tristan, writing on the subject, says:—

"Blindness is common in Palestine to a degree which we in western lands can scarcely realize. There is probably no country in the world, except Egypt, where this affliction is so prevalent. At Gaza, for instance, it is said that one-third of the population have lost one or both eyes; and from my own observation in that city I should unhesitatingly say that the statement is not exaggerated. But amongst these cases it is difficult to find any born blind."

This blindness is in great measure the result of the scarcity of water and the neglect of children, whose eyes are in consequence attacked by the flies. The miracle brought to our attention in this lesson differs from the five other instances of the healing of the blind by our Lord, mentioned in the Scriptures, in that this man was born blind. In our Lord's time the science of surgery had not advanced so far as at present, and consequently, as herein stated by the one healed, the cure was a marvel, the like of which had never been heard of. Even yet we believe that there are only five cases on record of successful operations upon those born blind. Our Lord's cure of such blindness, with the simple prescription used, would therefore be a remarkable miracle today, and much more so was it in that day.

ORIENTALISM, MORMONISM, THEOSOPHY

The question of the disciples, whether it was this man's sin or the sin of his parents that caused him to be born blind, implies either an extreme simplicity on their part, not to see that the man could not have sinned before his birth, or quite possibly it implied that some of the absurd notions of the far East—of India—had reached the Jews: one of these was and still is that each child born into the world had a previous existence, in which it had done either good or evil, the rewards or punishments of which were represented in the conditions of the present life. This absurdity is being revived, even in Christian lands, by so-called Theosophists, and by two bodies of people known as "Mormons," in the United States. It is scarcely necessary to point out that such a theory finds no support whatever in any statement of the Scriptures. Quite to the contrary, it is most emphatically contradicted by the Scriptures, which declare man's creation to have been a direct creation from God—not a reïncarnation of some being which had previously existed. This thought is consistently maintained throughout the Bible, in that we are distinctly told that the child receives its life from its father, and inherits good or evil according to his course of life, and not according to any course of life of its own in a previous condition or in another world. Thus the Lord declares that he visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation, and shows mercy unto thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments.—Exod. 20:5; Deut. 5:9, 10.

This heredity, we see, comes in the natural order of things. The tendency of sin is not only to break down the moral character, but also to vitiate and impair the physical system, while godliness, altho it cannot repair and make good the impairments of sin, can check these, and hold them measurably in restraint. The Scriptures again contradict this thought, in the declaration, "By one man's disobedience, sin entered into the world, and death as a result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men because [thus] all men became sinners"—by heredity. And if by heredity then not as Theosophy, Mormonism and Orientalism declare;—not in consequence of some previous existence and sin on the part of the child.

The whole matter is squared by the doctrine of the *ransom*, as all may readily see: for if our present blemishes, with which we are born into this world, were the results of sins committed in some previous condition of existence, the death of our Lord Jesus could not cancel them, and the doctrine of a ransom would be disproved. The doctrine of the ransom is unchangeably linked to the doctrine that Adam was a perfect human being in his creation, and that it was *his sin* and condemnation that passed to all of his posterity, through the channel of natural birth. The ransom (*"corresponding price"*) given by our Lord Jesus(was a man's life for a man's life: that, "as *by a man* came death, *by a man* also should come the resurrection of the dead." Our Lord's ransom sacrifice, being the complete and corresponding price and offset to father Adam's sin, was constituted thereby an offset to all the results of his sin as they appear in his posterity—and thus we all were redeemed by the one sacrifice of Christ, the just for the unjust.

IS ALL SICKNESS OF THE DEVIL?

An increasingly large number of Christian people—including those who refuse medicines—are reaching the conclusion that all sickness is the direct result of sin and the work of the devil; and therefore that godly living will prevent sickness: and that in the event of sickness, if it be punishment for sin, medicines should not be used, but, on the contrary, prayer should be made to God for the forgiveness of sin for which sickness is a punishment, and that the cure of the disease should be expected as a reward of repentance and faith exercised.

We wonder how these Christian friends view this lesson. Like the disciples, they evidently would conclude that a man born blind must have been so born on account of sin—if not his own sin, the sins of his parents—for they account for all disease from this standpoint. Unfortunately they feel so satisfied with their conclusions on the subject that they do not inquire of the Lord, as did the apostles. And they do not hear his answer here given—that it was neither sin on the part of the man, nor on the part of his parents, which occasioned his blindness.

If they were students of the Word they would note also the numerous statements of Scripture which clearly point out that calamities are not always punishments for sins: for instance, our Lord's declaration respecting the Galileans whose blood was mingled with the sacrifices, and those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them. (Luke 13:1-5) Our Lord distinctly declares that these calamities did not indicate that the sufferers were sinners above other men. Likewise, in the case of the sickness and death of Lazarus. Our Lord declares, not that it was because of sin on the part of Lazarus, but that it was permitted in order to be for the glory of God. So in this lesson he declares that the fact that the man was born blind was not on account of sin, but on the contrary, "that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

We are not denying that sin frequently brings sickness; on the contrary, we affirm this, and confirm this view with our Lord's words to some of those whom he healed, "Go sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." There is a great difference, however, between claiming that all sickness is of sin and the devil, and admitting that much of it is produced or intensified by sin. We go even further than this, and admit that in a general way all the blemishes of the present time may be indirectly traced to our great adversary, Satan. For had it not been for his fall, and for the temptations which he presented to our first parents, we may suppose that there would have been no sin in the world; consequently no imperfection, no sighing, no crying, no dying. But it is thoroughly wrong to credit to Satan's power all the difficulties which we experience. We are glad indeed that he is limited and restrained; because under the weaknesses with which we are born we find quite sufficient of evil disposition and weakness received by heredity, and operating, not only between parent and child, but between neighbor and neighbor. We may be glad indeed that Satan's power to deceive is not permitted to vitiate our minds contrary to our wills, and not permitted to break down our wills, except as we give them over to sympathy and contact with evil things. We may be glad also that sickness and death working in man are not wholly subject to the prince of darkness, for altho the Scriptures declare that Satan's power is deathward, they also show us that he does not have this power unlimitedly, but can exercise it only under restraints and restrictions. This is most clearly indicated to us in the case of Job and his family. Rather, the Scriptures teach that Satan's power or influence is the result of the Adamic death operating in mankind and rendering all amenable to Satan's devices and deceptions.—Heb. 2:14.

And, by the way, Job's case is another illustration of sickness and calamities of various kinds which were not the punishments of sin; for have we not Job's own testimony of his love for God, his confidence in him, and his faithful reliance upon him? "Tho he slay me, yet will I trust in him!" And more, we have the Lord's testimony to the same effect, in favor of his servant, Job, and in reproof of his friends who wrongly represented that his sickness and calamities were punishments for sin.

We conclude, then, upon Scriptural grounds, that not all sickness is in the nature of sin penalties, but that some sicknesses are as penalties. Hence, when the Christian shall find himself overtaken with sickness or other disasters, he should first of all inquire of himself, before the Lord, whether or not his difficulties are the result of—

(1) A direct violation of the laws of his reason, as for instance, indiscretion in eating, gratification of the appetite in respect to food which he knows is not suited to his physical conditions: or violation of recognized principles of conduct, as, for instance, the endorsing of a note, contrary to the instruction of the Lord's Word (Prov. 6:1, 2), which has brought disaster to many. If he does not find his troubles to be the result of personal *indiscretion* he should look—

(2) To see whether or not *sin* lies at his door; whether or not he has been living inconsistently, and might properly recognize his sickness or trouble as a punishment for his sin, his inconsistency. If he finds it to be so, he should of course immediately rectify the wrong to the extent of his ability and seek forgiveness, mercy, at the throne of the heavenly grace, and expect that after suffering some chastisements he will be released.

(3) Should he fail to find a cause for his difficulties in either of the foregoing, he should consider that quite possibly his difficulty, whatever its nature, was one of the ordinary casualties of life from which God does not wholly fore-

fend his children—desiring them to walk by faith and not by sight: such casualties are necessary, that we may be very sympathetic with the world's troubles.

(4) In some instances, as in Job's case and the case before us in this lesson, troubles may ultimately be found to have been *permitted* by the Lord, to be channels of mercy and blessing, if rightly received, as in these cases.

(5) In all troubles, whether for discipline or for instruction in righteousness and the development of character, the children of God (and we are not considering others now) should forthwith begin to seek the blessing which they may be sure God has in store for them when he permits adversities. And this should not hinder their use of any means for relief upon which they can conscientiously ask the divine blessing: on the same principle that we labor for and eat the daily bread for which we pray, and which is none the less of divine provision.

The work of God made manifest in this blind man was not merely in the miracle performed upon his natural eyes. It extended beyond this, and testified to the beholders the power of God, operating in Messiah. And it extended still further, in the case of the man who was healed: leading to the opening of the eyes of his understanding, it inducted him into discipleship to Christ. Had he not been born blind, had he not passed through just the experiences through which he did pass, how can we judge that he would have been in a better condition of heart to receive the Messiah than the educated Pharisees, who, with good natural sight, were thoroughly blinded respecting Messiah, his teachings and his work, so that they crucified him?

And so it is in many instances with many who become the Lord's people. Looking back they can clearly see that things which at the time seemed to be adversities, disappointments, troubles, disadvantages, hardships, were really great blessings, in that they led to the opening of the eyes of their understanding,—were really providences and blessings in disguise. Those who do so realize the divine care, looking back can praise the way God has led them day by day.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MISBELIEFS

Amongst the various false doctrines of today none appears more inconsistent from the standpoint of science and Christianity, than the system which brazenly and defiantly, and in perversion of truth and conscience unites these two words as its name. It would be amusing, we may be sure, to hear one of the devotees of this theory explain this Scripture. For, notwithstanding the fact that their entire system is in opposition to the Scriptures, they make a cloak, a pretense, of believing the Scriptures, and of using them in support of their theory—chiefly with novices. We may be sure that they would attempt to twist and juggle it in some manner, and get it so far away from the truth and the subject as at least to confuse many people, who have very little knowledge of the Bible and shallow powers of reasoning, especially those "who have not their senses exercised by reason of use," in connection with Scriptural subjects.—Heb. 5:14.

Their theory is that there is no such thing as blindness, that it is simply a mistaken thought, a misbelief: since the parents of the blind man could not have misbelieved that their child would be born blind, the child itself, we presume they would say, got this misimpression before its birth. And then we have the inconsistency increased, for every one of intelligence knows that the infant at birth has no thought, correct or incorrect, on any subject. The fallacy of this theory is likewise proven, in the case of those born deaf and dumb. But argument and reason have no more force with "Christian Scientists" than have the Scriptures. Their infatuation with their delusion is so great that they are fully prepared to wrest facts, reason, and Scriptures—and then, in perversion of all truth and consistency, they call this "Christian Science."

We are not contending with them respecting their use of the word "Science," for the most stupid should be able to see that there is nothing scientific in connection with their theory: but we do contend respecting their use of the word "Christian," because many do not recognize that they have not the slightest right to the use of this term. Our contention is that a Christian Scientist of full development, cannot be a Christian in any Scriptural sense of the word.

(1) A Christian is one who believes in God the Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent to be a propitiation for our sins, our Redeemer, and ultimately the Deliverer of all these who obey him. But Christian Science denies the very existence of God, claiming to believe merely in a *principle* of Good. To whatever extent a man has a good principle, the God-quality is in him, say they; and to whatever extent a horse or a dog may have the good principles, to that extent these are Gods, and to be loved, etc., accordingly. Denying the Father, they of course deny also the Son whom he sent: and altho they acknowledge Jesus, it is not with a Christian acknowledgement. On the contrary, they hold that he was merely a member of the Adamic family, and that his preëminence above others was in respect to his character and teachings. And they claim that while, in these respects, he stood higher than other men of his day, yet he but feebly grasped at certain principles or truths which are today brought to the world by her distinguished highness, "Mrs Dr. Eddy," who thus poses as being greater than Jesus, as an elephant is greater than a mouse; tho there be certain resemblances.

(2) A Christian is one who believes in Christ as a Saviour from sin as well as from its consequences;—death and its concomitants of pain, etc. But Christian Scientists deny that there is any sin, and deny also, that there are any consequences of sin; hence, logically, they deny the ransom, for how could there be a *ransom* for sinners, if none are sinners? Thus do they deny and ignore the very *foundation* of Christian faith, without which no one is a Christian—Scripturally.

The absurdities of Christian Science commend themselves only to those who are either Scripturally ignorant, or mentally weak; and their chief attractions are therefore—

(1) The fact that they put on, as a garment of light, gentleness and kindness of word and manner. That these do not grow out of hearts thoroughly converted to the Lord, and begotten of his spirit of love, is manifest: for altho kindness and patience and gentleness are manifested, the true essence of these is lacking, namely, love. Instead of manifesting love to be the mainspring of their meekness, patience, gentleness, they manifest ambition and money-love as their inspiring motives—so far as we are able to judge the tree by its fruits. So far as we are able to learn, their efforts to promulgate their views are confined to those who are able and willing to *pay* for the instruction good round prices; and so far as we are able to discern, their care of the sick shows a love of money, and love of fame; and hence very few of the poor of this world have been injured by the doctrines of Christian Science, or cured of disease by its treatment.

(2) The cure of disease without medicine, and sometimes almost miraculously, is in the nature of things calculated to attract and interest the "groaning creation"—just as the advertisements of patent medicines attract them. We unhesitatingly assert our conviction, that this power, manifested through Christian Scientists, is not of God, but of the adversary, directly, or indirectly. He no doubt directs his servants into the use of channels and means of which humanity in general, and even many learned physicians, are comparatively ignorant—channels of human nature, which, possibly, in the future may be used by the Lord during the times of restitution of all things. Our justification in ascribing their cures to an evil source, instead of to a good source, lies in the fact that they utterly repudiate the principles of Christianity, and we may be sure God would not coöperate to assist with his power those who deny his very existence, and who make void the gospel of the redemption through the blood of Christ. The miracle-working power in them we believe to be the same as the miracle-working power in Spiritism and in Orientalism, and in the charms of other Occultists—namely, Satanic power.

If it be asked, How could Satan be interested in doing a good work? we answer: He does no such work amongst those who are thoroughly and stupidly ignorant: he is doing these works merely in the most civilized lands, and especially amongst the most enlightened of the people in the various denominations of Christendom. The adversary thus assumes the garment of an angel of light and mercy, not to lead to the Light of the world—not to lead to the cross of Christ—not to lead to the Bible—but to lead away from these, to another hope of salvation, and to another teacher: to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. And be it remembered that our Lord's words indicate that when matters come to this condition, where Satan will cast out Satan and heal disease, it is a marked evidence that his throne is tottering to its fall—that, so to speak, this is the last extremity of the adversary's efforts to deceive.

* * *

The Lord's method of giving sight to the blind man, we may reasonably suppose, was parabolic—that is to say, it contains a lesson under a figure. Since our Lord did not explain the significance of his action in making a clay ointment out of dust with his spittle, and anointing the man's eyes with this, and sending him to wash them and receive sight at the Pool of Siloam, we may exercise our mental powers in thinking of what these different things would signify. But we are limited in our speculations, nevertheless, and may not run wild, but must restrain ourselves within the limits of plain statements of the Word of God respecting his plan of salvation.

In harmony with these plain statements we may interpret our Lord's symbolical act thus: The blind man would fitly represent the world of mankind in general, who during the present life are mentally blind—who cannot now see the goodness, mercy, and love of God as these may be recognized by others who are now able to see them. His being born blind would harmonize with this thought, for the blindness that is upon the world is, to a large extent at least, a matter of heredity. His blindness does not represent a blindness on the part of those who have once seen God's grace, represented in his Word and plan, and who have then become blind thereto, and who would represent the class mentioned by the Apostle as having once been enlightened, and who subsequently lose that enlightenment. (Heb. 6:4-6) If then the blind man represents the blind world (who do not see, in the sense that the church sees, of whom the Lord said, "Blessed are your eyes for they see"), the time of the healing of such blindness is in the Millennial age, as Scripturally pointed out, when "All the blind eyes shall be opened, and the deaf ears unstopped." (Isa. 35:5) And this agrees with the conditions of our Lord's miracle, because we are informed that this miracle took place on the Sabbath, or seventh day, which corresponds to, and typifies the Millennial day, the seventh-thousand year period.

Our Lord's words, nevertheless, seem to indicate that some part of this symbolical picture relates to the present age, for he said, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh wherein no man can work." In this statement the word "day" would seem to belong to the present time, and to be illustrated in the making of clay with our Lord's spittle, and the anointing of the blind man's eyes. The washing of his eyes and the cure would seem to belong to the next age, the Millennial age. The Lord's spittle, the secretions of his mouth, might represent the truth as fitly as would the words of his mouth—it is another figure, but seemingly of the same force and meaning. He uttered the truth, brought it in contact with the dust of the earth—not in contact with all the dust of the earth, but with a limited portion, an elect or select portion,—and of this he made the anointing clay. The Scriptures do inform us, in harmony with this, that the Word of God's grace, delivered through and by our Lord Jesus, is designed in the present age to act upon a small fragment of humanity, and to consecrate them and make them meet for the Master's use in the blessing of the world, in the anointing of the eyes of the blind. From this standpoint of view, the making of the clay would represent the formation of the elect church for the blessing of the poor, blind world. And, quite possibly, not only in this work of making the clay now in progress, but perhaps some portion of the anointing work is now being done, as is intimated by the Scripture which declares that the Gospel must first be *preached for a witness* in all the world, before the end of this age. The world must be witnessed to during this age, but the world will not have the eyes of its understanding opened during this age: it must wait until the great washing time of the Millennial age, of which the Scriptures declare, "In *that day* there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David for sin and for uncleanness." (Zech. 13:1) In full agreement with this is the significance of the word Siloam. It signifies "The sending forth," or "The fountain."

The Pharisee objected to the Lord's goodness, because, forsooth, it infracted some of their hypercritical dogmas and traditions. This is interesting, as showing to what extent religious forms and ceremonies may bind and blind intelligent and reverential people. And this should be a lesson to all the intelligent and reverent, leading them to great care in judging righteous judgment, according to the standard of the divine Word, and not according to their prejudices and revered creeds, and the traditions of the fathers.

Still another lesson may be found in the fact that the man who confessed our Lord Jesus, and who stood up in bold defence of righteousness, was greatly blessed, in that after he had thus demonstrated his loyalty to principle, and had suffered as a result excommunication from the church—*then the Lord found him.* Thus his faithfulness under trials and difficulties, and his willingness to suffer the loss of earthly fellowship and honor amongst men, led directly to a still greater blessing, even direct fellowship and communion with the Lord himself. How many are there whose mental eyes have been opened to the truth, who have been so loyal to the Lord and so appreciative of his goodness as to be faithful in declaring the facts? How many of these have found that such faithfulness means separation from the synagogue, from the church nominal? How many of these have feared to lose prestige and influence, through confessing the light of present truth? But all who have followed the noble course of thankfulness, loyalty, and obedience to God, have found that such obedience, while it led to a loss of fellowship in the nominal church, led also to a greater fellowship and communion, and a more intimate acquaintance with the Lord himself.

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"LET US DRAW NEAR"

"Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil, and our bodies sprinkled with pure water."—Heb. 10:22.

Not to sinners is this invitation addressed. The invitation to them is a very different one, *viz.*,—Repent, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus obtain the remission of your sins, and then you will be in the attitude to receive the invitation, Draw near to God. The Apostle is addressing those who have already believed unto justification, receiving to themselves the benefits of the Lord's promise, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Verse 17) The Apostle is addressing the brethren, and not sinners, and urges them, saying, "Having therefore, *brethren,* boldness [courage, confidence, privilege] to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, ... let us draw near."

The Apostle's words carry our attention to Israel's Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the spiritual things which it illustrated. The Court, entered through the gate, signified the state or condition of the justified, who must pass the Altar representing Christ's sacrifice for sins; secondly, approach the Laver of water for cleansing from defilements; and then be ready to pass under the first Vail into the apartment of the Tabernacle called "The Holy." This "Holy" apartment represented the state or condition of God's *consecrated* people (typified by Israel's priests) while yet in the flesh, and had its Golden Candlestick for their enlightenment, its table of Shewbread, representing their privilege of fellowship with God,—drawing near to him in prayer, praise and communion. The next step beyond the "Holy" was the "Most Holy," representing heaven itself; but this could be entered only from the "Holy" and by passing under the Second Vail, which represented the actual death of the priest, even as the First Vail represented the reckoned death or consecration. The Apostle has this same thought in mind when elsewhere he mentions the consecrated Royal Priesthood as "seated together with Christ in heavenly places"'—in the heavenly condition, the condition represented by the first apartment or "Holy" of the Tabernacle and of the Temple.

PRIVILEGES OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

It is in reference to this proposition to advance from the "Court" condition of justification into the "Holy" or heavenly or spirit-begotten condition, reached through consecration (and the closest possible approach to God) that the Apostle urges, "Let us draw near." His language implies that there may properly be a diffidence on our part in respect to this privilege. We might properly hesitate to expect to have communion, fellowship, close approach to the great Creator, realizing that by nature we are imperfect, "children of wrath, even as others," and that in whatever degree we differ from others and are accounted worthy of such a privilege of drawing near to God, it is not on account of personal worth on our part, but on account of God's grace bestowed upon us through Jesus our Lord. The Apostle therefore speaks to believers in an encouraging voice: "Let us draw near;" let us have courage to draw near; let us have faith in God, who has made us such gracious arrangements and promises.

The Apostle intimates that a close approach to God cannot be effected, except we have first a "full assurance of faith." Only those who trust the Lord implicitly, "as a little child" (Luke 18:17) would trust its earthly parent, can expect to progress and to have the courage, the confidence, necessary to approach God in this very intimate manner; and the desire to draw nearer and nearer to God must be in the justified believer's heart, else he will never go on and attain to this his privilege. And this desire to draw near to God is a manifestation of our hunger and thirst after righteousness, which the Lord expects to see before he fulfils to such his engagement that they shall be filled, satisfied.—Matt. 5:6.

Satisfaction will not be attained fully in the present life, tho the believer who progresses and draws nearer and nearer to God will have more and more of this satisfaction to the end of his journey in the present life, receiving the full measure of satisfaction in righteousness and perfection on the other side the vail. Similarly, in our drawing near to God, we may continue to draw nearer and nearer to him, as we obtain deeper experience in his grace, growing also in knowledge and love in the present life; but the full attainment of our privilege of drawing near to God will not be reached until we shall have passed the Second Vail—passed through death, and been changed from human to spirit beings, and have entered into heaven itself, the perfect heavenly condition. There and then we shall be fully at one with the heavenly Father and with our Lord Jesus, having drawn near to the full extent of the invitation and to the full of the opportunities granted us in the new and living way, the narrow way to life, consecrated for us, through the vail, by our Lord's death as our ransom price.

There are, however, certain conditions specified as necessary to progress along these lines. As no one can draw near to God except by attaining a "full assurance of faith," neither can he have a full assurance of faith unless he have his "heart sprinkled from a consciousness of evil," for, as the Apostle elsewhere declares, "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart." (1 John 3:20) We may be sure that if our course as new creatures is condemned by our own consciences it would also be condemned by God. Whoever, therefore, would make progress in drawing near to God must seek continually to have a "conscience void of offense toward God and man" (Acts 24:16);—a conscience that is clear, that can say, I am striving to do that which would be pleasing to God, in harmony with my covenant of self-sacrifice, and I am striving to do that which would be approved also by righteous men. Nothing short of this is at all permissible in those who have consecrated themselves to be royal priests, to offer themselves as living sacrifices in the Lord's service, and to draw near to him in the name and under the merit of the great High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

HAVING OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED

How very much is implied in this expression, "Having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil!" It not only means that we are to avoid sin, and to take heed that the words of our mouth and the meditations of our hearts are acceptable to the Lord, but it means additionally that our hearts, having covenanted self-sacrifice, shall be able to look up to the Lord confidently and realize his blessing and approval, because of the honest, earnest efforts on our part to comply with the terms of our consecration. But since we cannot fully comply with the terms ourselves, it is requisite that we shall apply to ourselves by faith the merit of the precious blood of Christ, the blood of sprinkling, the blood of consecration, and that we shall realize that our acceptance is only in the Beloved One.

WASHED WITH PURE WATER

The expression, "Having our bodies washed with pure water," figuratively represents the continued process of "cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord," elsewhere enjoined by the Apostle. (2 Cor. 7:1) By nature we are all imperfect, sullied, more or less depraved; and our devotion to the Lord is manfested, first, by our full acceptance and full assurance of faith in the merits of Christ's sacrifice; and secondly, by our earnest efforts to put away from our flesh, as we have already put away from our hearts, all things defiling and displeasing in the Lord's sight: that thus we may more and more become copies of his dear Son, our Lord. This "washing of water through the Word" is elsewhere represented (Eph. 5:26) in a similar manner as being a part of the duty and privilege of all of the Lord's people throughout the remainder of their earthly lives. And we can see how beautiful is the illustration here used, that the Word of God, like water, is purifying, cleansing; as the Apostle declares, speaking of the Christian's good hopes in the precious promises once delivered to the saints, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [who called him] is pure."—1 John 3:3.

As it is necessary to a thorough cleansing of our natural bodies that we should wash with "*pure* water," so much the more is it necessary to this cleansing of which the Apostle speaks, the cleansing of our moral characters, that we should have the *pure* water of divine truth, and not the muddy and polluted teachings of the adversary, or of those whom he has blinded. And as we look about us upon the many streams of Babylon—the various sectarian theologies which profess to be the truth—we find that altho there is something of truth in them all, yet it is sadly befouled and wholly incapable of cleansing their votaries from filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit,—wholly incapable of perfecting them in holiness of the kind which the Lord requires. For instance, false ideas of God and of his character and his plan are incentives to those who so believe to copy these misrepresentations and perversions of justice and love, and are well calculated to develop in the devotees of such a theory a low standard of character, because the low standard which they set for themselves and other fellow-mortals is really higher than that which they ascribe to the Creator.

How important, then, is the truth, and how much meaning we find in our dear Redeemer's prayer to the Father on our behalf,—"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth." Let us not attempt to sanctify ourselves through any other washing than this; let us not be satisfied with anything short of the "pure water," the pure Word of God, the pure truth.

"YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM"—Col. 2:10

Now view the class described by the Apostle: they are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus accepted with the Father through the Beloved One. More than this, to them has been opened up the narrow way to life, consecrated, made possible, through the sacrifice offered by our great High Priest. They are invited to become under-priests, sharers both of the sufferings, and also later on, if faithful, sharers of the glories of Jesus, the Chief Priest of this order. As a means of attaining the glorious end of their calling they are to cleanse themselves from defilement, and for their use in this respect the Word of God has been provided: it is at once a *mirror* to show them their blemishes, and *water* wherewith to cleanse themselves—the stimulus for the correction of life being the exceeding great and precious promises set before them in the Scriptures. Their hearts, justified by faith, and honest before God, are fully consecrated to him and to his service, and are to be so kept continually—by obedience to the best of their knowledge and opportunities, and by the blood of sprinkling which covers unintentional errors and failures. This is the class that is called to be associated with the Lord in his kingdom; they are styled his brethren, the royal priesthood, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and various other names representing their near and dear relationship to the heavenly Father: and all of these who are faithful to the end of the race-course are to be made partakers of the divine nature, with its glory, honor and immortality.

But let us not deceive ourselves in this matter of having hearts that do not condemn us; let us remember that our covenant was unto sacrifice and not unto self-preservation; that it was a covenant to lay our all upon the altar—time, influence, means of every kind; and that we agreed with our Lord that we would reckon this our reasonable service. Do our hearts condemn us in this matter, or do they justify us? Do we feel that we are doing all in our power to serve the Lord and his truth and our brethren? If so, let us rejoice, and let us continue in the same way, patiently hoping for the glorious results promised to the faithful. But if our hearts condemn us, let us not be discouraged; but on the contrary remember that this is a part of the cleansing of the flesh and of the spirit necessary to our preparation for the kingdom, and let us afresh bind our sacrifices to the altar (Psa. 118:27), and be more and more zealous in expending our little all in the service of him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood. Thus doing, it will be our privilege day by day to draw nearer and nearer to the "Most Holy," and thus finishing our course with joy we shall have share in the first resurrection, awakening in our Lord's likeness.—2 Cor. 5:14,15; Rom. 6:5; 1 John 3:2; Psa. 17:15.

THE PILGRIM HARVEST SERVICE

We will be glad to have at once *postal card* requests for Pilgrim visits from all parts of the United States and Canada. (British friends please address *cards* to our British branch office, London.) We are re-arranging our "Pilgrim" routes and want the following information in few words on postal cards (not letters) for easy reference. Remember that these "Pilgrim" visits involve no expense for the Pilgrim or his traveling expenses—all of which are borne by the Society. We merely request entertainment for the Pilgrim during his two or three days' stay. Answer the questions by number as follows:—

(1) Do you hope for *public meetings*,—as well as for private ones for those already interested?

(2) Could and would the friends secure the use of a school or church building or a public hall if *public* meetings are desired?

(3) Would a suitable room in a private house be provided for the private meetings?

(4) How many friends of present truth reside in your vicinity? (5) How many of these have been consulted and concur in the answers you are sending us? (6) How many of these are WATCH TOWER readers? (7) Do you now meet regularly for worship and study of the Word, as per Hebrews 10:25?

Most of these questions can be answered by either Yes or No or by figures. Number your answers, and add whatever may seem expedient, but do not crowd the card and make it difficult to read and understand.

THE GREAT SHEPHERD AND HIS SON, THE GOOD SHEPHERD

JOHN 10:1-16.—AUGUST 26.

"The Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

David, the Psalmist, wrote prophetically, "Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Psa. 23); for in David's day the arrangements for the Shepherd and the flock of this lesson had not been completed. True, the heavenly Father had purposed his entire plan as respects humanity's redemption and return to his care as his flock, but he had not yet sent his only begotten Son, the Good Shepherd, to give his life for the sheep, to call the flock, to open the door and to lead them out and into pasturage and to rest. Nevertheless, in the Lord's providence the nation of Israel had already been gathered, as those who would be prepared to be the flock of the Good Shepherd when he should come. These were "shut up under the law" (Gal. 3:23), waiting for the coming of the Good Shepherd to open the door and to call them by name as his own sheep. Others, indeed, came before the Messiah, affecting to be the true shepherd, leaders sent of God but they were mere pretenders, who sought their own good and glory, and not that of the sheep. They were thieves and robbers, who sought to gain possession of the sheep for their own selfish ends.

The "porter" (representing the law) would not recognize any of these pretenders, nor approve them, nor open to them access to the sheep. But when the true Shepherd came he satisfied the law (the porter), and bought the sheep from justice, giving his own life as their redemption price. Thus he gained the full right to open the door, the full sanction of the porter, the full authority to lead forth the sheep to the green pastures and still waters of divine truth which then became due to them.

At the time of the giving of this parable our Lord was laying down his life, and at the same time uttering his voice, that the true sheep might learn to know him. And not only will all the true sheep learn to know the Shepherd, but, precious thought! the Shepherd knoweth his own sheep individually, so that he calleth each by name as he leads them out. This suggests to us the intimacy of the relationship between Christ and each member of his flock.

The treatment of sheep in this part of the world is very different from that described in the parable, which is still maintained in Oriental countries. Here sheep are driven, and have little or no acquaintance with the herdsmen. But in Palestine, for instance, every sheep has a personal acquaintance with its shepherd, and he with it, and it is said that this acquaintance is so particular that the shepherds have a separate name for each sheep, and know each individually by its name; and that the sheep knows its own name and will respond to a call from its own shepherd at any time. How beautifully this illustrates the close relationship between Christ and his flock, the church! He gives to each one of us a new name, and we are each personally known to him—our peculiarities of character, temperament, etc., our strong points and our weaknesses—he knoweth them all. He loves us, cares for us, helps us over our trials and difficulties, and shields us from the temptations which would be too strong for us. "He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape," and causes that "all things work together for good to them that love God, the called ones according to his purpose"—his "little flock" of this Gospel age.

We note also the care of the Shepherd over the sheep, for he says, "He putteth forth his own sheep and goeth before them." The words "putteth forth" have the significance of looking after them, that they all get started in the way to the green pastures and still waters for soul refreshment. He is not heedless, careless, respecting them, whether they go or do not go; nevertheless, having started them in the way he will not drive them: he goeth before them to lead, that they may follow. Our Good Shepherd has indeed set us a noble example, so that we may walk in his steps; and whoever will, to the extent of his ability, trustfully do this, will find his wants abundantly supplied, for "No good thing will he [the Shepherd] withhold from those who [thus] walk uprightly." "He will guide them with his counsel, and afterward receive them to glory."—Psa. 84:11; 73:24.

Our Lord's parable does not tell us about the disciplines which the sheep are sure to receive, but these are set before us in the prophetic psalm on the subject, in the words, "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." The thought is that the Shepherd, while going before and not driving the sheep, nevertheless has such an interest and care that he will not suffer one of the sheep to wander away without administering certain chastisement designed for its good, and to correct it and to bring it back into fellowship in the flock. This is a comfort, and yet it should certainly be the desire of all true sheep to follow the Shepherd so closely that the rod shall not often be necessary.

The link between the Shepherd and the sheep, as here indicated, is love. The Shepherd loves the sheep, and has demonstrated this in having laid down his life for them; and the sheep speedily learn to love the Shepherd, as their care-taker; they recognize him through his voice—the Word of God. This voice appeals to the hearts of all the true sheep, who quickly respond, "Never man spake as this man."

The voice of the good shepherd is a blending of various sounds in a manner in which they are blended by no other voice. His voice sounds forth the chord of justice commingled with the chord of love, and the whole intoned with wisdom and with power. Other theories, plans and schemes of men and devils, have no such harmony of sound as has the message which the great Shepherd has sent us through his Son. His voice speaks to us of a just penalty for sins—death; it speaks of love, in our redemption and the forgiveness of our sins, and the opening to us of the way of life, through resurrection. This "word of grace" constrains all the true sheep as no other message or voice could do. Moreover, when the true sheep hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, it satisfies their longings as nothing else could do. They will no longer be in danger of being attracted by other sounds or voices, theories or schemes, but will reply to all,

"Jesus has satisfied; Jesus is mine."

There are many false voices in the world today, seeking to lead the Lord's sheep astray, and these are sometimes sounded in deceptive tones, to imitate the Shepherd's call, to draw away sheep after those who would be shepherds, but whom the great Shepherd has not appointed: shepherds who not only have not purchased the sheep, but who seek to ignore the great sacrifice by which the Good Shepherd did purchase them. We might mention many such false voices, or false would-be shepherds,—Christian Science, Theosopy, Spiritism, Evolution, Higher Criticism, etc., but we have the Good Shepherd's word for it, that his true sheep will not be deceived by any of these. Well do they know his voice, and its combination of justice, love, and mercy cannot be duplicated by others, —its message of redemption by the precious blood, justification by faith, the high calling, the begetting of the holy spirit, the by-and-by deliverance of the sons of God, and eventually of all who will obey him of the entire groaning creation, through restitution.

This voice, once heard, can never be mistaken for another; and those who know this Shepherd and his voice need never be misled by others. The Lord's true sheep, whom he knows by name and who follow him, will not heed the voice of strange shepherds, but will flee from them. They know when they hear a false voice, that it means that the adversary is seeking to ensnare them; and such will flee from the voice of error that they may come the closer to the true Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep. If, therefore, we see some whom we had supposed were of the Lord's flock heeding another voice and following after strange shepherds, and heedless of the voice that speaketh from heaven, we need not be fearful; for if they are true sheep of the Lord's flock they cannot long be deceived, if at all. We may indeed sound out the voice of the Good Shepherd, calling their attention afresh to the harmonies and beauties of the "voice from heaven," but if still they do not hear and heed, we may know that they do not belong to the flock which our Shepherd is now collecting and shepherding.

Amongst those who heard this parable from our Lord's lips, not many comprehended, not many had the hearing ear for the true Shepherd's voice: only a small proportion of the Jewish people followed him and became his true sheep. Similarly now, many are professing to be the true sheep of the Lord's flock, but in this day of the Shepherd's presence his voice, the truth, becomes the test. All of the true sheep will hear and be attracted by the voice of truth now uttered, and will obey it. Those who are not of the Good Shepherd's flock, and who have not his spirit, he desires shall now be separated; to this end they will hear the voice of other shepherds, and be deceived thereby: because they are not truly of the Lord's flock.

Dr. Porter tells of a scene he witnessed, in which several flocks of sheep were for a time commingled, and how, when the due time was come, the separation took place. He says:—

"As we sat and looked, almost spell-bound, the silent hillsides around were in a moment filled with life and sound. Thousands of sheep and goats were there, grouped in confused masses. The shepherds stood together until all came out, and then they separated, each shepherd taking a different path, and uttering, as he advanced, a shrill, peculiar call. The sheep heard them; at first the mass swayed and moved as if shaken by some internal convulsion; then points struck out in the directions taken by the shepherds. These became longer and longer, until the confused masses were resolved in long, living streams flowing after their leaders."

So at the present time there are many sheep in the nominal Church, but they are not all the Lord's sheep. Some belong to human leaders of various sects, and some are God's. The harvest, or end of this Gospel age, the time for separating the wheat from the tares, is the time for separating the different flocks of sheep. In harmony with this, we now hear various voices calling the sheep in various directions, as never before. This is, in the Lord's providence, for the purpose of separating all others from his own "little flock." His sheep will hear his voice and follow him—other sheep, consecrated to human leaders, human institutions, human theories, human efforts, will follow their own bents, and thus be separated from the "little flock," and this is now the Lord's good pleasure. Thus he will "gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and them that do iniquity," before the glorifying of his church and the great time of trouble that will follow.

CHRIST THE DOOR OF GOD'S SHEEP-FOLD

As a further explanation of the matter, our Lord refers to himself as the Door of the sheep-fold, the lawful, proper entrance-gate, by which God's people might enter into rest. All who had ever come previously, claiming to be messiahs, had attempted to climb up by some other way than that of keeping the divine law and purchasing the sheep. They were thieves and robbers, attempting to take what they had not secured a right to, and that for selfish gain. But none of the true sheep would heed them nor follow them. Now, however, the Good Shepherd had come, and had purchased the sheep, opening a legal door of entrance to them and liberty for them, and it was appropriate that all of the true sheep should know it. Now it had become possible for the sheep to have in Christ the liberty so long desired, and to be led out and into pasturage and refreshment and to rest and security. Henceforth Jehovah's flock should never lack for pasturage; because, having bought them through his Son, they shall be cared for. They may now say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Others who had approached the sheep, seeking to be their leaders, had done so selfishly; had been willing to sacrifice the sheep in their own interest; but the Good Shepherd, solicitous for the best interests of the sheep, demonstrated this by the sacrifice of his own life on their behalf, that they might have life more abundant, better than they had ever known hitherto,—eternal life. Hireling shepherds labor for the hire, and not from personal interest in the sheep, and consequently, instead of being ready to lay down their lives for the sheep in times of extremity and persecution for righteousness' sake, they are ready rather to flee the trouble and avoid persecution. They think chiefly of their own ease and comfort, honor and dignity, and of how much of the golden fleece they can get from the sheep. They are not very deeply concerned respecting the spiritual progress of the sheep, their growth in grace, and in all the fatness of love and spiritual welfare; but specially in numbers and collections.

Perhaps never more than at present is this truth clearly illustrated amongst those who are professedly representatives of the Good Shepherd—under-shepherds in his flock. Many of them give evidence of wanting to be on the popular side of every question—of unwillingness to suffer anything for the sake of the truth; of carelessness respecting the real spiritual condition of the flock; of interest rather in the human institutions through which they obtain their support, and with whose welfare their honor, dignity and titles are associated. Of such shepherds Milton, the poet, wrote, styling them—

> " . . . . blind mouths.
> The hungry sheep look up and are not fed,
> But. swollen with wind and the rank mist they draw,
> Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread."

The Christian philosopher, John Ruskin, commenting upon this, says: "These two monosyllables, 'blind mouths,' express the precisely accurate contraries of the right character in the two great offices of the church,—those of bishop and pastor. A bishop means a person who *sees;* a pastor means one who *feeds.* The most unbishoply character a man can have is, therefore, to be blind. The most unpastoral is, instead of feeding, to want to be fed,—to be a mouth."

Nevertheless, the Good Shepherd will always be represented amongst the sheep by those who have his own characteristics, and who are seeking to walk in his footsteps; and through these he will utter his "voice," and lead his own sheep to pasture and to rest. These will not only have the same voice, the same Word, the same good tidings, but they will have the same devotion to the interests of the sheep—to feed the sheep, to lead them into the green pastures and by the still waters of present truth, and to preserve their liberties in the Lord, and not to pen them up as their own, nor to make merchandise of them.

The Father, the great over-Shepherd, Jehovah, is referred to by the Good Shepherd, Jesus, in verse 16. "The Father knoweth me" [has confidence in me—has entrusted the care of the sheep to me] and even so I know the Father [having full confidence in him, and recognizing him as my Shepherd, director, leader], and [it is in harmony with his arrangement for me and for the sheep that] I lay down my life for the sheep."

The sheep that I am now calling and leading to pasture and caring for and calling by their own names, and who know me, are a very special lot of sheep; in all only a "little flock," for whom Jehovah, he Great Shepherd, has made special arrangements and provisions in his kingdom of glory. However, these are not all of his sheep, tho they are all yet called and led forth. "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold." I bought the whole world with the one sacrifice for sins, and all who have the true sheep disposition, all who desire to be in harmony with righteousness, truth, and the author of these, I must recognize as my sheep, and must search them out far and near, until every one of them shall be found. But not yet: this will be by and by, after the present "little flock" shall be glorified with me. Then they, with me, shall be the shepherds who will gather in all of the true sheep, delivering them all from the power of the enemy, and bringing so many as will obey my voice ultimately into that glorious condition of oneness, harmony with the heavenly Father and with myself, in which condition, as my sheep, they will be entitled to everlasting life. "Then there shall be one fold and one shepherd," as it is written, "Of whom the whole family both in heaven and in earth is named."—Eph. 3:15.

I come to thee with all my tears,
My pain and sorrow, griefs and fears;
Thou precious Lamb who died for me,
I come to thee, I come to thee.

O wondrous love! what joy is mine,
To feel that I am truly thine.
Thou precious Lamb who died for me,
I come to thee, I come to thee.

"THE LORD APPOINTED SEVENTY OTHERS ALSO

Luke 10:1-11, 17-20.—Sept. 2.

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few."

Our Lord had previously sent forth the twelve apostles, as heralds of himself and the kingdom. (Luke 9:1-6) The sending forth of seventy was evidently some little time afterward, probably in the last year of his ministry. Their commission reads almost in the same words as that given to the twelve, tho they are not recognized anywhere as apostles on an equality with the twelve. The fact that seventy men would voluntarily go forth as ministers of the Lord, without hope of earthly reward or salary, is sufficient evidence that a strong influence had already been exerted by Jesus' teaching. In this connection we remember the Apostle's statement that above five hundred brethren were sufficiently advanced in knowledge and zeal to be accounted worthy of meeting the Lord after his resurrection, which implies a keen interest on the part of several times that number. We may reasonably suppose that these seventy were representatives of a much larger company of deeply interested ones. They were sent into the various cities and villages, whither the Lord himself would go. They were to prepare his way by announcing the kingdom at hand, and by performing the miracles intended to demonstrate the authenticity of their message.

An explanation of why they were sent forth is given (verse 2): it was because the harvest was great and the laborers too few to properly consummate the work in the time appointed of the Father. All interested were expected to share in this appreciation of the greatness of the work, and the necessity for more laborers being sent forth; and it is but reasonable to suppose that the seventy sent were chosen from amongst those appreciating the situation and anxious to be commissioned.

There are several lessons for us in this matter: we too are in a harvest time—in the harvest time of the Gospel age, as they were in the harvest of the Jewish age. Now, as then, the harvest work is great, and the laborers are comparatively few, and now, as then, we cannot hope that any would succeed in doing harvest work unless specially commissioned or sent forth by the Chief Reaper. Hence, all who appreciate the work now in progress, should pray to the Lord to send them forth in his service, or if already engaged in it, that he would graciously open to them doors of opportunity for greater usefulness in his service. In the beginning of this harvest comparatively few were used of the Lord in connection with the harvest work; but as we progress we find that the Lord is graciously pleased to send forth and use more and more those who are zealously anxious to lay down their lives for the truth.

The expression, "The harvest is great," does not necessarily mean that the amount of ripe "wheat" to be garnered is great. It means rather that the difficulties and oppositions, and multitudes of "tares," make it difficult to reach all of the "wheat" class. The work is great here, as it was great in the end of the Jewish age; yet only a "little flock" will be gathered now, as only a remnant was gathered from Israel, as the Apostle Paul pointed out. (Rom. 9:27) The mass of Israel professed to be the Lord's people, but their piety was little more than profession. They drew nigh to the Lord in attendance at the synagogues, and in celebrating the feasts, felt full and self-satisfied, and looked with pity upon the Gentile nations, and had a great spirit of missionary aggressiveness, and "compassed sea and land to make a proselyte" to Judaism. Nevertheless, the Lord, who read the heart, recognized that theirs was only a formal lip service, and that their hearts were far from him; and we see conditions today very similar to this, in nominal spiritual Israel.

None were fit to be sent out as heralds of the kingdom except such who thoroughly believed in the kingdom—such as had accepted Jesus as the Messiah; such as believed in his presence—such, therefore, as could speak forth with earnestness and power the message they were sent to bear. And so it seems to be in this harvest time. The Lord is sending forth more laborers continually; yet only such as recognize the kingdom as nigh, even at the door; only such as recognize the *parousia* of the King; only such as have a zeal to tell the joyful tidings to others, are being used and blessed of the Lord in the gathering together of his elect,—the ripe "wheat." his "jewels."—Psa. 50:5; Mal. 3:16, 17; Matt. 13:39, 41.

It is not supposable that our Lord meant that any should appeal to him to send forth more laborers into the harvest, who at the same time would not be willing and anxious, to the extent of their ability, to enter this harvest service themselves. There may be some, but we trust very few, who would be prepared to pray: "O Lord bless, I pray thee, thy work, and send forth more laborers; but do not send me. Permit others to sacrifice time and strength and zeal, that I may rest, and have neither part nor lot in the matter, sacrificing little or nothing." Only those are properly qualified to petition the Lord on such a subject, whose hearts are burning with a desire to do with their might what their hands may find to do, according to their opportunities. Such, in praying, would be anxious, first of all, to themselves be used as servants of the great Chief Reaper, for it is "he that reapeth that receiveth wages and that gathereth fruit unto eternal life" now, as it was also in the Jewish harvest. Those who are most zealous to serve the Lord, and most willing to sacrifice on behalf of his cause, are the ones who will receive the greatest present blessing of spiritual fellowship with the Lord, and who will be the best prepared to share the glories soon to be reaveled.

The Lord adopted with the seventy the same method that he started with the twelve; *viz.*, of sending them two and two; and similarly we, at the present time, encourage the colporteur laborers in this harvest to go two and two, for mutual encouragement and helpfulness, etc. As the poet has said,

"So when two together work, each for each
Is quick to plan and can the other teach;
But when alone one seeks the best to know,
His skill is weaker and his thoughts are slow."

It is questionable just why the Lord chose seventy for this work. However, we remember that Moses chose seventy of the elders of Israel for his assistants, and that this number, seventy, was from that time onward preserved in Israel, and known as the "*Sanhedrin,*" or committee of seventy chief men and judges. In the light of this fact, it would appear that if the nation of Israel had been in proper condition of heart to receive the Lord, the chiefs of that nation would already have embraced his cause, and the seventy members of the Sanhedrin would by that time have been proclaiming the Messiah through the length and breath of Palestine. But since they had not received the King, and had not prayed him to commission them to announce him, our Lord commissioned others, and the work went on, the honor and privilege passing by those of influence and education who might have enjoyed it had they been worthy. Doubtless the seventy sent forth were, like the apostles, chosen from amongst the honest-hearted of the common people, and not many, if any of them, were rich, wise or learned.

Likewise, in this harvest time, there are many ministers, professedly servants of the truth, and possessed of education, influence, etc., who by now should realize that we are in the harvest of the Gospel age, and should be seeking of the Lord an opportunity to engage in the harvest work; but instead, they are described as "dumb dogs, lying down, refusing to bark"—refusing to awaken the household under their care to let them know that the kingdom of God is at hand, and that all not received into the kingdom are about to be plunged into a great time of trouble. All of the spiritual house of today must either receive a more than Pentecostal blessing, in being "changed" and made sharers of the kingdom, or else, being rejected from the kingdom, receive a baptism of fiery trouble —having their portion with the world, not being accounted worthy to escape those things coming upon the world.—Luke 21:36.

That the Lord did not expect the seventy to convert and gather in all Israel is very distinctly shown in his statement, "Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves." The Master knew that the majority of the professedly consecrated Israel of God were consecrated to self and selfishness, to sect and party, and not to the truth. The majority were represented as voracious wolves, not sheep. Nevertheless, there were lambs and sheep amongst the goats and the wolves, and these all must hear the message, and thus be prepared to receive the Messiah, when he should present himself to them.

Special instructions were given to these specially sent-forth ones. They had a peculiar work to do and the conditions accorded. They were not, therefore, a criterion for subsequent workers under different circumstances. They were to carry neither purse, nor valise, nor extra shoes, and were to salute no man by the way. They would thus be dependent on the generosity of those to whom they ministered the truth. And the effect of this would be beneficial in several ways. (1) It would test the faith of those who went forth, and keep them continually depending on the Lord's supervising care, and trusting that he who had sent them knew how to make provision for their necessities while they complied with his commands. (2) It would furnish an opportunity for hospitality to those to whom they preached, and who, by reason of the necessities of the case, would be constrained to reach a decision promptly as to whether or not they were in sympathy with the message, and hence with the messengers, and willing to entertain them. The same lesson of dependence on the Lord was implied in the provision for no change of raiment. Besides, it was to be but a short tour.

The injunction not to salute any one by the way may be understood to refer to the custom in Oriental lands of travelers stopping frequently to chat with each other respecting the news. The disciples had but one message, the good tidings, and they were to give all diligence to its promulgation, and not to be general newsmongers. On arriving at a house they were to take careful note respecting their reception, and were to anticipate this with a prayer that peace, blessing, favor, might be upon that house and its inmates. If a son of peace, a child of God, resided there, they might expect that under the Lord's providence they would have a kind reception, and were to accept it as of the Lord's arrangement. If they were not so received, they were to consider it as an evidence that that was not the home of God's people, living in covenant relationship with him, and were to take their departure, seeking another and another place. Peradventure they found no entertainer in the village, they were, nevertheless, to give their testimony. And it should be given in a striking manner, *viz.*, by the shaking of the dust from their shoes, which, to the Oriental mind, would signify a very solemn and final testimony; and then they were to say, "Notwithstanding, be sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

All who are engaged in the present harvest work may learn some very profitable lessons here, applicable, indeed, to the Lord's people at any time while engaged in his service. We have no time for the ordinary converse. The time is short; the harvest work is great; the laborers are few; our time is consecrated; we must labor while it is called day, knowing that a night cometh wherein no man can work. We have consecrated our lives even unto death; we are commissioned of the great Lord of the harvest to seek for the true "wheat," and to gather it into the barn. What time have we for frivolities or worldliness or the many social amenities? Rather, we must content ourselves with giving very little attention to these things, and must press along the line, engaging heartily in the work given us to do, if we would have the approval of our Master, his "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Altho it is not customary today, as it was in Palestine nineteen centuries ago, to salute a house and say, "Peace be to this house!" nevertheless all of the Lord's people should be peacemakers, peace-promoters, peace-lovers, and a blessing of peace and restfulness should go with them wherever they go. Alas! how many of them are slow to learn that God has not called us to strife, contentions, bickerings, anger, etc., but to love, joy, peace, etc. How few, comparatively, have learned how to speak the truth in *love;* and always to give a soft answer which turneth away wrath; and always to avoid the grievous words which stir up anger. Like the seventy of our lesson, in our daily avocations and efforts to minister to others, let the peace of God go with us, shining in our faces, governing our actions and intoning our language, so that, as the Apostle expresses it, our speech shall be always seasoned with grace.

Conditions in civilized lands today are very different from what they were and still are in Oriental lands, so that here and now it would be unusual to be expected to entertain strangers; nevertheless, all who are of the Lord's true people should be on the lookout to entertain hospitably any servants of the Lord, who they are sure carry his message, the Gospel of the kingdom. And, as the Apostle indicates, they should be just as careful not to entertain, not to assist, and not to bid God-speed to any who are bearing a false gospel, and denying that the Lord bought us.—2 John 10.

REJOICE IN THINGS UNSEEN

When the seventy returned from this mission they were full of joy; saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us, in thy name." Our Lord assured them that this was what he expected, and intended, when he sent them forth, and explained respecting his own knowledge of Satan in his prehuman condition, that there and then he had been a witness to Satan's fall from high glory and privilege and position to his present attitude of chief adversary of God. "I beheld Satan as lightning [as a bright one] fall from heaven." It is for those who deny the personality of Satan and who deny there are any fallen angels, to explain away these plain statements of Scripture. The true children of God, the true sheep who hear the voice of the Shepherd, will not be deceived upon this point any more than upon others. What matters it to us that we did not see Satan fall from his glorious condition? Our Master did, and he has borne testimony, not only respecting Satan's personality, but also respecting his fall from brightness and honor. What is it to us that others deny that there are fallen angels, demons, who seek to impersonate the dead, through spiritualism, etc.? We have the Master's words, and the words of the apostles, to the contrary, and as true sheep we both hear and heed the Shepherd's voice and follow him. We heed not the voice of Satan, uttered through those whom he controls, telling us that there is no devil, that there is no second death, etc.

Our Lord proceeded to tell the seventy that it was he who had given them the power they had enjoyed, and that it included immunity from the bites of serpents and scorpions, and from all the power of the enemy—all enemies, but specially the enemy, Satan: the same one mentioned also in the prayer which our Lord taught, saying, "Deliver us from the evil one." It may not be amiss to note here the fact that these powers and authorities over Satan, poisons, serpents, etc., were confined to the twelve and to the subsequent seventy, and were never given to the church in general. The only Scripture which even seems to so imply is Mark 16:9 to the end, and these verses are not found in the oldest Greek MSS., and are evidently interpolations, added probably about the fifth century: they are omitted from the Revised Version and others. But while no such immunity from poisons and bites and stings are granted to the Gospel church in general, we have what serves every purpose in this respect; *viz.*, the Lord's promise that nothing shall by any means *hurt us* as new creatures—that the Lord will permit nothing to happen to his consecrated ones that he is not both able and willing to overrule for their *good*, their highest welfare.

While rejoicing with the disciples in their increased faith and joy, resulting from their activities in his service, and in the exercise of the gifts which he had bestowed upon them, our Lord cautioned them against *thinking too highly* of such miraculous gifts, and assures them that their chiefest cause for joy lay in another direction—in the fact that they had been accepted as sons into God's family (John 1:12); in the fact that their names were written in heaven, as prospective joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom—prospective members of the body of Christ, to suffer with him, and thus attest their fidelity, and by and by to be glorified with him to all eternity. This is in harmony with the Apostle Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 13:1, where he assures us that the miraculous gifts conferred upon the early church by the laying on of the Apostle's hands, such as speaking with unknown tongues, interpretations of mysteries, etc., are not proofs of spirit-begotten conditions; that a greater proof is the possession of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love that never faileth.

The more of the spirit of love we possess the greater is our likeness to God's dear Son, our Redeemer, and the more will we be fitted and prepared for a share with him in his heavenly glories. If, therefore, the Lord permits us to do some little service in the present harvest, or to bear some burdens in the heat of the day, or if he grants us the privilege of successfully contending against the great adversary and his servants, and *hinders us from being stung* or "hurt" by their words or looks or deeds, and if he grants us opportunities for helping others out of soul-sickness by administering the good medicine of the present truth, let us rejoice in these privileges and opportunities; but let us rejoice still more that under the Lord's providence we are his children, begotten of his spirit—that our names have been recorded as members of his family, and that by and by we may expect to be joint-heirs with our Elder Brother. Yea, in these good hopes we will rejoice.

IS THE RESTITUTION CALL NOW OPEN?

A dear brother in the truth seems to think that the teachings of Dawn, Vol. V., differ from those of Dawn, Vol. III., on the question heading this article. He sees clearly that in Dawn, Vol. V., the view we present is that the restitution call cannot begin until the last member of the Gospel church has been changed, glorified, but he thinks that the third volume teaches that the restitution call will be in progress simultaneously with the closing work of this Gospel age. This clearer statement of the subject in Dawn V. is the result of our having learned that some had gotten the wrong impression from Vol. III. In proof of his point, the brother refers us to Vol. III., page 218, where it is stated that "the stopping of the favor or call here, in 1881, is followed, or rather lapped upon, by the general call of the whole world to the Millennial blessings and favors on condition of faith and obedience." Also pages 365 and 367: "Further, where the special favor of the general Gospel call ceased, October, 1881, the blessings upon the world would seem to be due to have a beginning." "It (1881) was the date of the closing of the high calling, and hence the date for the beginning of the restitution call for mankind in general."

On questions of so much intricacy it is sometimes difficult to use language sufficiently exact; especially if at the time of writing objections or criticisms are not fully anticipated. Were we to express the above points again we would try still harder, as in DAWN V., to guard our statements, and thus to prevent any misunderstanding. Our thought is, that the close of the high calling in the year 1881 was a marked date, and that from that time onward we should expect manifestations along the line of restitution—evidences that restitution blessings were in process of development. We had no intention of conveying the thought that restitution, physical, mental and moral, should be expected in 1881, and onward. As a matter of fact, we see no such process of general physical restitution in operation, nor ought we to expect it until the Day of Atonement sacrifices (of this Gospel age—Christ and the church, his body) are complete.

We have already pointed this out in the pamphlet, "Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices," published in 1881. We there show that the high priest does not put on the glorious garments, representing the dignity and authority of rulership and blessing, until the "Lord's goat" has been killed, its body burned without the camp, its fat burned upon the altar, and its blood carried into the "Most Holy" and sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat. (We there show also that this goat typified the church, all of whose experiences there typified cannot be accomplished until the last member of the body of Christ has finished his sacrifice completely.) Then it was that the high priest went to the altar, lifted up his hands, and began to bless the people, who meantime lay prostrate in the dust awaiting that very blessing, which typically represents restitution.

In the above statement that "the stopping of the favor or call here, in 1881, is followed, or rather lapped upon, by the general call of the whole world to the Millennial blessings and favors," we hoped that the reader would have in mind our further statement; that altho the call, in its open or full sense, ceased in 1881, it would be prolonged in a special or private sense for a time, just as Israel's national favor ceased five days before our Lord's crucifixion, when he said, "Your house is left unto you desolate," yet in an individual sense of the word, God's favor continued with Israel exclusively for three and a half years following that date; only that instead of being a national favor, it was a private, an individual favor. On page 219 we endeavor to explain this continuation of the Gospel call, in another form, using the following language:

"But tho the general 'call' has ceased. the 'door' is not yet shut. The end of the call and the shutting of the door are distinct and separate. The 'door' stands open for some to enter the race for the great prize of joint-heirship in the kingdom after the *general* 'call' has ceased. God has predetermined a fixed number to constitute the church, 'the body of Christ,' and there can be neither one member superfluous nor one lacking. (See this typically taught in Lev. 21:17-23) It follows that he could not call or invite to that honor more than would complete the number that he had determined, and God's Word shows that this number had been secured [called] in October, 1881. But since some of those who responded under the general call, and made the covenant with him, will fail to keep that covenant, fail to so run as to obtain the prize, the 'door' stands open after the general 'call' has ceased, to permit the entrance to the race, to self-sacrifice in the service of the truth, of some [under the private or individual call] to *take the places* of such as may, during the inspection, cast aside the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness; and also of such others as, having made the covenant of self-sacrifice in the service, love the present evil world, become overcharged with its cares or pleasures, and fail to perform the requirements of their covenant."

Our thought is that this secret *extension* of the privileges of the call, after it has ceased as a *general* offer, must of necessity precede the beginning of the restitution privileges, and hence that only preparatory work in respect to the restitution and the proclamation of it, will be in order until the harvest of this Gospel age has been fully gathered. The knowledge of restitution is granted to the Lord's consecrated people now, to the intent that they should not be in darkness with the world in respect to the divine plan, and especially in view of the approaching great time of trouble, and also in view of the falling of the systems of error, false doctrines, etc. It is necessary that the restitution should be recognized by God's people, in order to keep them from falling in this day of trouble. But the *message* or call to restitution is not *due to the world*, to our understanding, in any sense of the word; hence it is that the efforts being made in connection with the dissemination of present truth are confined, so far as seems reasonable and possible, to the church—to those, at least, who professedly claim to be the Lord's people, and not to the world.

Our brother's letter suggests several questions, which we here propound and answer, hoping that the answers may be helpful, not only to him but to others.

(1) *Question.*—May it not be, that both the high calling and the restitution call are now open? Or, if only one of them, would it not seem the more probable that the restitution call alone is open now? I fail to see the force of your claim that the "door" stands open after the "call" ceases.

Answer.—We believe that we have shown, foregoing that the restitution call could not begin until the sacrifice of the church is completely finished, and until the High Priest, with every member of his body, is fully clothed with the honors and dignities of his office, represented in the garments of glory and beauty. We doubt if we can make the matter of the open door after the general call has ceased, any plainer than above set forth. We think it beyond question that the Lord could not call at any time a greater number than the *elect number*, even tho his foreknowledge assured him that many of the called ones would not make their calling and election sure, and therefore would not be amongst the chosen. We hold, therefore, that at such time as the full number of the elect had been called, the general call must of necessity have ceased; and yet, since the Lord clearly foretold that a casting out of some during the inspection of the guests would follow (Matt. 22:10-14), and since the elect number must be complete, it follows that there must be some way of bringing in others to take the places of those who would be cast out, after the general call ceased and the work of inspection began. To our understanding this work of inspection of the guests has been progressing for some time—since the call ceased. As some were found unworthy of their privileges and "cast into outer darkness," similar to that in which the whole world is, others were admitted to the favors of the called, and the attendant testings. And this work must continue until the full quota of elect ones shall have passed divine approval. We can think of no other way that would permit God to be just and reasonable in his dealings, since he will not accept less than the foreordained number, and since he will not call to that number any who, in any sense of the word, might be open to disappointment. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!" As pointed out (DAWN, Vol. III., page 222) these additions are illustrated in the parable by those admitted to labor in the vineyard at the eleventh hour, after the regular calls had ceased.

(2) *Question.*—Did not the restitution call precede the Gospel call? Were not Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all Israel called to restitution? If this be true, then the Gospel call was merely a supplementary one, for the time being, and in that event its closing or cessation would at once put in force again the original call which it had temporarily superseded

Answer.—No: none of the patriarchs were called to restitution, nor was it possible that either they or others could attain restitution blessings until after the ransom had been paid; until after all the Atonement Day sacrifices had been offered. If restitution had been possible without the ransom, then Christ died in vain, so far as the world of mankind is concerned. But no; all that anyone enjoyed of restitution favors in the past, was what we now enjoy; *viz.*, a *knowledge* of them. A slight knowledge or hint at restitution was given to father Adam and mother Eve. Subsequently a clearer statement of the same was made to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob. There is a vast difference between the promise of a thing and the thing itself. Had the restitution call gone forth in the true sense, anyone responding properly would have been *restored* to perfection and everlasting life. True, there was a *kind of offer* of restitution made to Israel under the Law Covenant—an offer that they would be restored to perfection and life *if they would keep their Law Covenant inviolate.* But, as we have seen, the keeping of that law was impossible; and hence the attainment of restitution under it was equally impossible.

The special merit of the patriarchs consisted in the fact that, living before any call to overlasting life was made, and with merely a hint of God's gracious purposes, they exercised so great faith respecting the same—enduring much in their endeavors to please God, and because of their confidence in his promises. From the Apostle Paul's account, some of them endured, faithfully, experiences which, had they lived during this Gospel age, would have constituted them overcomers in the highest sense of the word, and joint-heirs with Christ in the kingdom. But living before this high calling or any other call had been issued, and suffering and enduring valiantly and faithfully, they are promised a better resurrection, a more favorable resurrection than that of the world, tho it will not be so wonderful a resurrection as that of the church. As the Apostle remarks, God has promised some better thing for us (than for them), "that they without us should not be made perfect."—Heb. 11:40.

Their resurrection will be better than that of the remainder of mankind, except the consecrated Gospel church, in that it will be an instantaneous raising to perfection, while the world's resurrection will be a gradual one, accompanied by disciplines and testings, and called by our Lord "the resurrection by judgment"—a gradual raising up of the obedient and willing throughout the Millennial age, step by step, to all that was forfeited and lost in Eden.

(3) *Question.*—Will not the restitution call be a call to faith and to obedience, without sacrifice? If we cannot imagine such a call as being now in process, let me ask, Why not? Was not this call the one that was open to Cornelius and to everybody else, both before and since his time, as mentioned by the Apostle Peter, "I perceive that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him?"

Answer.—Peter did not mean to be understood that he that feared God and worked righteousness to the best of his ability *had always been* acceptable to God. Peter had just learned that a new dispensation had been ushered in, and that since Christ had redeemed, not the Jew only, but the whole world of mankind, therefore *now* repentance and remission of sins were proper to be preached in Christ's name to every creature, Gentiles as well as Jews; and that whoever sought to do the Lord's will to the best of his ability would be acceptable in the Lord's sight.

The restitution call will be a very different one from any that has ever gone forth as yet. It will not be a call to faith and to reckoned forgiveness of sins, but a call to obedience and to the actual blotting out of sins. During the Millennial age the world of mankind will be dealt with according to the condition of each, and obedience to the extent of ability will be required of each individual. Every obedience will receive its reward, in the way of mental, moral and physical recuperation, restitution; and every disobedience will receive a just chastisement, and thus throughout that age all who will shall have the opportunity of development, mentally, physically, morally, until, at its close, if he has been obedient to the great Teacher, Christ, he will again be in the image and likeness of God, as was Father Adam, but with additional experience gained—not only during the fall, but especially the experiences gained under the administration of Christ's government, during the Millennial period, while *rising* again; while being restituted out of sin and death conditions, into conditions of righteousness and life.

What is now known to the church of this Gospel age as "justification by faith" (in like manner also the ancient worthies were justified) will not be in operation during the Millennial age, nor be necessary; because the conditions then will be so different from present conditions. It is because "we walk by faith and not by sight"—because faith is now so difficult, and therefore so rare, that it is so highly appreciated and rewarded of God. But when the Millennial age will have been ushered in, the age of *faith* will have passed—that will be the age of *knowledge*—the age of evidences so clear, so unmistakable, that even "the wayfaring man, tho ignorant, shall not err therein, for the *knowledge* of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the face of the great deep." With knowledge thus abundant, so that there shall be no need to say to one's neighbor, "Know the Lord," because all shall know him, it follows that special faith will be impossible, and hence the rewards of special faith will no longer be offered.

We do not mean to say that mankind during the Millennium will not believe; on the contrary, none can do otherwise than believe: we do mean to say, however, that there is a difference between *believing* and exercising *faith.* We now believe various things by faith, which the world in the next age will believe, not by faith but on evidence, by knowledge—it will be impossible for them to doubt them, seeing that the evidences will be so indisputable. For instance, now God tells us to reckon all of our past sins forgiven, and ourselves fully justified in his sight. Nevertheless, we continually see evidences of our own weaknesses in our minds and bodies. The sins are not blotted out; they are merely reckonedly covered. In the case of the church's sins: they will not be blotted out until death shall destroy these mortal bodies, and until the Lord, in the first resurrection, shall grant us glorious, spiritual, perfect bodies. In them there will be no trace of sin or weakness or imperfection; all our sins will then be actually blotted out. But now we are required to *believe* in the covering of our sins; to exercise faith in God's declaration. Our next step of faith is in connection with the high calling to sacrifice earthly and temporal interests for the gaining of the heavenly glory, honor and immortality. But the heavenly crown and blessing are seen only with the eye of faith; and whoever runs in the race now set before us in the Gospel, must not only look with the eye of faith unto Jesus, as the author and finisher of our faith, but with the same eye of faith must see the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, has laid up for those who are faithful. Thus ours is preëminently an age of faith, of reckoned conditions, and of trust in the promises: and it shall have its great and precious reward.

Not so will be the conditions of the Millennial age, when ushered in. Knowledge will be there, as we have seen; and each day's experiences will result either in mental, moral and physical development, or in chastisements for failures to make progress. Such experiences will give ample demonstration of what may be expected as the ultimate outcome—restitution as the reward of obedience, or the second death as the punishment of disobedience.

The matter is clearly set before us in the Scriptures, which clearly teach that during this age the rule of divine dealing is, "According to thy faith be it unto thee," while the rule of the judgment of the world in the Millennial age is clearly laid down in Rev. 20:12: "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book of life was opened [the first book of life is called the Lamb's Book of Life, containing the names of the elect church, his bride;—this other book of life will be the book or record of those who shall pass the restitution trial or judgment satisfactorily], and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books [the Scriptures—John 12:48] *according to their works.*"

It would be a mistake to suppose that God will call mankind to sonship during the Millennial age, and not require them to make full consecration of themselves to him, and to that righteousness of which he is the personal representative. None can ever have eternal life upon any other condition than this—absolute obedience, and more—absolute harmony with the very spirit of the divine law, the law of righteousness, the law of love. And all who will be in harmony with the Lord to such an extent as this, would of necessity sacrifice, if there were opposition to the Lord or to righteousness which would make necessary a sacrifice of any kind, rather than deny the Lord and the principles of his holiness.

The reason why there will be no sacrifices required of the world during the Millennial age is that sin and Satan will no longer be in control—"this present evil world" (dispensation) will have passed away, and in its stead will have been ushered in "the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness"—wherein righteousness will be the rule, wherein the King and all in favor with him and every feature of government will be one of righteousness, truth and love.

To suppose the restitution call already commenced would be to suppose that God had in some manner authorized some one to announce that henceforth no one would suffer for right doing, but only for wrong doing; and that henceforth whoever sought to do right to the best of his ability, would find himself unopposed therein, and that his every effort would promptly bring mental, moral and physical strength and recuperation, which, going on and on, would by and by reach absolute perfection. Furthermore, it would be to promise that any who accepted this restitution call would never die the Adamic death; but on the contrary, accepting this call heartily, would find that day by day, year by year, the power of death in him was being vanquished and the process of restitution progressing.

When that call shall go forth, and those restitution privileges shall be offered to mankind, it will be as the Prophet has declared, that no man shall thenceforth die for Adam's sin, nor for the sin of his fathers, but only for his own sin. (Jer. 31:29, 30) We understand that this time will not be reached until after the time of trouble—not until A. D. 1915. To our understanding, from that date onward, the kingdom being fully established, the call of the world to restitution privileges will be opened, and whoever shall then die will die for his own sin [second death] and not for father Adam's; and whoever will then be obedient to the Lord will experience the blessings of his grace in restitution—actual, perceptible recovery beginning at once, as the reward to the faithful under the restitution call.

The sense in which Millennial blessings and favors are already lapping upon the Gospel age, to our understanding, is this: (1) Knowledge, inventions, etc., are bringing to the world of mankind blessings never hitherto enjoyed, and which are really intended for the Millennial age, and are merely being gotten ready or prepared in this "day of God's preparation." (2) Restitution blessings are lapping also, in the sense that these inventions, etc., are gradually leading on to the great time of trouble, in which present institutions, social, financial, political, religious, will all be overthrown—that in their stead God may bring in the better provisions and arrangements of the Millennial kingdom. (2) Restitution blessings are coming to the church now, in the sense that she is permitted to foresee these coming blessings upon the world, and to rejoice exceedingly, and to lift up her heart in thankfulness and praise to him who loveth us and who bought us with his own precious blood, and to realize how it is "the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

(4) *Question.*—Suppose some one should say, "I wish to give up this present world and all its honors and pleasures, to obey and follow Christ, no difference what trials and persecutions it may bring; but I have no expectation of salvation on the divine plane, and I am not running for that prize. Salvation on the human plane is better than I deserve, no matter how much it may cost me to follow Christ now, in the opening years of his reign, before Satan is bound. I am glad of an opportunity to show my loyalty under adverse circumstances, which will prove that I am sincere." Who may say that such an one might not come in under the restitution call?

Answer.—The Apostle, on one occasion, said, "The times of this ignorance God winked at"—took no account of. So all the way down through this Gospel age, while this "high calling" has been presented there doubtless have been some of the Lord's followers who have not clearly grasped his promises in all their length and strength and beauty—many who did not clearly understand that the overcomers of this age are to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and partakers of glory, honor and immortality. Their ignorance, however, did not alter the call nor the Lord's engagement. The heavenly Father is, so to speak, dealing with Christ rather than with us, and thus it is written that we are "accepted *in* the Beloved." Whoever, therefore, during this Gospel age, has fully consecrated himself to the Lord as his Master, fully trusting in him also as his Redeemer, and seeking to walk in his footsteps, the same is an heir of God and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, his Lord, whether he knew it or not; just as it would be in respect to an earthly inheritance.

It might seem strange that a son should not have some knowledge of his father's wealth and of his father's intention to give him a portion, but the son's ignorance would not alter in any degree the father's will, nor hinder him from participating in its provisions. So we should say respecting those of the Lord's faithful ones during this age, who have not been aware of how great things "God hath in reservation for them that love him." And this applies also to such an one as you mention in this question: his ignorance will not alter the divine arrangement; and if he faithfully follow the Lord now we have every reason to believe that in the regeneration he shall sit in his throne, whether he expects so great a favor or not. Nevertheless, we should expect that now the Lord would graciously reveal to such a faithful sacrificer his goodly heritage. There surely is no Restitution Call at the present time—no offer yet of an opportunity to grow out of imperfection and death, into perfection in God's likeness and into life everlasting.

"OUT OF DARKNESS INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—About one year ago your book, called THE PLAN OF THE AGES, fell into my hands. It came like the day-star arising in my soul, flooding my mind with new thoughts and conceptions as to the great plan of redeeming this old, lost world. Since 1897 I have been out evangelizing, preaching "Christ and Him crucified," to men throughout the States, but my "advanced" views soon gave dissatisfaction among the orthodox preachers, especially among the set to whom I belonged, the Methodist Episcopal church society. It was then that I began to read in earnest every thing I could find along the line of prophetic truth. I have read and re-read with great pleasure and profit the first five volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN, and am only awaiting now further issue of Volume VI. I can not express to you my indebtedness to you for the light I have received from the perusal of the WATCH TOWER publications.

May God continue to bless you with light, that you may be the means in his hands of leading many more pilgrims into the glorious light of the liberty of the gospel of Christ. Since seeing the fulness of God's truth, I have withdrawn from the M. E. church and ministry. Pray for me that I may continue "to walk in the light as he is in the light."

Yours in the Light, R. K. RICHARDSON,—*Alabama.*

[To the Lord be all the praise for the light now *"in due time"* shining upon his Word and revealing to us his gracious character. I am glad to hope that withdrawal from human institutions and their service means a fuller appreciation and closer membership in "the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven" and a more zealous and more wise participation in its ministry of the truth.—EDITOR.]

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Some time ago Brother Woodworth witnessed my method of handing out the Volunteer TOWERS and was so well pleased with it that he made me promise to write to you about it. I don't consider it anything out of the ordinary, but for the sake of my promise I will give it to you.

With a bow and a smile I say, "Sample—WATCH TOWER"; or "Free sample WATCH TOWER." If any questions are asked, I say, "An unsectarian religious magazine." My reasons for this method are, I seek to interest them thus, or rather to arouse their curiosity in knowing what the paper is; rather giving them the impression that I am seeking subscribers. In this way they will read with an unprejudiced mind—it does not arouse their antagonism by giving them the impression that you have something to refute the arguments they have just been listening to. If any know of the WATCH TOWER and do not care for it, they can refuse to take it, and thus one is saved for some one else. I think I am justified in giving the imprsession that I am seeking subscribers; if anyone becomes interested, he *will* become a subscriber, and it is for such that we specially labor. With much love, I am,

Yours in the best of bonds,

JOS. L. HOAGLAND,—*Pennsylvania.*

UNTO HIM BELONGETH ALL

"Just why I suffer loss
I can not know;
I only know my Father
Wills it so.
He leads in paths I cannot understand;
But all the way I know is wisely planned.

"My life is only mine
That I may use
The gifts he lendeth me
As he may choose;
And if in love some boon he doth recall,
I know that unto him belongeth all.

"I am his child, and I
Can safely trust;
He loves me, and I know
That he is just;
Within his love I can securely rest,
Assured that what he does for me is best."

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

REV. R. HEBER NEWTON'S OPINION

Doctor Newton writes to the *Christian Citizenship League* as follows:

"The teachings of the church, for the most part, are far from following the teachings of Jesus. Nay, they are far from recognizing what those teachings are. The organization of the church is planned and patterned upon a policy which is the very antithesis of a true society of Jesus.

"Commercialism dominates the organization, and conventionality tyrannizes the pulpit. The law of the market, rather than the law of the mount, is accepted by the church at large.

"Our Protestant churches are composed, for the most part, of a constituency drawn from the well-to-do classes, and they see nothing essentially unsound or unethical in the economic system of the day. The pulpit, therefore, is rarely free to deliver its soul, if it has one, upon the burning questions of our generation.

"Blind leaders of the blind, both seem hastening to fall into the ditch which lies before our civilization. And yet within the Christian church is the very ideal that the world hungers for the very power to solve these problems. Infinitely pathetic is the situation."

This is a very severe arraignment of orthodoxy in any case; but coming from one of its leading lights it is terrible!

PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE AND IN AMERICA

Within the past few years Protestantism has been making considerable progress in Catholic France; but it is to be remembered that there the term Protestant includes all systems of religion and irreligion opposed to Roman Catholicism.

As might be expected, this in turn arouses the ire of Romanists, especially the clergy, who, long accustomed to full control of the masses, and to having their mandates pass without dispute or criticism, are now furious in their attempts to hinder their people from slipping the bonds of gross religious ignorance and superstition, and escaping from their control. Deprived of the civil power of the past—lost a century ago—and unable to torture or destroy those who protest against their system, they nevertheless clearly show that the spirit of the past still dominates them, and that only opportunity is lacking, and this by reason of a higher civilization and a more generally enlightened public conscience—not because of a higher and holier religious standing.

Words are the cruelest weapons now permitted, and these are used with energy and venom and regardless of the truth. For instance, the *Bonne Presse*, the organ of the Assumptionists (a Roman Catholic order), and many *Croix*, or Catholic church papers, are seeking to arouse prejudice and public sentiment against everything not Catholic, by confounding Jews, Freethinkers and Free Masons with Protestant Christians—charging all with treachery to France, etc.,—and the general name of "*Huguenots*" has been revived as applicable to all those to whom Romanism is opposed. The inference is deducible from some of the writings, that their authors would like to see these modern "*Huguenots*" massacred as were the others—for the glory of God and the *peace* of the Roman Catholic church.—See MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. II., pages 332-353.

The names of some of the tracts and books published in the interest of this crusade against Protestantism would, alone, give a clew to the character of the attack; but we will give a few extracts:—

"*The Protestant Peril*," of 569 pages, declares:—

"The Huguenots go hand-in-hand with the traitors of the fatherland and with the foreign foes of France, just as their religious fellows did in the year 1870. . . . . The Protestants force their way into the houses of the French people, ostensibly to sell Bibles, but in truth to spy out where the honest peasant has hidden his savings. They are picking out quarters for the army of the invasion. Therefore, we must keep a watch over these imbeciles and force them to leave our towns. . . . These pious gospel messengers do not propose so much to make converts to Protestantism, as to demoralize our good people and to lay plans for facilitating the proposed invasion of our country. We appeal to the peasants to become new crusaders in the interests of the good cause."

"*The Protestant Conspiracy*" charges that the queen of England annually contributes five million dollars to propagate Protestantism in France, and thus to make the latter a vassal state to Great Britain. Another work is entitled, "*The Treachery of Protestantism.*" "*Treason's Formation*" is another of these. It says:—

"The Huguenot is a born traitor. A Catholic will die for his *faith;* a Jew to save his *money;* but a Protestant knows no martyrdom. . . . The claim of the innocence of Dreyfus was simply a specimen of Protestant treachery in order to make it possible for England to occupy Fashoda, and William II. to make his journey to Jerusalem. All the defenders of Dreyfus are open or secret Protestants."

"*The Protestant Conquest*" is the title of another of these blasts of ignorance and falsity, designed to prejudice the populace so that they will give Protestants and the Bible no hearing. It suggests the wisdom and propriety of murdering leading opponents, both political and religious, as follows:—

"The Catholics are too scrupulous. Nobody can bake an omelet without breaking some eggs. No revolution can be achieved without advancing over dead bodies. Do you think it would be a crime to condemn and put to death such men as Zadok Kahn, Reinach, Scheurer-Kestner, Picquart, Zola, Brisson, Yves Guyot, Jaures, Clemenceau, Monod, and Ranc, because they have organized the Dreyfus conspiracy? I confess openly that I would have no hesitancy to vote for the death of this Reinach, etc., and such pastors as Monod, etc."

French Protestants are justly indignant at such unscrupulous methods of opposition, and are crying out for freedom and fair and honest treatment; and to offset it are publishing pamphlets entitled, "Away from Rome," and scattering them widely.

* * *

But now note the difference between the sentiments of Protestants in France, and Protestants here. Where they are in the minority they want liberty and God's Word to prevail, and appeal to *reason and the Bible* as in offset to ignorance, superstition and priestcraft. But how is it here in "the land of the free" where Protestantism controls the great majority? Ah! here we see the weakness of fallen human nature displayed; for here Protestants, like the Catholics of France, are most bitterly opposed to any advanced light—especially any further light from the Bible;—not only denying what they cannot gainsay Scripturally, but becoming the more angry in proportion as they find present truth unanswerable.

True, they have not published volumes in opposition to our presentations, but this is no doubt due to two facts: (1) There is no opportunity to confound the gospel we preach with any class of politicians or political aspirations; and (2) they know nothing to say against our position and fear to call attention to it lest their closely guarded and tightly penned "sheep" should get a taste of "the *good* word of God," and break away from sectarianism to the "green pastures and still waters" of divine truth. But most of their fears are groundless, for the majority of their flocks are not "sheep" anyway; and the "goats," true to a perverse nature, would prefer tin cans, paper, filthy rags, or anything of a sensational character—Evolution, Higher Criticism, human philosophy, and "science falsely so called"—rather than the truth.

United States Protestant *methods* differ from French Roman Catholic *methods*, but both have the same object; namely, to prejudice the minds of the people under their control who are trusting to them as their guides and spiritual advisers; thus to hinder them from investigating truth on its merits and in the light of the divine Word.

Having mentioned the Roman Catholic method, it is but just that we cite instances illustrating the Protestant method. For instance, some years ago the pastor of the North Ave. M. E. church of this city made a most furious attack upon the Editor of this journal, whom he had never met, and whose writings he probably had never read—as would seem to be implied by the false statements of our position made by him in a discourse over an hour long. What was the ground for the attack? Simply that five members of his congregation had been baptized by us the week previous, and that he knew, in some way or other, that we believed in the imminence of the kingdom of God. He railed at the fact that this teacher did not belong to any of the sects, and was not recognized by any of them, informed *his* people that he had been specially educated *so as to be able* to guide them in all spiritual matters; and that they should seek no other counsel respecting God's Word.

He then *demonstrated* his wisdom and ability as "a scribe instructed respecting the kingdom" by declaring that the second coming of Christ must be many thousands of years future, *because in his judgment*, this was clearly taught, not by the Bible writers, but by the coal fields and ore deposits of earth, which he thought would last that long.

If the learned gentleman had only thought of it he might have prophecied a still longer interim—millions on millions of years—basing his calculations on the supply of limestone for macadam and whitewash, and on the supply of granite for tomb-stones. This encouraging (?) sermon on "The Second Coming of Christ" ended with an attempt to arouse the murder spirit amongst the "goats" of his flock and to intimidate the "sheep" with words, understood by all to refer to the Editor of this journal, who was (by request of the recently baptized ones) present in the audience thirty feet from the reverend and learned speaker, who in loud and angry tones shouted, "Do you know what they would have done to such a man eighteen centuries ago? They would have led him outside their city and would have stoned him to death!"

Here is the same murderous spirit manifested by the French Catholics, and in both incited by a bitter hatred of the truth—or rather by a *fear of the truth*, and a desire to preserve, by any and every means, the *human* organization they have been taught to regard as *divine*. "By *any* means" is none too strong; for we know of numerous instances in which professed ministers of God's truth have most outrageously falsified for *the good of the cause*, as the Jesuits would say.

For instance, it makes the false shepherds (who seem to predominate) very angry when members of their flock receive present truth and request that their names be stricken off the sectarian roll because they consider it quite enough and much more in accord with the Lord's will and Word to have it written only in "the Lamb's book of life,"—and quite sufficient to be members of "the church of the first-born, which are written in heaven," and thus in fellowship with all true "sheep," wherever found. In some instances reported to us the pastor kept the letter to himself, and long afterward charged the one who had withdrawn with backsliding, neglect of covenant in not attending service and hence unworthy of respect or fellowship.

In one instance a dear sister who had been a Bible class teacher of prominence and influence was so feared by her erstwhile pastor that he deliberately, and with much hypocritical show of sorrow, circulated the report that she had "gone insane"—"a very pitiable case." His crafty satanic method succeeded; and her church friends and neighbors "let her alone," for fear they would "excite her" and "make it necessary to send her to an insane asylum." Needless to say, the sister is of much sounder mind than ever before;—of much sounder mind than any who can believe the unscriptural and God-dishonoring doctrine of eternal torment, taught by the jarring creeds labeled "Orthodox."

It was in view of such cowardly and disreputable methods coming to our notice that we prepared what are known as "Withdrawal Letters"—setting forth the truth in kindly language—which we supply freely to all who desire them, so that *each member of the congregation* receiving one may be truthfully informed as to our reasons for renouncing membership in sectarian systems; and thus, too, the temptation to misrepresent is taken from the false shepherds whose love for the sheep is chiefly for the sake of their "golden fleece." But those kindly-worded letters are feared and hated as much as the Dawns.

Space forbids us to mention numerous instances of perfidy and misrepresentation by "ministers" against our publications—especially Millennial Dawn. Publicly and privately they warn their people against it, and advise those who have it *not to read it*, but to "saturate with oil and burn it," evidently thinking us so opposed to eternal torment that we would use some kind of fire-proof paper that would need oil to make it burn. Others, learning that colporteurs had reached their city and had sold Dawns to their parishioners, have gone about from house to house, warning, threatening and entreating (according to the intelligence and financial dignity of the person) that they violate their engagements and refuse to take the books, and if they already have them to be sure to burn them.

Why all this warning, etc.? Love for the "sheep"? Oh no, indeed! but love for themselves. They well know that wherever the true light of the Word of God goes their "craft is in danger." (See Acts 16:16-24) Often they hear of their "sheep" getting into by-paths of sin, but who ever heard of their working themselves into a frenzy of energy on that account? Why then are they so excited the moment Millennial Dawn is mentioned, or seen in the houses of their sheep?

Their fear is (1) that if the people read the Dawns they will know far more about the Bible, and will begin to think and to ask questions which they cannot answer. (2) It will show them that they have been hiring shepherds to lead them to the green pastures of truth who, instead, have been penning them up in sectarian folds and forcing them to subsist on the God-dishonoring doctrines of the dark ages. (3) It will lead the true "sheep" to get out from among the "goats" and "wolves in sheep's clothing," by showing them that the "harvest" time of separation has come and that a great Chief Shepherd is calling forth his own sheep to himself and to fellowship with all other sheep—free from human creed-pens. (4) No wonder these worldly-wise shepherds resent a teaching which would gather the few grains of "wheat" from a parishful of "tares." It would look bad to call his a wheat-field if there were no wheat in it. Then, too, it would count in numbers (tho far less than they suppose—for the "tares" take little or no interest in present truth), and their prestige and salary depend so much on numbers; how could they regard Dawn otherwise than as their enemy likely to bring all kinds of trouble to their slumbering flocks by awaking them to thought and Bible study?

This seems to make no allowance for honest preachers, lovers of the truth who should be glad to find it in Dawn or anywhere, and glad to proclaim it at any cost,—some one complains. No, we do not deny that there are honest, God-fearing and truth-loving men in the Christian ministry, scattered probably among all denominations; but evidently, as at the first advent, the Doctors of Divinity as a *class* are, by their training and selfish interest, enemies of the true light, the wisdom from above, and friends and patrons of earthly wisdom. The majority are blind and cannot see the true light, and of the remainder a large proportion seems to love the present world, and to be willing to sell the truth for its "mess of pottage." Nevertheless, here and there some "forsake all" for the sake of the truth,—to suffer with Christ, if so be that they may also reign with him by and by.

Nor does it always stop with threatening words: these in small towns are often followed by social ostracism and business boycott too often successful. For instance, a brother wrote us a short time ago, changing his address, explaining that he had been obliged to move onto a farm because his cotton-gin, saw-mill and grist mill in town had been boycotted until he could not longer earn a living—because of his attempt to explain the truths of the Bible to his neighbors. The charge against him was that he "had too many different translations of the Bible" and "had many texts marked in his Bible which neither the preacher nor his neighbors could *find* in theirs;"—not being so well acquainted with their Bibles as with their almanacs, daily papers, dominoes, cards and chess.

Alas, poor world! It is still true that "men love darkness rather than light," and that this is their condemnation, leading surely to the great time of trouble with which this age is predicted to end, as the same love of darkness led natural Israel to its great trouble and overthrow, in the end of the Jewish age.

Yet none of these things move the Lord's people, for the same light upon the Word shows not only that the Lord's true people will be hated and maligned even to the end of this age, and that whosoever will live godly must suffer persecution; but it shows also the object of such tests and trials and sacrifices—to fit and prepare a little flock to be faithful and merciful kings and priests of God during the coming age, when with their Lord, Jesus, whom they follow through evil as well as good report, they shall, as God's representatives, "judge the world"—giving to all the fullest opportunity to come back to full harmony with God and righteousness.

PREPARED TO FALL INTO SPIRITISM

It is our expectation that Spiritism, as one of the latter day delusions, is to play an important part in the next few years in connection with the great falling away already begun, in which "a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand." Romanism taught, and still teaches, a Purgatory to which their dead go at death for purification for heaven; and that while there the prayers and paid masses of their friends on earth avail for them to a sooner release—to heavenly bliss. Protestantism at its start, through Luther and its principal exponents, denounced this as a Papal deception to fill its coffers with the money of its deluded people; and failing to grasp the truth that a dead person is not alive anywhere, but awaits the resurrection of the dead as his only hope of a future life, Protestantism took its illogical position still held—that death ends all hope, and that all not fit for heaven go to a hell of everlasting torment. And, in harmony with this, prayers to and for the dead were reprobated—the righteous needing none, and the wicked being hopeless.

It has often surprised us that with the thought that their dead are not dead, but more than ever alive and "hovering" among the friends at the funeral, as some ministers explain (?), there has not been a greater disposition to follow the lead of Spiritism and seek communion with those supposed to be alive and near, and able to assist. The explanation seems to be that Romanists are under the control of the priests instructed who are the saints who may be prayed to, and instructed that those who need to be prayed *for* can only be reached or assisted through the priests,—who alone must do the mass-saying and praying. And Protestants have been restrained by the original declaration of the leaders that prayers to and for the dead were both Romish superstitions, unsanctioned by the Word of God—to which we heartily agree.

A CHANGE ALREADY IN PROGRESS

But the Boer-British war has started a fresh discussion of the question of prayers for the dead. As Roman Catholics, after news of a battle, repaired to their cathedrals to pray for the Catholic dead, and to offer mass on their behalf in Purgatory, Protestants have been perplexed and felt their need of *something* to offset the hard error of their creed that if the soldier were a saint he went at once to glory, but if not a saint at once to an endless and hopeless torment in hell. Loving fathers and doting mothers were unable to hide from themselves that their sons, and the army in general, were far from being saints or "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light;" and yet they felt sure that they were far too good and noble and patriotic to be turned over to the care of devils to be roasted eternally: and this coming now, at a time when people are *thinking* more than ever before, and when human sympathy is greatly expanded, is awakening serious thought in Britain.

As usual, however, the adversary manages to turn thought into a wrong direction; and so they fail to see that all the dead must wait for the second coming of the Lord and for the resurrection awakening then due, and that then (during the Millennial age) the whole world will be a grand and good Purgatory;—when Satan will be bound, and when so many as will, can have the assistance of the royal priesthood in getting rid of their errors and weaknesses, and coming back to perfection by a process of restitution. No, on the contrary, the suggestion is that the early Reformers must have erred in rejecting that feature of Rome's teachings which permits and encourages prayers for the dead. Note the sentiments promulgated by the influential *Christian World* of London. It says:—

"Here is theology in the roughest: its chiefest problem thrust on you in a fashion which brooks no shirking. What has really happened? Where or what is he who, a moment ago so near, is now at a remove to which our space computations offer no clew? We are all on-lookers today at tragedies of this sort, and the questions behind them press us with relentless force. Do our dead still think or love? Have we any sort of relation with them? Can we do aught for them or they for us? . . . .

"What on this subject [communion with the dead] is the position of Protestant Christians today? Signs are abundant that the standpoint from which it is approached by non-conformists, not less than by conformists, is a somewhat different one from that held by the Reformers and the Puritans.

"Thoughtful minds are now asking whether the sixteenth-century onslaught on Purgatory and priest-craft did not, in the rush, carry away with it some precious things that it is time now to restore. . . . .

"And why should we not pray for the dead? What is prayer, in the best conception of it, but the following of those we love, with aspiration and affection, with desire for their highest good, with the whole best emotion of our soul? What barbarous infidelity has taught us that death interposes a limit to this out-going? The notion that those who now rest in God are, because of that, beyond the reach or need of prayer is heathen, and not Christian. It is disloyal at once to God, to the departed themselves, and to our own best instincts. There is no position, not that of heaven's central point; there is no condition, not that of supremest blessedness, that is outside the range of love. . . . .

"We have neglected our dead, and in so doing have weakened one of the most intimate of our links with the unseen. We have put up in our minds barriers that do not correspond with the reality, and so have obstructed the flow of some of the grandest of the human inspirations. The mind revolts against these limitations. Its prophetic instinct recognizes them as a mistake. The vagaries of Spiritualism are a rough protest against the policy of cutting the cable between here and the beyond. And that other side protests also. Near to us, on the other side of a very thin veil, lies a great realm of life which has the closest connection with our own. What that connection is we at present only dimly discern. Our organs of perception seem only in the most rudimentary condition. It may be that our later indifference on this side has hindered their development. But develop they must, for *they are among humanity's most priceless possessions*. A stage will yet be reached when they will be part of the soul's general apparatus, and when, not to a stray prophet here and there [mediums?], but to the common man will it be given to stand with Bunyan's pilgrim on the Delectable Mountains and behold what was visible there."

Light (Spiritualistic, London, April 10) thinks this is a real, tho belated, recognition of the essential truth of the Spiritualistic position. It says:—

"Spiritualists have been severely criticized and ridiculed for affirming that the departed are frequently benefited by the advice, sympathy, and prayers of earth-dwellers. We have been denounced for teaching that progress after death, following upon repentance and effort, is possible for the ignorant and sinful dwellers on the threshold. . . .

"Think of it! Spiritualism is a '*protest against the policy of cutting the cable between here and the Beyond!*' Aye, and evidently the protest has not failed, it has not been in vain. While the writer laments that 'our organs of perception [physical, mediumistic perception, or "spiritual gifts"] seem only in the most rudimentary condition,' he suggests that indifference has 'hindered their development,' and he fully justifies us and our long struggle for recognition against, not only indifference, but prejudice, intolerance and active hostility, by affirming '*develop they must, for they are among humanity's most priceless possessions!*'

"After this we shall assuredly have *The Christian World* founding a 'School of the Prophet's for the development and exercise of mediumship and psychical powers generally."

PRAYING AND FIGHTING—AN EMPEROR'S SERMON

The German Emperor preached a sermon on board his yacht Sunday, July 29, from the text, Exodus 17:9-11. His argument was that as Moses prayed and got a blessing for Israel, so all Germans at home should pray that their brethren gone to war in China might successfully slaughter the heathen Chinese, who should be like the Amalekites. The press report of the discourse follows:—

"The soldiers shall be the strong arm which punishes assassins. They shall be the mailed fist which smites that chaotic mass. They shall defend, sword in hand, our holiest possessions. True prayers can still cast the banner of the Dragon into the dust and plant the banner of the cross upon the walls.

"Again is heard God's command, 'Choose us out men and go out to fight with Amalek.' A hot and sanguinary struggle has begun. Already a number of our brethren are over there under fire. Many more are traveling along hostile coasts. You have seen them, the thousands who, to the call of volunteers to the front who will guard the empire, have assembled themselves to battle with victorious banners. We who remain at home are bound by other sacred duties. Woe unto us if we remain slothful and sluggish while they are engaged in their difficult and bloody work, and if from our place of security we only curiously look on while they wrestle in battle.

"Not only should we mobilize battalions of troops, but we should also, and shall, set in motion an army of trained people to *beg* and *entreat* [God] for our brethren that they may strike into the wild chaos with sword in hand. May they strike for our most sacred possessions. We would pray that God the Lord may make heroes of our men and lead those heroes to victory, and that then, with laurels on their helmets and orders on their breasts, he may lead them home to the land of their fathers.

"Our fight will not be finished in one day; but let not our hands grow weary or sink until victory is secured. Let our prayers be as a wall of fire around the camp of our brethren. Eternity will reveal the fulfilment of an old promise—'Call upon me in trouble, and I will deliver thee.' Therefore pray continuously."

The Emperor and many other militant "Christians" fail to see that Israel was used of God as a typical people and that the duly authorized slaughter of the Amalekites was because their iniquity was "come to the full" (Gen. 15:16), and God would use them as types of evil and evil-doers to be overthrown by the antitypical Moses, the antitypical Mediator, Christ—as Pharoah and his hosts previously typified the same thing. Similarly the "Land of Promise," Canaan, was typical of the heavenly Canaan.

The Spiritual Israelite is to watch and fight and pray, but against a different kind of enemies and with different weapons—mighty through God to the pulling down of error, and the gaining of victories over sin and self and Satan. "The weapons of *our warfare* are not carnal," says the inspired Apostle—not swords, machine-guns and battle-ships.—2 Cor. 10:4.

As for the "Christian soldiers" going to "heathen China" from "Christian Europe" we fear they have not a true "soldier of the cross" among them, and but few who have any knowledge whatever of the sword of the spirit—the Word of God. They are probably no better than the thousands of their comrades already there and of whose unchristian conduct, after the capture of Tien Tsin, the telegraphic dispatches published say:—

"This day has been devoted entirely to looting the native city [Tien Tsin]. The Chinese killed many of their women to keep them from falling into the hands of the allied troops. It is impossible to cable a description of the scenes that were enacted. . . . . American and Japanese troops were the only ones who made any attempt to restrain the civilian or soldier looters."

THE GERMAN KAISER'S HUMANE (?) EXPRESSIONS

The Emperor is practically the pope of the German National Church system; we presume he has received the collegiate degree of "D. D.," as did Bismarck. He is evidently another "man of blood and iron." He has surely placed himself, by recent utterances, at the head of the revived ancient order of Christian soldiers of the period of the crusades. The "Boys' Brigades" should all be pointed to this fact;—and be advised to resign and turn in the opposite direction from the general Christian (?) drift of our day. The following from the *Presbyterian Banner* is to the point. It says:—

"'Ye have heard that it hath been said. Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.' Is this passage in the German New Testament? Has the Emperor William ever read it? If he has he must have forgotten it, or lost its spirit, for last week, in dispatching German troops to China, he is reported to have said to them, 'Every civilization not founded on Christianity is sure to be brought to naught. I send you out. If you close with the enemy, remember this: spare nobody, make no prisoners; use your weapons so that for a thousand years hence no Chinaman will dare look askance at any German.' The whole address breathes the spirit of ruthless destruction to the Chinese. The great 'war lord' doubled up his 'mailed fist' and threatened to pound China to pieces. The vain emperor, swollen with a sense of his own importance, seemed to be sublimely unconscious of the violent inconsistency of his fierce paganism with his professed Christianity. He would outdo Mohammed in spreading religion with the sword. There are difficulties, however, in the way of this plan. Christ himself told Peter, who was eager to use it for defending the kingdom, to put up his sword, and there is no evidence that he has handed this weapon to William II. for this purpose. And further, there are the Chinese themselves; there are 400,000,000 of them, and they may prove a considerable obstruction in the way of William's policy. In fact, the German emperor's plan is about the worst possible one that could be announced in the present emergency. It would consolidate the Chinese and turn them into a horde of fanatics that might easily turn out to be a genuine 'yellow terror.' It is believed that the emperor's rash words will render the coöperation of the powers difficult, if not impossible. England and America will not set out on any such bloodthirsty mission. When Christianity seizes the sword, it may perish by the sword. Poor old China, in its paralysis, needs pity. Something must be done in the way of chastisement and reörganization, but let not passion seize the sword and sweep it with a besom of destruction. Justice must be done, but let it be tempered with mercy, and let the Christian nations act in a Christian and not a pagan spirit."

"NOT SO PAUL WON MACEDONIA"

Rev. Dr. Halderman lifts his pen against the modern and erroneous methods of propagating the gospel of "peace on earth, good will toward men." He says:—

"I am absolutely sure that in the future Russia will gain the supremacy. It is also true that, taught by Western genius, the Eastern hordes will yet break in awful avalanches on the West. The greed, the rapacity, the Christless, godless selfishness of European nations will get its reward. All the Christianity that has been wrought in China will be small, counting in the terrible final balance that shall be made against so-called Christian nations, who have poisoned China with opium and made them look upon Christians as only another division of rapacious foreign devils.

"Considered morally, there are two sides to the question. These Chinese are fighting for their homes, their land, their institutions. They know the Christian nations are ready to rob and cheat them; and when they find the missionaries backed up by guns and swords and bloodthirsty Cossacks, by rude and godless soldiery, ready to kill and slay, they are only the more infuriated and determined in the opinion that any white man is a devil and needs to be slain.

"It was not so that Paul won Macedonia and Rome. When he went to Rome he did not say, 'Down with Nero! Down with the powers that be!' On the contrary, he counseled Christians to recognize that here Nero's government, bad as it was, was permitted by God and that Christians should submit.

"It was by the blood of martyrs our church won at first: not by the blood of their foes, but their own blood; not shed with arms in their hands, but shed at the stake or rack or block with prayer on their lips and love in their hearts."

GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL CARE

Because two of the Lord's dear sheep of the Allegheny congregation recently lost their lives in an accident, while returning home from meeting and discussing the sermon, many of the brethren have been surprised. The inquiry arose, Do we not believe that God's consecrated people are specially the objects of his care? And if so, how was such an accident possible?

These same questions are liable to arise in many minds, and hence we discuss the matter here for the benefit of all.

We advise that each WATCH TOWER reader shall peruse afresh the tract entitled, "Calamities: Why God Permits Them." In it we discuss this topic at considerable length—from the standpoint of accidents to the world, and accidents to the church. Now we will confine our remarks to the latter phase of the subject, suggesting:—

(1) It is the Scripture teaching that every member of the church must die somehow. This was the purport of our consecration—"even unto death." Each member of the "royal priesthood" became a member by consecrating,—presenting his body a living sacrifice as did our High Priest, Christ Jesus. And just as it was necessary for him to finish his course of dying in actual death, so will it be with each of us.

(2) As the Master's death was not on a "flowery bed of ease," neither, probably, will be the death of any of his footstep-followers. And, if it be a choice between a bed of tedious sickness and a sudden death by "accident," many would choose the latter as the less painful—the quicker "change."

(3) But it is not for us to *choose* on this more than upon other subjects. It is ours to accept with patience and full resignation whatever divine providence may permit; and this may vary. Under some circumstances it may be better that death come through a lingering illness in which God will be glorified, and the power of his truth to sustain shall be demonstrated in the patient, loving spirit of the dying sufferer. Or, at another time, the Lord may see best to permit death to come upon his dear one suddenly—as a shock, as a calamity; to test the faith of some, and to awaken others from lethargy to vigilance,—from drowsiness to a fresh energy in running the race toward the mark for the great prize. The suddenness of the death of the two dear sheep of this Allegheny fold certainly has had a good effect upon many of the dear ones most intimate wth them, and who knew them both as most saintly characters—ripe in the Christian graces, and fully ready and waiting for their "change." Undoubtedly many not so prepared have been awakened to fresh vigilance, and a renewal of consecration vows, and zeal in self-sacrifice, by this incident and the thought—Would I have been ready had the call thus suddenly come to me?

(4) If to some the question arises,—But what about the little children needing parental care? The answer is, that these parents had already placed their children, as well as themselves, under divine care; and that care is still over the children: as able to care for them now, as for both parents and children before. This is a place for trust—for faith. Whoever cannot trust his children to divine care does not as yet properly know his Heavenly Father, and needs to give renewed diligence to this important study. Such an one has not yet attained the faith that would be acceptable to God, and without which it would be impossible to please God,—the faith of an "overcomer."

(5) The shock connected with our dear Redeemer's death was no doubt a severe test of faith to some of the early disciples—it seemed as tho it proved that our Lord was in disfavor with the Father—"We did esteem him smitten of God, and afflicted." Yet to those who stumbled not in unbelief the shock of our Lord's cruel death became afterward a great lever of sympathy for good as they fully grasped the thought, "He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement for sin

which brings peace to us was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed." The apostles also suffered violent deaths and learned to regard such calamities not as marks of divine disfavor, but the reverse.

(6) There can be no *"accident"* happen to the Lord's consecrated ones, viewed from the divine standpoint. Not a hair of their heads can be injured aside from the Father's *permission*, and what God purposely permits cannot be properly considered an accident from his standpoint, nor from the standpoint of those who fully trust his providence and grace. We might even suppose a calamity in which ninety-nine children of this world and one of the Lord's consecrated met death together. It might be purely accidental so far as all but the Lord's one was concerned: but, to that one nothing could occur unforeseen of God—nothing that God could not have fully controlled, and which permitted must mean a blessing to his child who rightly and in faith accepts it,—"For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." So it was in our Lord's case. As he testified, the Jews could not touch his life before because his "hour was not yet come." And when his hour did come, our Lord testified to Pilate,—"Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." The same is true of every member of the body of Christ, the royal priesthood. But this divine supervision does not watch for the unconsecrated of the world—except as they may be children of the saints, or others whose affairs and interests are interlinked with theirs.

(7) Expecting as we do that the living members of this royal priest or "jewel" class will all be gathered to glory sometime before A. D. 1915 (and so far as we are now able to surmise by 1910), we are bound to suppose that a considerable number of these will, in some manner, die sudden or violent deaths. And happy for us will it be if this thought that our "change" may come at any moment, shall be so impressed as to assist us to be always ready to answer the summons with joy.

Let us each permit this thought to arrange our business affairs, our family affairs, our relationship to the "brethren"—our relationship to the world in general—all our words, and thoughts, and doings; and thus it will bring us great blessing and assist in making us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

The Editor will not be surprised if his death should come suddenly; nor if by divine permission it should come in some unpleasant form that might, for the moment, seem to "jolt" and interrupt the "harvest work." Let all of the consecrated be on guard against such a wavering of doubt respecting the divine power to care for and carry on the work. If such a trial does come, it will no doubt in part, at least, be intended of the Lord to show that the work is his and not ours; and that he is perfectly able to carry on his work, using one or another of his children as his servants to set the food of his providing before the household of faith.

All of our affairs in daily life are shaped to these ends: to the development and bringing forward of others ready to the Lord's hand, should he at any moment call for the transfer of our stewardship and bid us "Come up higher." And the same applies to the financial means and interests which the Lord has entrusted to our care. Let none be surprised, then, at anything which may happen to us, but, on the contrary, glorify God on our behalf, and press along the "narrow way" with redoubled energy.

DOING, TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE

Luke 10:25-37.—Sept. 9.

Golden Text:—*"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."*—Lev. 19:18.

Probably while our Lord was preaching, and his audience seated about him, either upon the hillside or in a synagogue, a lawyer stood up, and thus politely intimated his desire to say a word in connection with the subject under discussion. The term "lawyer," amongst the Jews at that time, signified one versed in the Law of Moses, one claiming to be able to expound that Law, and to teach others its true meaning. Such persons today we term theologians. These were also termed scribes or learned men—irrespective of their religious convictions, some of them adhering to one view and some to another; some being Pharisees, others Sadducees, etc.,—each endeavoring to interpret the Law in harmony with the teachings of the sect to which he adhered.

Luke does not give us the connections, but quite possibly this lawyer raised his question in connection with some discourse in which our Lord held forth that he himself was the Bread of Life, of which, if a man eat, he may live forever—or in which he had been representing himself as the Good Shepherd, who would give his life for the sheep; or as the Redeemer who had come, that God's people might have life, and that more abundantly—eternal life. This lawyer (or, as some today would say, this D. D.) was probably of the Sadducees, who denied a resurrection and any future or eternal life, interpreting the law, which promises life upon certain conditions, as merely a decoy, intended to promote holiness amongst the Lord's people, but nevertheless a deception, since the holiest and most faithful of the race had not inherited eternal life, but had gone down into death, even as others.

In this view of the matter this Jewish D. D. propounded to our Lord a question, hoping that the answer would give room for a discussion, in which he would be able to show himself the greater of the two teachers, and to prove to his pupils, at least (who were probably present with him), that his theories were correct—that no matter how faithfully the law might be kept no reward of eternal life would be given, and that faith in Christ would be equally futile in this respect. The Evangelist says he asked the question, "tempting" the Lord, that is, to prove him, to draw him out, to expose the weakness of his argument: saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" You recognize me as a scribe, a doctor of the law, a teacher; as one, therefore, who is living a godly and upright life, so far, at least, as his neighbors and pupils may be able to discern. Looking back I see that the holiest and best of our nation (the holiest nation in the world, and the only one recognized of God) have not inherited eternal life. I see that, on the contrary, they have died as other men; I see that for some cause (whether it be the Lord's failure to fulfill his promise, or man's failure to comply with the conditions) all have died, none having attained eternal life. Tell me now, what shall I do that I may not share the same fate of death—that I may live everlastingly?

Our Lord answered the question with great directness, at the same time signifying his unquestioning faith in the promises of God, that whatever God had promised he would surely fulfil—implying, therefore that if he failed to obtain eternal life it would be his own fault, and not the fault of God. Our Lord practically said, I stand by the Scriptural record: you are versed in the law; quote, as you understand it, the teachings of the law on this subject.

The answer shows that this Doctor of the Law was well versed, for he quoted correctly the most direct statement on the subject to be found in the law. Our Lord's reply was equally to the point: "Thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live"—I confirm the Law; I uphold it; I vouch for its truthfulness; none who keep that Law can possibly die. The difficulty with all Jews who have died has been, that they did not fulfil that law requirement toward God and man.

DISPLAY OF HEAVENLY WISDOM

The Doctor of the Law was trapped. He had hoped to entangle Jesus in a discussion, and had himself become entangled; for the great Teacher had pointed out that the fault was not in God—that God was not unfaithful to his agreement under the law; that the fault lay with the people. And this included the lawyer as well as the remainder of the race; and that he so understood it is implied in the statement, "He, desiring to justify himself, said, And who is my neighbor?" It was very shrewd of the lawyer to avoid discussing the first commandment, respecting the love for God with all the heart, mind, soul and strength; because no one can thoroughly judge another in respect to this feature of the law; only God and each individual heart knows absolutely whether God is loved with every talent, every power of heart of mind and of body. But others can judge to some extent respecting obedience to the second commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The lawyer felt that he could safely leave the first proposition and claim that none could judge his heart, provided he could "justify himself" in respect to the second proposition, his dealing with his neighbor. Hence it is that he brought up this point, saying, "But who is my neighbor?"

There was a difference of opinion amongst the most learned Jews on this subject of who is the neighbor meant in the law, —some claiming that it meant all Jews, and Jews only. Others claimed that the word "neighbor" would mean only those Jews who lived holy lives. Thus the lawyer practically said, I shall be obliged to yield my contention and acknowledge you superior to myself as a teacher, unless we can get into a contention on this subject of who is the neighbor. In that event I shall at least be able to bring a strong argument that will appeal to all the hearers. But when the great Teacher had, in parable form, explained the true meaning of the word neighbor, the lawyer found himself without an argument.

"NONE RIGHTEOUS, NO NOT ONE"

Some have supposed that our Lord meant that this Doctor of the Law and others who heard him should understand that the Samaritan of the parable, by doing a kind and neighborly act, won for himself the inheritance of *eternal life*, and that our Lord meant further to teach that the lawyer and all of his hearers might inherit eternal life if they would go and do likewise—do as the Samaritan did—do good, help their neighbors. This view is a serious error. In the first place, we do not know that any Samaritan ever did just such an act of kindness. It was merely a parable, a suggestion: Suppose that such conditions existed, and suppose that a Samaritan had done such an act, would he not be a good "neighbor"? The reward of eternal life was not offered on condition of being a good neighbor merely. This was one of the conditions (the one the lawyer questioned), but it was quite secondary to the main proposition—Thou shalt love the Lord with every power and talent of mind and body. The lesson which the lawyer and every other Jew needed to learn was that no imperfect man could possibly fulfil that requirement. All so learning that "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10) would be prepared to look for the promised Messiah as, first of all, their sin-bearer, to justify them and to discipline them and make them perfect and able to obey the law.

Our Lord in the parable represents a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan, in order to give force to the matter. The priest was specially consecrated to God, the Levite also was consecrated (and most of the Doctors of the Law were Levites), while the Samaritans were outcasts, without God, and having no hope in the world, aliens and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel. The Samaritans, altho they lived in a part of the land of Israel, shared none of Israel's promises; but, as our Lord testified, "Ye worship ye know not what: we [Jews] know what we worship; for *salvation is of the Jews.*" The Samaritan, therefore, was introduced into the parable to make a strong contrast before the minds of the hearers, and to say, A neighbor is one who does a neighborly act, however high or however low he may be in the scale of intelligence or dignity or divine favor.

What our Lord wished to prove to the lawyer and to all hearers was, that the Law was just and holy and good, and that any Jew complying with its conditions would inherit its promise—eternal life. He wished all of his hearers to realize, therefore, that the fact that neither they nor their fathers inherited eternal life proved, not that the law was imperfect, but that they were imperfect, sold under sin, and unable, therefore, to comply with the just demands of the law. It was difficult for the Jew to learn this great lesson; *viz.*, that he could not keep the perfect law of God, and hence that he needed a Savior, a Redeemer, who would keep the law for him, and thus justify him before God, and who would then grant him eternal life as a gift, as a favor—not of the law, but of grace.

In harmony with this, the Apostle assures us who trust in the sacrifice for sins which Jesus gave, and who have entered into New Covenant* relationship with God through him, that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us"—the true sense, meaning, purport of the Law being in our hearts, God accepts this as instead of absolute fulfilment of the letter of the law. The sacrifice of our Lord Jesus compensating for all our imperfections, for all differences between the actual demands of the law and our efforts to conform our lives thereunto, we, walking not after the flesh but after the spirit, are reckoned as no longer fleshly beings but new creatures.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Altho this parable of the good Samaritan was not given to illustrate by what good works the lawyer, or any other man, Jew or Gentile, might attain eternal life, but, on the contrary, was given merely to head off the argument of the lawyer, and to leave him without excuse, it nevertheless contains a rich lesson, which has brought a blessing to many. Not only has it made it clear to many of the Lord's dear children the course of conduct pleasing in the Father's sight, *viz.*, that of generosity, love, benevolence, etc., but it has also brought blessing to many who are not the Lord's children, in that they became recipients of mercies, favors and kindnesses in adversity which, otherwise, they might never have known.

The road leading from Jerusalem to Jericho has a steep downward grade through a rocky country, which abounds in caverns, the hiding places of highway robbers. It has always been a dangerous road, and on it the traveler is not entirely safe to this day, unless under some kind of a protective guard. This feature of the parable was, therefore, in strict accordance with the conditions of the time; so was the fact of the priest and the Levite passing, for Jericho was one of the appointed cities of the priests and Levites, and it is estimated that twelve thousand of them resided there then. These, with other priests and Levites from other parts, took their turns in the service at the Temple in Jerusalem, and, consequently, were frequently on this road.

Our Lord's parable seems to imply that the religion of the Jews, instead of bringing them nearer and nearer to the spirit of the Law, was really, by reason of the formalities and ceremonies and pride connected with it, tending to separate them further and further from the condition of heart which would be acceptable to God. The priest, most fully consecrated to the service of God in the Temple, is represented as having *least* interest in the brother in distress. He passed by on the other side (of the ravine), not counting the circumstance worthy of attention; reflecting, no doubt, with a self-righteous feeling respecting the honor of his own position as a servant of God, and unwilling to run the risk of ritual contamination. The Levite, also consecrated to God and his service, but not so high in office and privilege, was more disposed to consider the poor brother, and to render a helping hand. He went so far as to stand and look at the sufferer, and to think over how much trouble would be involved in assisting him, and how much risk he himself might run in so doing (altho we are inclined to believe that the priests and Levites were, on account of their office, generally exempted from molestation by the robbers.)

EFFECTS OF TRUTH ON HONEST HEARTS

Then our Lord chose, as hero of his parable, a despised Samaritan, unrecognized by God and disowned by his favored people. This heightens the force of the picture, by suggesting the thought that one who had never learned at all respecting the true God and his will, one who had never been offered eternal life on the terms of obedience to that law, might nevertheless exercise so much of brothely kindness and sympathy as to lend a helping hand to a neighbor in distress.

And it is still true that many who, by reason of their better knowledge of God, through his Word and plan, should be possessed of a larger measure of his love and grace, are instead more deficient in these qualities than some who have been less highly favored. It might indeed be that some who are strangers to the covenants and promises of God as yet, possess, by reason of being well born, a large measure of natural generosity, benevolence, kindness, sympathy, and might be good Samaritans by nature, rather than by grace; and it may also be true that some who have been begotten again to the new life and to the new hopes may *naturally* have less of this good Samaritan element of kindness and generosity, because low born according to the flesh—born with a predominance of selfish proclivities. However, such an one, coming under "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," will soon be taught in Christ's school, that love is the fulfilling of the law; and if he be an obedient pupil he will gradually attain to a better appreciation of the heavenly Father, and in heart, in spirit, will learn to love him with all his mind, with all his being, with all his strength. And so surely as this condition obtains, and in proportion as the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, it will enlarge them also toward our fellow-creatures, so that every "new creature" must at heart come into such a degree of fullness of love toward God and toward his fellows as would make him not only an obedient and self-sacrificing son of God, but also a good Samaritan, a kind friend, a loving father and husband, a generous neighbor to all with whom he stands related. He will be a living exemplification of the Apostle's injunction,—doing good unto all men as he has opportunity, especially to the household of faith.—Gal. 6:10.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

Beautiful hands are they that do
The work of the noble, good and true,
Busy for them the long day through;
Beautiful faces are they that wear
The light of a pleasing spirit there,
It matters little if dark or fair;
And truly beautiful in God's sight,
Are the precious souls who love the right.

"BEWARE OF COVETOUSNESS"

LUKE 12:13-23.—SEPT. 16.

"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"—Mark 8:36.

While Jesus was preaching on spiritual themes he was interrupted by one of the audience, whose heart was filled with anxiety respecting temporal matters, esteeming that he was being wrongly dealt with by his brother in the division of the parental estate; and perhaps finding that through some technicality he could not obtain what he considered to be his just rights under Jewish laws, he appealed to the great Teacher to use his influence on his behalf—to speak to his brother—to tell his brother that he *ought* to deal generously, and perhaps to threaten him if he failed so to do.

How many there are who see just this much and no more in the teachings of Christ—a channel through which to serve their own interests; a means of securing justice to themselves. How many are ready to quote our Lord's precepts when it suits their convenience so to do, but who otherwise and at other times manifest little interest in them, and in the principles of righteousness which they inculcate! Persons in this attitude of heart are rarely able to grasp or enjoy the spiritual truths which our Lord enunciated, just as the young man in the lesson was failing utterly to profit by our Lord's spiritual teaching, because his entire thought was preoccupied with his own personal, selfish plans and schemes and views—however just they might have been.

Our Lord flatly refused to interfere in the manner suggested, saying, "Who made me a judge or an arbiter over you?" Thus he illustrated the general teaching of the Scriptures. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's" and again, "If any man sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, refuse not even if he take similarly thy cloak also"—do not ask or expect anything beyond what is granted by the civil laws of the land in which you live. "Be subject to the powers that be; for the powers that be are ordained [permitted] of God." Our Lord's kingdom, long promised, and which eventually shall be "the desire of all nations," had not then come, and still has not been set up. We still pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." The Lord's people are to recognize this fact, and not to expect absolute righteousness and justice until present conditions cease, with the close of this dispensation,—of which the Scriptures tell us Satan is the prince or ruler. Instead of expecting justice in full measure now, the Lord's people should rather be surprised that there is so large a measure of justice obtainable in many parts of the world.

As our Lord was not willing to impose himself as a judge or an arbitrator in his day, so his followers now should not seek to interfere in secular affairs. The case would have been different had the two brothers come together to our Lord, and, indicating that they wished to do right, had requested his judgment of what would be the right course. In that event undoubtedly our Lord would have favored them with his view of the question and the reasons for it.

It would be an excellent thing for all of the Lord's footstep-followers to learn well this lesson of non-interference in secular matters—the lesson, that those who speak as the oracles of God should speak respecting spiritual matters, to the spiritual class and not to the worldly—to them that have ears to hear, and not to the blind and deaf. This, of course, would not mean that the Lord's people should not give any advice, but merely that they should not give advice nor otherwise interfere outside the laws, customs and usages of the country in which they reside. The young man in the narrative undoubtedly had appealed to his brother and to the Jewish authorities for the relief which he thought he ought to have; and similarly it is proper for a Christian to appeal to the person immediately interested for what he considers to be just rights in the matter in dispute. He may appeal also to the laws of the land in which he resides; but if he fails in this he should content himself with his condition and wait patiently for the Lord's kingdom and its righteous retribution.

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This principle, put into practice by Christian missionaries in China, would, we believe, have led to very different conditions than those which now obtain there. But our Lord's example and various injunctions along this line have been very generally ignored, and, to the contrary, it has been the custom of missionaries, who have gone to China and other lands, to ignore the laws of those lands and "the powers that be" there, which God's ordinance has permitted. They have attempted to settle all kinds of disputes; interfering in a manner which the Master, in this lesson, disapproved of. Not only so, but they have sought and invoked, publicly and privately, the interference of various so-called Christian governments of the world on their behalf, and in violation of the laws of "the powers that be" in those countries. It is as a result of this wrong line of conduct that the good of Christianity, its moral and civilizing influences, are specially hated and feared,—as political interferences, aimed at the destruction of the laws and institutions which to those people appear to be wise and good; and which undoubtedly are adapted to the present intellectual and moral conditions of the masses of their people.

We cannot too strongly condemn, as contrary to the Master's teachings, modern methods of missionary effort—backed by cannon, warships and soldiers. It seems to us wholly contrary to the method employed by our Lord and the apostles, and advocated by them. It is much more in harmony with the methods adopted during the dark ages by Papacy and by Mohammedanism. Early Protestant missions seem to us to have been along much more reasonable and proper lines. The missionary, in giving himself to that work, understood and agreed that, figuratively speaking, he took his life in his hands; he had already sacrificed his life before starting. Neither he nor those who sent him forth thought of appealing to the government to avenge his death, either with many lives for the one life, or with large sums of money, nor with large concessions of land, or with large privileges of commerce. He went as a representative of the meek and lowly Jesus, as a "living sacrifice," as the apostles in early times went forth, without backing, ecclesiastical or civil. Like the apostles, they were privileged to appeal to all the laws and moral instincts of the people in whose midst they were living, and for whose good they were laying down their lives; but more than this they did not do, and were not authorized to do by anything in the Scriptures.

It is the present wrong system of compassing sea and land to make proselytes, with battleships, cannon and soldiers, that is responsible for the loss of thousands of lives and awful misery. Were the missionary question today left upon the same footing that it occupied in the days of the apostles, and again at the beginning of this century, it would probably be less pretentious in appearance, but in reality probably would have found just as many of the "elect" as the present method; and would have left undisturbed questions that already have caused much trouble, and which in the near future will cause more. It would have left millions of the poor heathen in a much more contented frame of mind than at present—would have left them much more susceptible to the influences of the true Gospel, when, by and by, the great missionary work which God has planned will begin in earnest, under the administration of the kingdom of heaven, with Christ and his elect church, the kings and priests, to rule and bless with infinite power and wisdom and love.

* * *

But while refusing to interfere with the matter, the Lord made use of the intrusion to point a lesson on the subject of covetousness—a lesson which would be of benefit to both of the brothers, if they were present, and a lesson, indeed, which could not fail to be of profit to all of his hearers. The exhortation to take heed of covetousness would apply to the one who had sought our Lord's interference. Possibly he had been asking something outside of his rights and outside of his father's will and intent—coveting what his father had really intended should go to his brother. Or, if he were asking only what was reasonably his due, our Lord's words would be a consolation to him, as showing that whether or not he got all of his rights in the present life would be a comparatively unimportant matter—unimportant as compared to his having such experiences as would be favorable to his eternal life, and rightly using those experiences. Our Lord's words would also be a lesson to the other brother, if he were seeking to defraud and to take unjustly what belonged to his brother—or even if he were covetously ungenerous in construing his brother's rights. Indeed, every one who will carefully consider the meaning of our Lord's parable in illustration of this subject of covetousness will draw from it a valuable, a profitable lesson.

THE RICH CHURL

In this parable it is not stated that the rich man had obtained his wealth by any unlawful means. He is not charged with having defrauded his brother or his neighbor. The record merely is that he had temporal blessings in abundance, and that by natural increase he was wealthy; and the point of the lesson turns upon his question to himself, What shall I do with these possessions?

The right attitude of mind, "the spirit of a sound mind," would have answered this question somewhat after this manner: These bounties of divine providence are a trust, and I am a steward, a trustee; my position will permit me to be a source of great blessing to others of my fellow-creatures not so bountifully supplied; in fact, I have in my hand the power to make many fellow-creatures comfortable and happy; and in discharging this stewardship in this proper manner I shall have much greater pleasure than if I endeavored selfishly to use all these bounties upon myself, or to store them up for my own use in the future.

Such an unselfish, generous course would not only have had divine approval, and thus have constituted "true riches" "laid up in heaven," but, additionally, it would have been the most direct road to happiness for the already favored individual himself. It is a true proverb, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty." So, many have found that hoarding of earthly wealth leads to poverty of heart, to a meanness of disposition, which is not enjoyed by the individual himself, and which is strongly reprobated by him with whom rests our eternal interests, our everlasting blessing and riches. On the contrary, he who uses, in harmony with his best judgment, the earthly wealth committed to his care, thereby purchases to himself a rich reward of approbation on the part of all with whom he has to do; and, through the Lord's gracious arrangement in Christ, this cultivation of the spirit of love becomes a most important factor in respect to his attainment of everlasting joy and blessing.

As illustrating the uncertainty of such selfish calculations, our Lord might have made the parable to close by showing the rich man as losing all of his possessions and being reduced to beggary through some misfortune, such as war or fire; or he might have shown him the victim of a loathsome disease, in which even his riches could not purchase attendance, so that thus he might suffer want in the midst of plenty. But he chose to close the parable by merely representing the rich man as dying suddenly—ceasing to have and to hold and greedily enjoy his selfish hoardings. "Soul, take thine ease," etc., is merely another way of saying—Self, take thine ease, eat drink, etc.

Our Lord, to enforce the lesson, then raises the question, Whose, then, shall these things be? They could no longer be enjoyed by the accumulator, whoever might get them; he would be poor indeed, whoever might enjoy them; for these were all that he had; he had given up thought and effort and every talent to money-making and to attempted selfish enjoyments, and had not been rich toward God,—had not been rich in good works—had not laid up treasure in heaven. His life had been a failure; he would enter the next life a pauper, as respects mental and moral development in good qualities. He would enter it with a load of selfishness, with which to some extent he had been born, but to which he had added greatly by a life of selfishness. And his load of selfishness will, in that future life, for a time handicap his efforts toward true nobility, should he then make efforts toward perfection under the gracious terms of the Millennial kingdom.

Tho our Lord in the parable represents the covetous person as succeeding in accumulating riches, yet, as a matter of fact, the majority of covetous people never so succeed; and their selfishness is not less reprehensible from the fact that it fails of success. The thought rather is that if a covetous person who succeeds makes a miserable failure of life, how much worse would be the failure of the covetous person who gains nothing, either in the present life or in that which is to come!

Our Lord, turning to his disciples at this juncture, gave a special lesson applicable to them only, and not to the multitude. Literally translated this message is: Be not *anxious* as respects your earthly life, its food and its clothing. Think rather of the life which is to come; remember that this present condition is, from the divine standpoint, a death condition. Consider that in you who believe, the new, the eternal life, has already begun, and that if you will faithfully continue under present conditions in living for this new life, and not after the flesh, it will be perfected in the First Resurrection. Think more of your bodies than of the raiment which covers them; think more of your life than of the natural food by which it is at present sustained. God is able and willing to give perfect life and perfect bodies and perfect conditions to those who believe in me, who walk in my footsteps and meet my approval. The reason why you need not take *anxious* thought for these temporal things, for which the world takes anxious thought (and necessarily so), is this: you have come into harmony with God, and have been adopted into his family; believing in me, you have been granted "liberty to become *sons of God*." (John 1:12) As sons of God, with the new life begun in you, you are to realize that everything of the present life is quite unworthy to be compared with the future and eternal interests. You are to remember that, having consecrated yourselves to the Father's will in becoming my disciples, you have given up every interest and matter to his superior wisdom. Be content, therefore; be without anxiety, knowing that so long as you abide in me, and so long as you are walking in my footsteps, your Heavenly Father knoweth what things you have need of, even before you ask him, and is both able and willing to give what is best.

Therefore, if in divine providence you receive poverty as your unavoidable portion, accept it as best for you, according to divine wisdom; remembering that it is our Redeemer who is guarding our future and eternal interest, and permitting such experiences in this present life as will be most beneficial to us, and as will lead most directly to eternal riches and favors, and that in greatest measure.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE CHICAGO LOVE FEAST

A love feast from beginning to end! This was the public expression of many, and apparently the sentiment of all in attendance. Our Lord surely poured us out a grand spiritual blessing and refreshment. Surely if any went away empty it was in part or in whole his own fault. None of our conventions ever exhibited more love for the Lord and his truth and his brethren. Indeed each succeeding one seems just a little better than its predecessors, however grand they were. And may we not expect this, as we approach nearer and nearer in our journey toward "The general assembly and church of the first-borns?" It would be but reasonable that the ripening of the hearts of a larger number should be more and more manifest in the exhibited fruits of the spirit.

The Chicago Convention was announced as a—

CONVENTION OF BELIEVERS IN THE ATONEMENT
Through "the Precious Blood of Christ"—"A Ransom for All," and in His Millennial Kingdom

It lasted for three days, continuously—except for intermissions for food and rest—and was followed by a colporteurs' session in the interest of those already in that service, or about to enter it.

The attendance was the best we have ever had;—three important items contributing: (1) Chicago's large population and the goodly number already interested in the truth there. (2) The city's central location. (3) The unusually low rates of railroad fare granted from every direction and over all roads. The number in attendance was estimated at between 500 and 600, and of these about 300 were from outside Chicago.

We had a grand time! The Lord be praised! May the blessing so abundantly poured out not only be lasting in its effect upon those who received it, but may it overflow from them upon the brethren at their various homes, and thus become wide-spread. We know well that we had the loving thoughts and earnest prayers of many thousands not privileged to meet with us. Eighty-two symbolized their consecration to death by water baptism (46 brothers, 36 sisters) It was a grand sight, such as is seldom witnessed on earth. We may be sure that our Lord, the great Chief Reaper, and the saints who have already joined him "beyond the vail," and also our guardian angels who continually minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation, looked upon that scene with deep interest, as did some three hundred brethren in the flesh who were witnesses.

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIANS TROUBLED

The split between Northern and Southern Presbyterians during the Civil war made of them practically two distinct bodies or denominations. The troubles and suggestions respecting the Confession of Faith have all been amongst the Northern brethren, until lately. However, at the last "General Assembly of the Presbyterian church (South)" a petition was received from the Presbytery of Brazos, Texas, requesting that the Assembly "modify the statements of the Confession regarding the eternal damnation of non-elect infants."

The resolution was strangled in committee which reported *adversely to any discussion of the Confession* fearing no doubt that the question once opened never would close. The representatives of the Brazos Presbytery asked an amendment to the Confession reading thus:—"All dying in infancy are elect infants, and are regenerated," etc., Chapter 10, paragraph 3.

Note now the shrewd but dishonest treatment of that petition (formulated by the committee and adopted by the Assembly) in these words,—"We recommend that the prayer of the overture be declined, inasmuch as the present language of the Confession cannot, by any fair interpretation, be construed as teaching that any of those who die in infancy are lost."

Let us read over this paragraph 3, Chapter 10, of the Confession and see whether or not the Brazos brethren and humanity in general have mis-read it. Here it is: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth. So also are all other *elect* persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word."

If the General Assembly were sincere in averring that in their judgment these words do not teach that there are non-elect infants who dying in infancy are lost, then it follows that these brethren have totally repudiated the doctrine of election taught in other paragraphs of their Confession of Faith. For if *all* infants are elect, or if the election does not take place until after the period of infancy, then they must deny all that Calvinism stands for in the way of *Predestination* and *Foreordination.* Otherwise they would be forced to the position that *only elect persons* die in infancy and hence must assume that God specially intervenes to *prevent* the non-elect from dying in infancy, specially supervising the deaths of the millions of infants dying annually from infanticide, lack of care, etc.

But to think of the General Assembly taking any of the above positions would be altogether unreasonable, and hence we are unwillingly forced to think of their resolution as lacking in honesty, lacking in truthfulness, which they no doubt excused on the Jesuitical plea that—It is right to do wrong if thereby you can serve God and the church. However, *the* church is not served by this false statement, even if a sect is thereby held together a little longer. The true church "whose names are written in heaven," and which will eventually include all the truly "elect" "little flock," is never benefited or served by error or falsehood; but, as our Lord declared, only by the truth—"Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth." Nor is God served or honored by such false representations of his Word and plan.

Furthermore, the specifications of *"elect* infants" implies that the framers of this Confession had in mind *non-elect* infants who die in infancy, whose fate they left to be implied by the intelligent reader, who, if he accepted this Westminster Confession as a whole, would believe in elect and non-elect adults, and coupling this with the specifications of the same Confession on *predestination* would conclude that every *non-elect adult* must at one time have been a *non-elect infant*, who dying in infancy would have died non-elect and unregenerated and unsaved by Christ through the spirit who worked not upon them at any time nor anywhere nor anyhow, because he pleased not so to do, they being non-elect.

One would suppose that our dear Presbyterian friends, finding themselves in such inextricable confusion on this doctrine of election, and yet finding much on the subject in the Bible, would be ready, yes anxiously and hungrily waiting for the reasonable Bible-solution of the subject presented in *Millennial Dawn.* Yet comparatively few of them seem to be so. The only reasonable explanation is that the majority are not sufficiently honest with themselves and with each other, and with God and his Word. They do not sufficiently love the truth—error is preferred. They do not hunger and thirst after right. Hence also the comparatively few who are "sanctified through the truth"—the large number failing to make their calling and election sure, because unsanctified by reason of their false doctrines.

THE "BIBLE HOUSE," ALLEGHENY

Friends of the cause naturally feel a deep interest in everything connected in any manner with the harvest work. We have frequently been urged to publish the Editor's picture either in the DAWNS or in these columns; but have as persistently refused. It is the truth rather than its servant that should be honored and proclaimed. There is too much disposition to credit truth to the preacher, forgetful that all truth is of God, who uses one or another servant in its proclamation as it may please him.

However, when requested to publish a photo of our workshop, the "Bible House," we could think of no reasonable objection, and hence it is being reproduced in this issue. The third floor is the chapel in which Sunday and other services are held. On the top floor, centre, is the Editor's study; his usual seat being near the window at the head of the spiral fire escape.

GATHER ALL THY CHILDREN HOME

Heavenly Father, Holy One!
May thy will in me be done;
Make my heart submissive, meek,
Let me ne'er mine own way seek!
Loving Savior, I would be
Ever more and more like thee,
Free from pride and self-desire,
Fervent with a holy fire.

Blessed Lord, thy saints defend,
Watching o'er them to the end;
Day by day their faith increase
Keep them in thy perfect peace,
Comfort, strengthen, guide and bless,
Lead them through the wilderness;
And when thy due time shall come,
Gather all thy children home! —G. W. S.

"DO YE EVEN SO TO THEM"

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."—Matt. 7:12.

Whatever the tests we apply, Jesus and his teachings are seen to tower above all others. For instance, we are frequently told that the Golden Rule is found in the writings of Confucius as well as in the New Testament, and that this is a proof that Confucius was a teacher equal in rank with Jesus, and equally sent of God. And no doubt many of those who give this report do so in all honesty; for the fact is that many Christians have never seen the depth and scope of the Golden Rule given by Jesus, and misunderstand it to be the same as the maxim by Confucius, which much resembles it. There is a wide distinction, however, and in comparison the words of Confucius might be termed a brazen rule. His maxim is, "Do not do to others what you would not wish them to do to you." We repeat that this is as much as the majority of Christians have ever seen in the Golden Rule given by our Lord.

We would be glad to see the maxim of Confucius received and acted upon throughout the whole world by every creature, and undoubtedly the result would be a great blessing to mankind—a great improvement over present conditions, in which almost everybody except the saints who seek to walk in the footsteps of the Lord are continually doing every day the very things which they would not wish their neighbors to do to them. But even tho so great a reformation could be brought about, it would still leave much to be desired; it would still leave the world far from the condition suggested by our Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." For men might, through policy or for other reasons, deal justly with each other, refraining from the doing of such things as they would not wish done to them, and with all that their hearts might be very full of selfishness, meanness, covetousness, etc., and very far from the condition of love.

But when we note the comprehensiveness of our Lord's Golden Rule, we find it is absolutely a love-rule; and that it leaves nothing to be desired: nothing could possibly be added to it; it is complete. It is not merely a negative law: "Thou shalt not" do an injury; it is a positive law: "Thou shalt" do good. Thou shalt do thy neighbor all the good, all the kindness, all the service, that thou wouldst have him do to thee. This law, which the Apostle calls "the law of liberty," the perfect law, this Golden Rule for life, has no parallel anywhere, in any writings, and could not possibly have a superior, —a grander sentiment could not possibly be expressed. But how few there are who rightly appreciate and love this rule, and use it daily in the measurement of their own conduct! As already noted, the majority, even of the best people in the world, the vast majority of Christians, fail to discern its lengths and its breadths, and consider it merely an injunction not to do injury to others. How few, then, joyfully and appreciatively grasp its sentiments, and seek from the heart to conform their lives thereto—none but the saints, none but the "elect," we may be sure, are thus in heart-harmony with the essence and spirit of their Heavenly Father's law of love.

There might be danger of some of the Lord's people using this rule amiss and to their injury, by being overgenerous toward others and not sufficiently careful of themselves; but such instances are very rare, because in our entire race the general result of the fall has been to crowd out love and benevolence, and to fill us with selfishness. So much is this the case that it has become a worldly proverb that "Self-preservation is the first rule of life;" that self is always to be number one, and to be cared for well and thoroughly before others are to be even considered.

Even after we have been begotten of the holy spirit, as new creatures, after the transforming of our minds has begun, we all know from experience that the selfishness of the old nature is so deep-grained that it is likely to hold its own with us to the very end of life. We have, however, known of some who, in their desire to conform themselves fully to the Lord's will, have taken an extreme view of this Golden Rule, and have understood it as tho it said, "Thou shalt do to thy neighbor *as he shall wish thee* to do to him"—not noticing that this would be a very different rule, and one which might operate very unfavorably in every way. While few are in danger of making a mistake in this direction, many are inclined to reason on the matter from this standpoint, and to say: We could not possibly carry out this Golden Rule in the ordinary affairs of life, because, for instance, if I were to do to my neighbor as I should wish him to do to me, I should sell him a five-dollar pair of shoes for one dollar; or a twenty-dollar suit of clothes for five dollars; or what he might want of wheat or oats at half the usual price. And if I adopted such a rule with one, I should properly adopt it with all, and this would soon mean bankruptcy in my business; so, evidently, the Golden Rule cannot be used in human affairs at the present time.

But we answer that this is a mistaken view of the Golden Rule, and whoever examines it should see that the difficulty probably lies in the selfishness of his own heart. He thinks his neighbor might expect goods at less than cost, because he thinks that he himself would be *willing to receive* goods at less than cost from his neighbor. The application of the Golden Rule should show him his difficulty; should teach him the lesson that when he goes to his neighbor to buy shoes he must do to his neighbor as he would that his neighbor should do to him: he must pay his neighbor a reasonable price for his shoes; a reasonable, living profit. And likewise in every other transaction: the Golden Rule teaches us that we should be willing to pay the farmer for his produce, and the manufacturer for his, as we would think just if we were the manufacturer and making the sale. Likewise, if we were making the sale, we should not think of charging our customers a larger profit than we would think reasonable if they were the sellers and we the customers. Whoever of the Lord's people, therefore, gets thoroughly into the way of using this Golden Rule in all of life's affairs will certainly find that it will elevate their conceptions of justice, righteousness, equity; and these godlike qualities will become more and more developed in them, as parts of their characters, until they will obey them not merely because of their harmony with the Master's Golden Rule, but because they will recognize their true beauty and grandeur, and because their hearts will be in harmony with them.

But this rule, while thus inculcating justice, goes beyond this and inculcates benevolence;—such benevolence and so much of it as we, with properly balanced minds would be disposed to ask of others if we were the ones in need, in straits. O how grandly rounded out in spiritual character would all of the Lord's true saints become, under the influence of this Golden Rule! It would not only affect the actions of life, making them first just toward all with whom they had dealings, then, benevolently disposed toward all needing their assistance to whatever degree they were able to render assistance without doing injury to others,—and, additionally, the same law in force would extend also to their every word. Under the regulations of this golden measurement how few bitter or angry or slanderous words would be used—for how few would like to have others use such to or of them — to speak to them in anger and with bitterness and rancor, or to slander them. No wonder the Apostle tells us that those who have put on Christ must put off all these—anger, malice, hatred, strife, envy, slanders, etc. Additionally, this Golden Rule would lead to kind words, gentle actions, considerate demeanor; for who would not wish such from his neighbor? As the Apostle again declares, we are to put on as Christian graces,—gentleness, meekness, patience, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love.—Col. 3:8, 12-15.

This Golden Rule, beginning with the outward actions, and progressing to our words, would very quickly extend to our thoughts; and as we would not wish to have others think ungenerously or meanly of us, nor put a bad construction on our every act of life, but would rather that they would view our words and deeds generously and lovingly, so we in turn would find, that under the influence of this Golden Rule, our thoughts of others would become more generous, more noble, less suspicious, etc.

This Golden Rule is assuredly the divine law which our dear Redeemer expressed in other words at another time, saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." We may safely consider, therefore, that the one rule interprets the other, and that to love our neighbor as ourselves signifies that we should love him and do for him as we ourselves would wish him to love us and to do for us. And we could not understand it to mean more than this. God expects of us that we will make reasonable provision for ourselves and for those for whom, by legal or natural ties, we are responsible—our families, our relatives, as the Apostle says: "He that provideth not for his own, and especially they of his own house, hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."—1 Tim. 5-8.

Evidently, therefore, our own households are our first charge and responsibility, and must have reasonable attention before we could hope to do for our neighbors. This would indeed be putting a difference between our neighbor and ourselves, and between our neighbor's family and our own family, but the matter is well adjusted by the Golden Rule, rightly interpreted, which requires of us that we shall do for our neighbor, in his want and extremity, as we would have him do for us, were we in his circumstances and he in ours. And our minds being leveled up to a plane of justice, we should expect that if we were in distress our neighbor would first make reasonable provision for his own family, and not give to us to the injury or deprivation of those more immediately and more closely dependent upon him.

IS THE GOLDEN RULE INCUMBENT?

But some one may inquire: Is it *necessary* for us as Christians to attempt to carry out this Golden Rule in our daily lives? When we see that very few even of Christian people appreciate the rule, or to any extent seek to carry it out, may we not consider that it is a very good rule, but that its observance is not made incumbent upon us, and that our attainment of eternal life and heavenly glory are not linked with the observance of this Golden Rule? May we not consider it rather as a good standard to have in mind as the perfect law, but consider that we are not to live up to that standard in any sense of the word?

We answer that this Golden Rule was the one by which our dear Redeemer's every action was measured, the one according to which he lived, and under which he laid down his life on our behalf, and it is essential to and incumbent upon all those who would be his disciples, his followers. All who hope to become his joint-heirs in the kingdom are required to walk in his footsteps as he set us an example (1 Pet. 2:21), or, as another Apostle declares, God has fore-ordained to have an elect church to be joint-heirs in the kingdom with Christ, but he has equally fore-ordained that none shall ultimately be acceptable as members of that glorified church except such as shall, in the present life, become copies of God's dear Son, our Lord Jesus: and to copy him means to copy the Golden Rule, which was exemplified in him and in his course. It follows, therefore, that whoever expects to share the kingdom must give diligence to the formation of character, and that this Golden Rule is necessary in such formation of character—to develop in us not the principles of equity, or justice only, but also the spirit of love, of unselfishly doing good to others.—Rom. 8:29.

DIVINE STRENGTH PERFECTED IN HUMAN WEAKNESS

But here again comes in the question, How can those who by nature are fallen and imperfect, and full of inherited selfishness and meanness, ever hope to keep this Golden Rule, which is the full measure of a perfect man's obedience, and which, with all his well-doing and sacrificing, was not more than fulfilled by our Lord Jesus himself? How could we hope to be approved as keepers of this Golden Rule, in the sight of him who can read, not only the outward conduct, but also the thoughts and intents of our hearts?

We answer that here comes to our relief the gracious arrangement which God has provided for this Gospel age, *viz.*, justification by faith. Our justification not only covers "the sins that are past" (Rom. 3:25), and makes us acceptable to God in Christ, so that we can offer ourselves as living sacrifices upon his altar, but, more than this, it stands with us all the way down the journey of life, and according to God's grace in Christ it compensates for, or makes up for us all of our unintentional deficiencies, so that, as the Apostle says, "The righteousness of the Law [expressed in the Golden Rule] is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."—Rom. 8:4.

Since we are not all alike fallen, not all alike selfish, it follows that some walk much nearer to the spirit of the divine Law, attain much closer to the measurement required by the Golden Rule, than can others; yet no fallen creature can walk fully up to the requirements of the Golden Rule, so long as handicapped by the various weaknesses of the flesh; and here the grace of God in Christ makes up our deficiencies; those who are able to follow the pattern most closely are still far from following it absolutely, and consequently need to have the merit of the precious blood of Christ imputed to them to make up for their shortcomings; and those who are still more fallen, and who, with their very best efforts, are still further from measuring up to the grand standard of the Golden Rule, need that much more of God's grace to compensate for their deficiencies. Hence the Apostle declares that where sin and imperfection abound the most, there God's grace correspondingly abounds the more; so that those who are in Christ and seek to walk in his footsteps, who are in their hearts measuring themselves with the Golden Rule, and seeking to the best of their *ability* to live up to its requirements, may be succeeding variously in their endeavors, from the worldly standpoint; but from the divine standpoint all such are reckoned as having their blemishes fully covered with the merit of our dear Redeemer's sacrifice, and that therefore the righteousness of the Law, its true meaning, its spirit, and the true measure of the Golden Rule, is reckoned as *fulfilled* in them to divine acceptance,—perfectly.

But it is not merely to have this Golden Rule thus reckonedly fulfilled in us for a day or for a week or for a month that counts us "overcomers," but that we shall faithfully continue to walk as closely in the Lord's footsteps as we may be able, faithfully continuing to use his Golden Rule to the best of our ability; and that we shall do this day by day and year by year with continued and increasing zeal, until our Master, watching the process of development of character, shall say, It is enough; the character is fixed; the love for righteousness is permanent and thoroughly developed; the spirit of love is indelibly marked, and altho there still remain in the flesh traces of selfishness, yet they are dim and faint in comparison with the original mark, and give good evidence of victory gained, not in the flesh, but in the heart, in the will.

"They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—Mal. 3:17.

ANOTHER SERIOUS ERROR MADE BY SOME IN APPLYING THE GOLDEN RULE TO LIFE

Undoubtedly the Golden Rule has, to a considerable extent, exercised an *influence* over even worldly people (nominal Christians), where such have come more in contact with the true saints who endeavor with more or less zeal to recognize and to use the Golden Rule in the measurement of their daily conduct, without their being keepers of it is a rule, or even professing so to do. And even amongst Christians who have given themselves to the Lord, and who fully desire that his will in every particular shall be done in them, and who recognize this Golden Rule as a grand expression of the divine will, we believe there are serious misapprehensions respecting the proper manner of its use. For instance, among the noblest of the Lord's people are some who say, We will turn our backs on society and worldly enjoyments, and devote what time we have at our disposal to the improvement of the fallen—to moral reforms, social reforms, financial reforms, the reforming of drunkards, etc. And still others, imbued with the same spirit, and with the same desire to fulfil this Golden Rule, say, We will leave home and friends, and go into far-off lands as missionaries, to preach Christ to the heathen.

We are bound to appreciate such noble sentiments, whether we can agree with the conclusions as to methods of work, etc., or not. We love the noble principle which, if not in every instance, at least in many cases, lies at the foundation of such sacrifices of time, influence, convenience, etc.: it is an outworking of the Golden Rule in these dear friends, saying to themselves and to others, If we were in the slums or in heathen degradation, we should wish that some of God's children would come to us, to lift us up and enlighten us, and hence we should do so to others, even as we would, if our conditions were altered, that they should do to us.

This is sound reasoning and a proper application of the Golden Rule, and yet also, we believe, a mistaken or wrong one. One of the first lessons that the Christian is called upon to learn in the School of Christ is, that his judgment is defective; that not only our physical powers have degenerated through the fall, but that likewise our mental powers have suffered; so that the whole world today is not only unsound of body, but also unsound of mind, unsound of judgment. The primary lessons of God's children in the School of Christ are to the effect that we all lack wisdom, and that for this very reason he has provided his Book, the Bible,—"that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished."—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

We are taught in the Book that the work of salvation is one too great for humanity itself, and that therefore God has undertaken the work; we are taught that he has not left the matter to operate itself at random, neither has he left it to our imperfect judgments and puny efforts: we are taught that the great Savior of the world planned his work "from the foundation of the world," and yet that it was four thousand years and more before he took the first great step for its accomplishment, namely, the giving of his Son to be the redemption price of Adam and his race (1 Pet. 1:20); we are taught that having begun this work of salvation God has not abandoned it, and does not intend to abandon it, but that eventually "he shall bring forth judgment [trial] unto victory;"—and that eventually our Lord Jesus shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul on man's behalf, and shall be satisfied;—that eventually the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and all shall know him from the least to the greatest; that eventually he shall bring in everlasting righteousness, so that the time shall ultimately come when all the families of the earth shall be blessed with the knowledge of God's goodness and grace, and with an opportunity to benefit thereby; that eventually whosoever will not obey the great Prophet-King shall be cut off from amongst the people in the second death; that, eventually there shall be no more dying, no more sighing, no more crying, no more pain there, because the former things of Adamic sin and its penalty and blight shall have been done away.—Isa. 14:24, 27; 55:11; Matt. 12:20; Isa. 53:11; 11:9; Jer. 31:34; Acts 3:19-23; Rev. 21:3, 4.

But many of God's dear people overlook these gracious provisions and promises of his Word, and partaking to a considerable extent of the spirit of love they forget that God's love is still greater than their own, even as God's wisdom is greater than theirs; hence they lose sight of the fact that the entire plan of salvation is of God, and that he has not abandoned it to others, but will carry it out himself in his own due time. It is because they forget this that they become burdened with the weight of responsibility, and feel as tho the salvation of the world rested upon themselves—and, impressed with this feeling of self-importance and forgetfulness of God's Word, they go into the mission work, slum work, and to the heathen. They forget, and are greatly disadvantaged by so doing, that God has already declared, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my plans higher than your plans, and my ways higher than your ways."—Isa. 55:8, 9.

As a consequence of this oversight and misdirection of effort, these dear friends are doing works now which God intends shall be done in a future age, and which can and will be done then to very much better advantage every way. God has appointed the Millennial age for this work of lifting up the weak, opening the blind eyes of the barbarians, and unstopping their dull ears to hear the message of divine grace. God has appointed that when his time for this great work, in which he is more interested than any of his creatures possibly could be, will come, the conditions will be favorable to the success of his plan, which he guarantees us will succeed, and will bring blessings to all the families of the earth, and will enlighten every man born into the world.—Gal. 3:16, 29; John 1:9; Acts 3:19-21.

God's Word informs those who seek his counsel, that at that time Satan shall be bound so that he may deceive the nations no more, as he is now doing (Rev. 20:1-3): that during that period of Satan's restraint those whom he now blinds (2 Cor. 4:4) with various doctrines, sophistries, superstitions, etc., will be freed from these, and have the eyes and ears of their understanding opened. It informs us also, that at that time he will establish as the King over all the earth his honored agent, who gave his life as a ransom for mankind; and that our Lord Jesus will establish the kingdom of God amongst men, a kingdom not merely in name, but also in power and in fact; one which shall rule the world, forcibly putting down sin, oppression, ignorance, superstition, darkness; and raising up righteousness, truth, and every good principle and influence for the blessing and uplifting of those whom he purchased with his precious blood. It informs us that under his beneficent reign all evil shall be subdued, that even death shall be conquered; and that all mankind, freed from the Adamic sentence of death, may, if they will, then attain unto eternal life and full human perfection, and that only the wilful sinners against light and opportunity will be utterly destroyed in the second death.—1 Cor. 15:24-28; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9; Acts 3:23.

The same Word instructs us that the Lord's plan for the present age does not purpose the conversion of the world; nor its salvation in any sense of the word; nor its uplifting; but that his plan, on the contrary, is simply the development of the church, the foreordained and predestinated number, a "little flock," who must all be selected from amongst men, and every one of them be copies of God's dear Son. (Rom. 8:29) It also informs us that this work of God in this age is the work in which we are invited to be co-workers together with God. It points out to us that this is the work of the bride—to make *herself* ready for the marriage (Rev. 19:7); that the special work in this present time consists not only in the "*calling*" of the church, but also in the building up of one another, among the called ones, in the most holy faith;—helping one another to perfect holiness in the reverence of the Lord,—showing us that a large part of our work is in our own hearts, cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, helping one another to make our calling and our election sure, by perfecting in our hearts the Golden Rule.—2 Cor. 7:1; Jude 20.

But overlooking the particular service marked out for those who would be co-workers with God in this age, our dear friends, now criticised, misuse their Golden Rule, by applying it outside of the class for which the Lord intended it in this age. It will be applicable to all the heathen world and the sub-stratum of society in the Millennial age, but now it is applicable chiefly to the household of faith. True, if we could accomplish all that the Lord would have us accomplish for the household of faith, it would then be very proper for us to extend our efforts to the heathen and lower strata of society, rather than to sit down in idleness; but so far from finding that we have not enough to engage our time in the household of faith, we find that we are in the harvest-time of the age, and that the harvest is great and the laborers are few, and that there is much more than enough to engage all our time and energies among the "brethren" whom the Lord our God has called. Hence the Golden Rule calls us to be exercised chiefly amongst these, and not amongst those whom the Lord our God has not yet called, but who are left, in the divine plan, for a calling and blessing of another kind in the next age—the Millennial age.

Looking back we see that our dear Master, who gave the Golden Rule, observed it in the manner we are now advocating. Living in the end of the Jewish age, and knowing that the divine favors and blessings at that time were confined to fleshly Israel, our Lord, with a full appreciation of the Golden Rule, nevertheless used it in strict harmony with the Father's plan; and accordingly instructed his twelve apostles also, saying, "Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; for I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:56; 15:24, 26) Likewise the apostles understood that while, at the death of Christ, the middle wall of partition, which had heretofore separated divine favor from other nations, was now broken down, so that, so far as God was concerned, the Gospel message was open to every creature,—nevertheless, that every creature had not open ears for the Gospel, and that according to the Lord's plan he would not open their ears until his due time, the Millennial age, and hence it was that the apostles sought for the class to whom the present message, the high calling for the church, was intended,—"He that hath an ear, let him hear."

Pursuing this policy of searching for those who had ears to hear, the Apostle Paul, sent by the Lord to be the great messenger of grace to the Gentiles, did not say within himself (as some of our dear missionary friends seem to say within themselves), I will seek out the most illiterate and degraded people in the world, that I may lift them up. Had this been the Apostle's sentiment he doubtless would have hastened, with his coadjutors, southward from Jerusalem into darkest Africa, or eastward from Jerusalem into India, with its hundreds of millions, and still further eastward into China, with its hundreds of millions, in utter ignorance of God and steeped in superstition. But the Apostle had made a better study of the divine plan, and knew that the times of restitution, the Millennial age, was set apart by God for this general uplift of mankind; and that it would be a waste of effort to undertake to do that work in advance of God's cooperation; in advance of his time and in advance of his arrangements, which his wisdom foresaw would be necessary to the accomplishment of that work.

The Apostle reasoned, on the contrary, "God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31), and that appointed day is a future day, the Millennial day; and if God has appointed that day to be the time for the world's judgment, it would be folly on my part to attempt to bring in a judgment of the world sooner than God intends it, even if I were able to do so. He reasoned, further, that if God has appointed a future day for judging the world in general, then the world in general is not on trial or under judgment in the present Gospel day, and hence might just as well be left in their heathen darkness a little longer, as God already had left them in heathen darkness for more than four thousand years,—and he reasoned wisely, logically. He was instructed of the Lord, and hence he had the spirit of a sound mind, and did not attempt to do an utterly impossible and hence a foolish thing. He did not attempt to be either wiser or more loving than the Heavenly Father, but trusting to the Heavenly Father's wisdom and love he sought to know the will of God now, in this present age, that he might thus be an ambassador for God and a co-worker together with him.

Nor was he left in darkness. He was instructed of the Lord, and he in turn instructs us, that the work of the present age is the work of preparing the *judges* of the world, who, when the great day of the world's judgment or trial shall have dawned, will be prepared to execute judgment and justice in the world, and to bless with a righteous rule all the families of the earth. He informs us that the saints now being tried (judged), tested and developed in character are undergoing this severe process, and are required to walk in the "narrow way," to the intent that they may be fit to be instruments of God for *judging the world* in righteousness when the due time for that judgment shall have come. (1 Cor. 6:2, 3) Consequently, we find that the Apostle's energies, so far from being directed to the substratum of society, the heathen and the barbarians, were directed to the very opposite class. He sought the best people in the world; the most moral people and the most intelligent; the people most advanced in every sense of the word—believing, and rightly, that the reasonable and gracious plan of God would commend itself better to such than to the sodden and benighted and stupefied and degraded minds of the barbarian heathen. Conservatively, the Apostle first sought the intelligent classes of Asia Minor, and after having gone through various cities (not attempting nor expecting to convert the people *en masse*, but merely hoping, in harmony with the divine program, to find a few, a little flock, and to establish these in principles of righteousness and in the School of Christ, to learn of him and to develop character, and to be prepared for the future work of judgship and joint-heirship with Christ in the kingdom)—the Apostle pressed on to find still others who had "ears to hear."

The declaration of the Scriptures is that he and his company purposed to go into Asia, but that under divine providence he seemed to be hindered from going there, and that then God specially directed him in a dream, and sent him into Europe with the message—sending him, not to barbarians, but to the most enlightened and most cultured people of the then civilized world, the people of Greece. (Acts 16:7-10) And we remember that later on the Lord sent the Apostle to Rome, telling him in advance that this was his purpose, and seemingly in order to keep the Apostle in Rome he was sent there a prisoner, yet for three years was permitted to have full liberty to preach Christ to as many as had ears to hear. And let us not forget a circumstance which occurred in connection with the journey to Rome, when the Apostle was shipwrecked on the Island of Melita. (Acts 28:1-10) He found there a people who, so far as we are able to judge, were on the average better prepared for the truth than the Chinese, Malays, etc., and of these the record says, "The barbarians showed us no little kindness." We might suppose that barbarians who were disposed to be kind and generous to people who were ship-wrecked on their coast, would be a rather more favorable class to approach with the gospel of Christ than cannibals, to whom missionaries of today frequently go.

And yet what do we find as the result of the Apostle's stay in the midst of that people all that winter? Do we read that he left several flourishing little missions? Do we read that he preached day and night unto the barbarians? Not a word of it;no mention is made of the slightest effort to reach them. The Apostle seemingly knew that they were too degraded to have any ear to hear the Christian message, or to be called with the high calling which God during this age is sending forth, to gather the bride for his Son. We have every reason to believe that the Apostle made no effort whatever to make known the Gospel of Christ to those heathen people. Quite possibly while he was there forcibly detained in their midst, and unable to reach those who would have an ear to hear the good tidings, he may have attempted to suggest to them certain moral reforms, or how to live more comfortably, or something else that would come within the range of their measure of intelligence. But apparently he had no thought whatever that the Gospel "High Calling" was for such, and hence the Golden Rule, operating in his life and governing his conduct, was limited accordingly—limited to act in harmony with the divine revelation and the divine plan.

Why is it that the example of Jesus and his inspired apostles is overlooked by so many of our dear Christian friends today? Why is it that they use their Golden Rule without respect to the divine plan and divine promise? We answer, It is because some of them are leaning to their own understanding, instead of seeking the divine word, and to be taught of God; they think they know what ought to be done without inquiring of God's Word, and they are going about to do what they think should be done, rather than seeking to follow heaven's directions and Apostolic example. Many of them, indeed, are not self-conceited to the extent of being careless respecting advice; indeed, many of them are quite lacking in thought on their own part, and only too willing and too anxious to take advice of others; but they are not sufficiently careful where they get the advice.

They say to themselves, We *belong* to the Presbyterian body: look at its millions; look at its education; look at its influence. Or, We *belong* to the Methodist body: look at its numbers, influence, etc., etc. The same is true of the others. And then they ask, Is it possible that all these wise and learned men should be mistaken? Do they not all advocate that we should thus go out to preach the gospel amongst the heathen? Yes, we answer; this is a part of the delusion: many of the great and worldly-wise have adopted a theory, and are attempting to operate the Golden Rule wholly outside of and in utter neglect of the divine plan. Their theory is that *God's kingdom has come*, and they point to the civilized nations of Europe and America as evidences and proofs that God's kingdom has come, and they say, What all zealous Christians should now do is to convert the Chinese nation, the Japanese nation, India, and all the tribes of the earth, that these also may become Christian nations like those of Europe and America, and thus the whole world will become God's kingdom.

But we answer, This is false, utterly false; the nations of Europe and America are not God's kingdom, notwithstanding the fact that they claim to be Christian nations, and that they put upon their coins that their monarchs reign by the grace of God. They are all, at best and at most, "kingdoms of this world," under the control of Satan, "the prince of this world." (John 14:30) These are the kingdoms which at the advent of Christ's kingdom he declares shall be broken in pieces as a potter's vessel, as being utterly unfit for his service, and utterly out of harmony with the principles of righteousness which will be established in his kingdom.—Rev. 2:26, 27; Dan. 2:45.

Alas! if these kingdoms of so-called Christendom be the fulfillment of our dear Redeemer's prayer which he taught us as his disciples, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven"—if we must accept these as God's kingdom, if we must think of their rule as being God's will done on earth as it is done in heaven—then some of us are greatly disappointed, for we find that God's will is very little done on earth, and consequently heaven, if no better than this, must be a pandenomium in comparison to what we had hoped for.

But we are not mistaken; the Lord's Word everywhere teaches that the present Gospel age is for the selection of the kingdom class, the saints, who by and by, in God's due time, shall be joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom, and inheritors with him of the great promises made to Father Abraham, that this seed, Christ (head and body—Gal. 3:16, 29), shall bless all the families of the earth, as God's kingdom bringing in everlasting righteousness. Would to God that we could assist to some extent in opening the blinded eyes of Christendom on this subject: and yet we could not hope to render any assistance to the general mass of churchianity,—for it is the divine plan that not the "tares," but only the "wheat," shall *now* understand.—Dan. 12:10; 1 Thes. 5:3-5.

All we can hope for is that those who are the Lord's true saints are not, and never have been, fully satisfied with the position in which they are, and the work which they are doing; but realize a heart-hunger for something better, more satisfactory, and more in harmony with the divine character and power—that these who have ears, and who have already heard to some extent the true Gospel, might now hear the true ring of the Shepherd's voice, and thus be called away from Babylon and its confusion of error, its jargon of contradiction and insincerity, to the green pastures and still waters of divine truth—present truth—that thus separated (delivered from Babylon's bondage) they might be more fully united with the Shepherd himself, and become co-workers together with God in his work, learning to exercise the Golden Rule in their own hearts, in their own lives, and to help others of the household of faith and the bride of Christ to do the same.

Nor are we to overlook the fact that while the present Gospel message is for the highest types of men, it appeals specially to the middle class of these—the humble but intelligent rather than the rich or great. "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. 11:25, 26.

WATCHING AND ITS REWARD

LUKE 12:35-46.—SEPT. 23.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."*—Matt. 26:41.

Prayer is good; it is absolutely indispensable to Christian life. It means, not only a living faith, but a growing faith. Experience will prove that neglect of either private prayer (Matt. 6:6) or prayer in the congregation of the Lord's people (Acts 12:12; 1:14; 16:13; 1 Cor. 11:4, 5; 14:13, 14) is sure to lead to leanness of soul and lukewarmness in respect to spiritual things—unfaithfulness, coldness, death. On the contrary, communion with the Lord in prayer brings increased confidence in the Lord's supervision of our affairs; increased faith in all the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word; increased realization of his dealings, past and present; increased love for all the brethren of Christ, and increased solicitude for their welfare and spiritual progress. Prayer is thus closely and actively identified with progress in spiritual things, progress in the fruits of the spirit, toward God, the brethren, and all men.

Our Golden Text suggests, however, that more than praying is necessary. Praying that does not fully represent the sentiments of the heart is apt very quickly to degenerate into a mere form of words—drawing nigh to the Lord with the lips while the heart is far from him,—perhaps enwrapped in business or pleasure or sin. Whoever, therefore, would make progress in the spiritual way must not only pray with the spirit and with the understanding, but he must also watch—against the sinful tendencies of his own flesh—*self*-gratification, selfishness; also against the allurements of the world toward so-called worldly pleasures, worldly ambitions, honor amongst men, the love of money, etc.; also against the wiles of the adversary, whose deceitful attacks usually come upon the Lord's people as "an angel of light"—to deceive them into forms and ceremonies of Churchianity, substituting before the mind and affections and consecrated intentions, human sentiments and methods and works and objectives, as instead of "the hope set before us in the Gospel" (Col. 1:23) and its various exceeding great and precious promises, by whose incentive the Lord has called us to walk and to run, by faith and not by sight, following in the footsteps of our Redeemer.

Our lesson itself deals particularly with the watching; but in harmony with the Golden Text we know that all true watchers must also be prayers, and that all fervent prayers will also be watchers. Prayer represents the faith; watching represents the works which must accompany it, so long as it is a living faith; for, as the Apostle declares, Faith without works is dead—it speedily loses its vitality, its value, its very existence.

Our Lord gave a parable, as was his custom in teaching, to illustrate this lesson of the necessity for watchfulness.

A wealthy householder is represented as absent for a considerable portion of the night at a wedding-feast, and expecting on his return that the servants of the household would be awake and alert to receive him and any company he might bring with him. It was expected of such servants that they would not only not retire to bed, but that they would not even get drowsy. To give their master a proper reception they should be thoroughly awake, quick to hear and to respond to his knock, and to "open unto him immediately." Hence, in the parable, such servants are represented as having their loins girt about and their lamps burning brightly. The custom of Orientals at that time was to wear long, loose, flowing robes. These, when they were resting, were loosened at the girdle, but when attending to business they were drawn tightly at the waist with a girdle or belt, preventing them from interfering with proper service. Lamps, which were the mode of illumination, were also necessary in the night, and should not be permitted to grow dim, but be trimmed as necessity required.

Our Lord points out that such faithful servants would be appreciated by their master, and that he would give them a reward—he would honor them by treating them as his friends, and bring forth to them of the good things from his pantry. He would indeed gird himself as a servant and serve these faithful ones: and for the master of the house to do this would imply the bringing forth of the very best that he possessed. But in order to fulfil the conditions and be thus acceptable to their master they must be ready in whatever hour of the night he might come.

The parable, without question, refers to the second coming of our Lord Jesus, and points out to all of his faithful servants the proper attitude of watchfulness and preparation to receive him at whatever time his second advent should occur. It also indicates that it was the Lord's good pleasure not to reveal definitely and positively to his people when to expect his arrival, but rather that all the way down through this night-time which we designate the Gospel age, and which must necessarily precede the morning of the Millennial day, they should be continually awake, alert, waiting for him, ready to receive him at any moment. They should have the loins of their minds girt up and be active in thought, in word and in deed, in every matter pertaining to the Master's service, that they might be approved of him;—the lamp of the divine Word, so necessary to their enlightenment, should be with them, and well supplied with the oil of the holy spirit—and well trimmed, in the sense of rightly dividing the word of truth, and seeking to understand through it their proper attitude of heart and conduct, to be pleasing to their Master.

The parable is a very simple one, and could scarcely be misapprehended by the class for whom all parables are intended—the consecrated church. These realize at once that the central thought with them, as the Lord's servants, must be such readiness of heart and mind and character as will be pleasing to the Master when he shall come to gather his "jewels,"—his watching, faithful servants. This thought of the return of the Lord, and of the blessings which he has promised to his faithful ones at that time, is the great incentive set before the called ones of this Gospel age. It is for the Master's favor and the consequent exaltation with him to a share in his kingdom, then to be established, and a share in the great work of blessing the world of mankind, then to be accomplished, that all of the saints are seeking, watching, praying, striving.

Well has the Apostle said, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he [the looked-for Master] is pure." It is this hope that leads the faithful servants continually to the lamp of the divine Word, to trim it and to thereby keep themselves thoroughly awake, quick of ear and quick of eye in respect to any and every thing relating to the will of the expected Master, and such conditions of heart-purity and robes of righteousness as would be pleasing and acceptable in his sight at his arrival.

Let all watchers fully appreciate this parable, and be on guard against every ensnarement of the adversary, and against the stupefying influence of the world and its spirit, and against the selfishness and weaknesses of his own flesh; and let each put on the graces of the spirit, and assist his fellow-servants in these preparations, that thus an entrance may be ministered to him into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.—2 Pet. 1:4-12.

What great blindness and spiritual stupor respecting so simple a parable is manifested by many who are regarded as teachers in nominal Zion, in respect to this lesson! Note the interpretation of it offered by one of the leading "Helps to Sunday School teachers." The writer evidently is not *so* blind as to fail to see that the parable relates in some manner to the second coming of our Lord; but he *is* so blinded by misconceptions, false doctrines, etc., as to give the following as an explanation:—

"The comings of the Lord are ever unexpected to us,—his coming at death, his coming to judge the world, his coming in his kingdom, his coming in the harvest-times of men, his coming in the crises of our lives, his coming with opportunities and open doors, his coming with the power of the holy Spirit."

This blind teacher thus believes in seven comings of Christ, additional to his first coming eighteen centuries ago. More than this, the words we quote signify that the writer believes that a coming of Christ occurs every time a death occurs (or possibly he limited this to the death of his saints; but other teachers of the same school of darkness, when preaching funeral sermons, are accustomed to announce the Lord's coming in the death, not only of saints, but of pretty nearly everybody). This writer further claims a coming of Christ in all the crises as well as in all the opportunities of human life. He evidently believes (may we not say, dreams?—he surely is not *awake*, and surely his lamp is not trimmed and burning, nor the loins of his mind girt about) that there are millions of comings of Christ. Moreover, speaking (in his dreams) as a mouthpiece of the great adversary, he speaks of the harvest-time of men—evidently to direct attention away from the Master's explanation that the harvest-time will be "the end of this age," in the which he himself will be the great Chief Reaper, and will associate with him his faithful servants in the work of gathering the wheat (his faithful) into his barn (the spiritual condition).—Matt. 13:30.

Note another method of wresting the Scriptures, and of attracting the minds of the Lord's people away from the great truth everywhere set forth in the Scriptures, and particularly enunciated in this parable, *viz.*, the second coming of our Lord as King, and the duty of all his faithful ones to be ready, expecting and joyously waiting for that event. This perversion and wresting of the Scriptures is in the interest of temperance, and represents the watching as implying temperance work, thus: "Not only those who are laboring and praying for temperance reform, but the young people especially, should be wide awake and *watchful* in regard to temperance. They should *watch* the effect of strong drink upon others. They should *watch* its effect upon the community. They should be on their guard against the smallest beginnings of the habit of using intoxicating liquors. They should *watch* for opportunities of helping on the cause of temperance by word and by example, in public and in private."

Is it any wonder we hear the Master prophesy respecting the unfaithfulness amongst his professed people at this time, saying, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find *the* faith on the earth?" The form of the question implies the answer. No; he will not find the faith flourishing in the earth,—not predominating. Other Scriptures, however, assure us that at the time of his coming he will find a little flock of faithful watchers—not many great, wise or learned, but chiefly "the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom." As for Babylon in general, she is saying, with louder voice than ever, Have we not done! done! done! Are we not rich and increased in goods! Are we not compassing sea and land to make proselytes!

But the Master will say, Thou art poor and blind and miserable and naked, and knowest it not! (Rev. 3:17) Thy colleges, of which thou dost boast, are they not the very hotbeds of infidelity, denying my Word—denying that my work was perfect in the beginning, and that present conditions of sin and degradation and death are the penalties of violation of my righteous law; denying also the value of my sacrifice for sins, given that the heavenly Father might be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in me; denying that holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the holy spirit, and claiming a superior wisdom as "higher critics," by which they determine that myself and my chosen and inspired apostles were ignorant and incompetent and deceived when we quoted the words of the prophets and applied them; denying also my second coming, to gather my little flock, the church, to associate them with me in the kingdom promised through the prophets, which shortly shall bless all the families of the earth; claiming, on the contrary, that all things continue as they were from the beginning,—that a process of evolution is in progress, and that no Redeemer, no redemption and no restitution are necessary—some of them going so far as to claim that no personal deity is necessary but that what they call the laws of evolution are the creator, preserver and savior of the race.

Is it any wonder that under such false teachings in high places, and the same teachings repeated with more or less of ability throughout the length and breadth of Babylon—is it any wonder that my people are "perishing for lack of knowledge"? (Hos. 4:6) They have "hidden the key of knowledge," and not only fail to enter into the privileges and opportunities of this Gospel age and its call, but them that would enter in they hinder by their false teachings and misrepresentations, putting darkness for light, and light for darkness.—Luke 11:52; 2 Pet. 2:1; 3:3, 4; Amos. 8:11; Matt. 23:13; Isa. 5:20.

Alas! that any whose eyes of understanding have been opened in any degree should be deluded into supposing that he can do God service by co-operating with Babylon in any measure, sense or degree. Surely they are under the blinding and stupefying influence of the adversary when they do not hear sharply and distinctly the Lord's message to all of his true people at this time, to come out of Babylon and be not partakers of her sins, her errors, her false teachings, and the crime implied in these, and on account of which severe scourgings are coming upon Babylon, and will fall with special severity upon those who had known better, and who for any reason have refused to obey the voice of him that speaketh from heaven—our present Lord, King, Bridegroom.—Heb. 12:25-27; Rev. 18:4.

Our Lord applied the parable in few words, saying, "Be ye, therefore, ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour that ye think not." That is to say, watchfulness for the great event of the King's return would be absolutely indispensable, and would constitute a mark or indication of those worthy to be called true servants or "brethren." We are not to make the mistake of supposing our Lord to mean, Watch incessantly, for you will not know when I do come. This would be an absurdity. The central thought of the parable is that the faithful servants, awake and watching at the proper time, will hear the knock, will recognize the Lord's presence, will open to him, in the sense of believing and accepting his presence, and will be rewarded by him in the time of his presence by being supplied special knowledge respecting heavenly things which would be "meat in due season" to their comfort and joy. All who are faithfully watching shall know when the event occurs, so surely as those who do not watch shall not know.

The Apostle Paul speaks of this same great event and of the same class of watchers, designating them brethren; and after explaining that the second coming of our Lord would be upon the world as a thief and a snare, and that the world will not escape certain trouble and overthrow of their systems and politics, he explains that, on the contrary, "Ye brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake *you* as a thief"—you have your lamps trimmed and burning. As he further explains, the brethren worthy to know and to escape the troubles incidental to that time do not sleep, as do others; they are watchful; they are alert, and because thus alert they know of the Bridegroom's arrival, of which the world knows not; and in the time of his presence these brethren are fed with special spiritual food, which the world knows not of. The Master himself is sending forth, at the hands of his servants, the needed meat in due season, things new and old for the strengthening of his household for this present time of trial and for the perfecting of the saints for the work of ministry, to which he has called them.—1 Thess. 5:1-6.

TO WHOM DOES THE PARABLE SPECIALLY APPLY?

This was Peter's question. He wondered whether or not the Lord meant that the specially chosen twelve apostles were these servants who must watch and wait for him at his second coming, or whether the parable was of general application, and meant that everybody should watch. Our Lord did not answer this question directly, for to have done so would have been contrary to the divine plan; to have answered directly, to have shown that our Lord was not coming in the early watches of the Gospel night, would thus have been in contradiction of the very teaching of the parable, that he must be watched for all through the Gospel night.

Evading this feature of Peter's question our Lord embraces the opportunity to give some further instruction, and explains to Peter and to us all that at that time, "then," *i. e.*, at the time of his return, his second advent, he would look out and appoint a steward for the dispensing of spiritual food to the household of faith; and that a special blessing would be with that steward in the event of his faithfulness, and that he would be removed from the stewardship in the event of unfaithfulness. Faithfulness on the part of this steward would imply larger and continued service in dispensing the meat to the household of faith at that time. But unfaithfulness on his part, and a disposition to tyrannize the household, would be sure to result in his being cut off from further opportunities for serving the household, and lead to his having a severe experience with the unbelievers in the time of trouble then to come upon the world. And altho it is not stated, it is fairly inferable that such an one being deposed from stewardship, another would take his place, subject to similar terms and conditions as to faithfulness.

In certain senses of the word, and in certain respects, every child of God is a steward—a steward of his own talents, opportunities, privileges, abilities in the Lord's service; and each one is to recognize that his responsibilities as a steward in these respects is toward the Master who gave him the talents, and who will require at his hands an account thereof—an increase by reason of proper use. We are not, therefore, to understand our Lord's answer to Peter to imply that none of the household but the one are in any sense of the word regarded as stewards. Such an interpretation would be in conflict with numerous Scriptures. We are to notice that the stewardship mentioned is not a stewardship of talents and opportunities, but a stewardship of spiritual food merely.

Neither does it imply that in the end of this age, and at the time of our Lord's presence and the sending forth of meat in due season that the special steward alone will have to do with the dispensing of the food for the household, for, as shown in Matthew's account of this parable (Matt. 24:45-51), there are "fellow-servants" whose duty and privilege it will be to co-operate with this steward in the dispensing of the viands, the feeding of the household of faith. The thought would seem to be that in the interest of the household and for its comfort and joy and blessing the Master at an appropriate time would furnish to some one of his servants a key to the precious things of his Word, thus providing bountifully "things new and old" for the sustenance and joy of the household, and minister these through numerous fellow-servants, as well as through the one to whom the key of this stewardship would be specially entrusted.

In this connection we are to remember that every stewardship brings with it weighty responsibilities, and while such responsibilities are not to be shirked, neither are any of them to be undertaken lightly, without appreciating the fact that every one who becomes a servant of the household of faith has thereby a larger degree of responsibility, not only toward the household, but toward the Master of the house, from whom comes every commission. And every servant is to remember that unfaithfulness would surely lead to his removal, even as every manifestation of humble faithfulness on his part will endear him to the Master and to every faithful member of the household, and imply his continuance in the service until the Master shall say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joys of thy Lord."

REVIEW OF THIRD QUARTER

SEPTEMBER 30.

"Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."—James 1:22.

Reviews are frequently profitable, and especially so when conducted in the light of this Golden Text; with a view to noting to what extent we have heard the voice of the Son of Man, and to what extent we have been obedient to his messages. To fancy ourselves as making spiritual progress merely by gaining information respecting the Lord, his miracles, his teachings, etc., is to get the nut and crack it and drop the kernel, the thing of real value.

It is in harmony with this thought that our Lord declared, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and they that hear shall live." The dead are the entire human family, all of whom must hear the voice, the teaching of this great Prophet, whom the Father has sent, not only to redeem, but also restore so many of the human family as will accept his favors upon his terms. All must hear eventually but comparatively few have the hearing ears at the present time. The prince of this world blinds the mind, closes and stupefies the ear, or makes what may be heard of no effect through traditions of men, or through hardness and selfishness of the hearer's own heart. Blessed are our eyes if, seeing and hearing of the Lord's grace and goodness toward us and toward all of his creatures, we at once fall into obedience to the spirit of the great Teacher's instructions. In so doing we will have passed from death unto life—gradually, until, under the ministry of the great Prophet, as sharers in the first resurrection, we shall be perfected and possess life in perfection, yea, life more abundantly—immortality—the divine nature.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

[The following, author unknown, came from India, from a Christian Missionary. It is excellent.]

WHAT IS THE END OF LIFE?

The end of life is not to do good, although so many of us think so. It is not to win souls—although I once thought so. *The end of life is—to do the will of God.* That *may* be the line of doing good or winning souls or it may not. For the individual, the answer to the question, "What is the *end* of my life?" is *"To do the will of God, whatever that may be."*

Spurgeon replied to an invitation to preach to an exceptionally large audience, "I have no ambition to preach to 10,000 people, but to *do the will of God"*—and he declined.

If we could have no ambition past the will of God, our lives would be successful. If we could say, "I have no ambition to go to the heathen; I have no ambition to win souls; my ambition is to do the will of God, whatever that may be," *that would make all lives equally great or equally small,* because the only great thing in a life is what of God's will there is in it. *The maximum achievement* of any man's life, after it is all over, *is to have done the will of God.*

No man or woman can have done any more with a life—no Luther, no Spurgeon, no Wesley, no Melanchthon can have done any more with their lives; and a dairymaid or a scavenger can do as much.

Therefore, the supreme principle upon which we have to run our lives is to adhere, through good report and ill, through temptation and prosperity and adversity, *to the will of God, wherever that may lead us.* It may take you to China, or you who are going to Africa may have to stay where you are; you who are going to be an evangelist may have to go into business; and you who are going into business may have to become an evangelist. But there is no happiness or success in any life till that principle is taken possession of. And the highest service is first, moment by moment, to be in the will of God. It may be to work or to wait; to stand fast or to lay still. 'Tis he, our blessed Lord, who will keep us in his will, if our eyes are fixed on him.

How can you build up a life on that principle? Let me give you an outline of a little Bible reading:—

The definition of an ideal life:

Acts 13:22—*"A man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will."*

The object of life:

Heb. 10:7—*"I come to do thy will, O God."*

The first thing you need after life, is food:

John 4:34—*"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me."*

The next thing you need after food is society:

Mark 3:35—*"Whosoever shall do the will of my Father in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."*

You want education:

Psa. 143:10—*"Teach me to do thy will, O my God."*

You want pleasure:

Psa. 40:8—*"I delight to do thy will, O my God."* A whole life can be built up on that vertebral column, and then, when all is over,

1 John 2:17—*"He that doeth the will of God abideth forever."*

THE SPREAD OF MOHAMMEDANISM

If reports are to be believed Mohammedanism is spreading in Asia and Africa much more rapidly than is Christianity. This is credited to three reasons. (1) Its simplicity of doctrine, which makes it commendable to persons of low intellectual capacity—Believe in Mohammed and obey his simple law and have an eternity of sensuous bliss. (2) Its permission of polygamy, common throughout those countries. (3)

Its uniform requirement of total abstinence from intoxicants.

Recognizing the fact that Christianity makes few proselytes from Mohammedanism, and that the latter is growing rapidly in numbers and influence, the British Government has of late years been attempting to gain the confidence and support of her Mohammedan subjects, whose number is estimated at one hundred and fifty millions—*fifty millions more than all denominations of Protestant Christians in the whole world.*

Doubtless this change of attitude toward the very religion against which all the Crusades of medieval times were waged, though due to political policy, is backed by the changed religious sentiment of our day;—which under the lead of the higher critics has declared,—

"The hope of the race lies in a deeper study of the great, inspired writers of the past, such as Shakespeare, Homer, Dante and a few others, whose works have charmed the minds of people of culture. The Bible, also, though a little out-of-date, has been recognized, in the past, as a work of inspiration, and you may find it helpful to include it in your course of reading."

General sentiment, therefore, resolves itself into this,—Since our wise men tell us that the Bible is unreliable, and that the death of Christ Jesus no more redeemed the world than did the death of other reformers; and since they tell us that future happiness depends upon the cultivation of our mental and moral qualities, and that Shakespeare's and other writings are quite as good or better than the Bible for such culture, how do we know but that the Mohammedan's Bible—the Koran—is as good or better than our own, and they as right as we or more so? Therefore let us not any longer say with the Bible that there is no other name than that of Jesus given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved; but let us say, Get morality and education in the name of Mohammed or Jesus or Confucius or whomsoever you please.

Such would be the *logical* outcome of such teachings; and thereby we are reminded of our Lord's words respecting these times—"When the Son of Man cometh shall he find the faith on the earth?"—Luke 18:8.

WHAT GREAT BRITAIN IS DOING FOR MOHAMMEDANISM

Shortly after the capture of Khartoum by General Lord Kitchener, and at his instance, a Mohammedan college was founded, known as Gordon College, and more recently another Mohammedan school was founded at Sierra Leone, on the west coast of Africa. This latter institution was opened with considerable ceremony under the auspices of the acting-governor, Major Nathan, and of it the New York *Sun* says editorially:—

"The ceremony began with a prayer in Arabic offered up by the Imaum of the mosque, Alfa Omaru, who afterward gave a short account of the efforts to promote education made by the Sierra Leone Moslems. He referred to the years 1839 and 1841, when the Mohammedan religion was considered as a danger to the colony, when Moslems were persecuted and their mosques pulled down by excited mobs. Thanks, however, to an enlightened policy, matters were set right, and for more than fifty years the Moslems have enjoyed full toleration and the protection of the British Government. In 1872 the festival of the Lesser Bairam had been attended by the governor, Sir John Pope Hennessy, with a military escort, and in 1879 another governor, Sir Samuel Rowe, had entertained seven hundred Moslems at Government House on the occasion of the Bairam Festival of that year. In 1891 Governor Hay handed over a fine property with commodious buildings to the Moslem community for educational purposes, accompanied by a grant for the payment of the teachers. These successive events were important epochs in the history of Islamism in West Africa, and the Imaum looked forward to the day when the present elementary school would become the stepping-stone to a college."

In his reply Major Nathan cited examples of Mohammedans occupying official positions in Indian and in Egypt, and added that,—

"He wished them to perfect themselves in Arabic in order that they might know what real Mohammedanism is. When they understood the Koran, he said, they would see that their religion was one telling them how to live, and not a religion of charms and gewgaws. Knowing English, they would have the literature and wisdom of the white man open to them: and with Arabic, they would be able to read not only the Koran, but the 'Makamat' of El Hariri, known already to some of them, and the 'Alif Lailat wa Lailah,' the translation of which English people read with pleasure. In concluding, Major Nathan urged them not to rest content until they had in Sierra Leone a Moslem college whence wisdom and knowledge might go forth over the whole of West Africa."

The *Sun* believes that the importance of the incident can hardly be overestimated. It says:—

"The news of the official encouragement given to the Mohammedan religion and the culture of its sacred language, Arabic, will in a very short time spread from the Atlantic to the Red Sea, and the wisdom of the policy that dictated it will be justified by the resulting spread of British influence among the Moslem populations of North Africa. In all probability it will lead to a corresponding rivalry on the part of the French, whose hold on the Arabs of Algeria is none too strong, owing to mistakes in policy and the want of character of many of those appointed to office.

"The next century no doubt has many surprises in store; but whatever they may be, not the least strange will be the spectacle of the two Western nations that led in the crusades promoting, for political and territorial reasons, the creed they then tried to crush."

However peculiar all this may appear from the standpoint of *nominal* "Christendom," it is perfectly clear to all of the "royal priesthood." We see the fallacy of the claim that European kingdoms are *Christ's* kingdoms—that the Word of God never did recognize them as anything but "kingdoms of this world" ruled by "the prince of this world." We see that the nominal churches are not the one true Church of "saints," whose names are written in heaven. We see that the Crusades, Inquisitions, and all similar attacks upon human beings and their moral and religious liberties were never authorized by the Lord; but were wholly contrary to his Word and spirit. We see that it is perfectly proper and consistent for worldly people and governments (English, French, German or what not) to favor *any* system or all systems of education and religion that will in any degree counteract vice and immorality, and preserve peace.

True, we who have had the eyes of our understanding opened to see matters *clearly* from the Bible standpoint could do nothing against the truth and in favor of error—nothing to foster and encourage the error or even to apparently bid it Godspeed. But we are not in official positions where such questions could come to us: because we are "not of this world" even as our Redeemer was not (John 17:16), therefore the world disrespects us (John 17:14), and offers us no places of public influence. Fidelity to our Lord's principles thus saves his faithful from perplexities: they have died to worldly politics and its aims and duties and methods, and have been *"translated* into the kingdom of God's dear Son," and are thus members of the "holy nation" which has not yet come into power and ruling authority—waiting for their King to exalt or set them up in power and great glory at the time when his kingdom shall be *revealed* to the world as the supplanter of all kingdoms of this world.

METHODISM AND HIGHER CRITICISM

"The 'heresy' case of Professor Mitchell (see *The Literary Digest*, January 27), has been effectively disposed of for, at least, some years to come. By the recent General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Chicago it was referred to the bishops, who, apparently finding it as embarrassing a subject to handle as did the Conference, referred the matter of Dr. Mitchell's retention to the trustees of Boston University, by making him eligible to re-election for five years—until, conveniently, after the next meeting of the General Conference. The fact that the trustees of one of the leading Methodist theological seminaries have now unanimously re-elected Dr. Mitchell, who is *one of the most prominent American exponents of the higher criticism*, and has been accused of deviating widely from the traditional view as to the authorship of certain Old Testament books, is regarded as an event of significance. *The largest Protestant denomination in America thus tacitly votes to retain an upholder of the higher criticism as official instructor of her young clerics."—Literary Digest.*

PRESBYTERIANS BEING SIFTED

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church recently in session in St. Louis, in reply to overtures for a revision of its Westminster Confession of Faith, referred the matter to a committee, whose business it shall be to learn the opinion of the local Presbyters and to report to the Assembly of 1901. The Presbyterian weekly journals give the best clue to the results, for they are generally under the care of the leaders amongst the ministry, who generally "try to be on the winning side."

From the trend of comments by these journals (*The Interior* and *The Herald* and *Presbyter* alone seem to urge revision) we opine that the Confession will probably not be revised but reaffirmed. The result of this course would be to sift out the honest but deluded souls in pulpit and pew who for years have burdened their consciences (and in many instances hardened them) with slander against the divine character and deceit toward all mankind in professing the Westminster Confession. These have for years consoled themselves with the thought that (1) the Confession is a dead letter anyway, which today nobody believes, and (2) that it would soon be changed, "perhaps next year,—and my conscience can stand the strain that much longer." If now that Confession is reaffirmed by the denomination these will be thereby forced out to maintain even a vestige of peace with God and a good conscience toward God and man. The pity is that their consciences are not more tender and their hearts more loyal to God and his truth that they should act more promptly.

"The children of this world [the "tares"] are wiser in their generation than the children of light [the "wheat"]," said our Lord. And so in this case undoubtedly the reaffirming of the Westminster Confession is the wisest course so far as the preservation of the "tare" organization is concerned. For though, as above suggested, this will drive out some of the most conscientious, it will be found that they all told are but few. On the other hand were the Confession revised or repudiated it would mean to the rank and file of Presbyterianism, "We have lost our gods! We have admitted that we were all wrong in respect to our faith—blind men who for centuries have attempted to lead the confessedly blind world into truth, and now confess ourselves bewildered, yea totally blind as respects the divine plan!" Every Presbyterian would feel abashed at such a confession, and hence it is that such a revision of creed is improbable: and if it were seen to be inevitable many would transfer their "good names" and titles to other denominations before the funeral.

"THE PRESBYTERIAN" ARGUES AGAINST REVISION THUS,—

"Too much has been said recently to weaken the force of our doctrinal statements. Many who never thought of calling them in question are wondering what they really teach."

The people would have little difficulty in deciding the meaning of that very explicit and carefully worded "Westminster Confession," were it not that the theologians having told them, "These be thy gods, O Presbyterians!" are fearful that the pews (more honest than the pulpits) shall discover how terribly homely, yea, devilish, are these gods which they have so long worshipped and served.

Continuing, *The Presbyterian* says, "Others who regard the false constructions put on them as the work of adversaries, now find that even Presbyterian ministers are declaring them legitimate inferences. Damage is being done by the outgivings of radical revisionists. The church is suffering, and will continue to suffer in name and in accomplishment, with years of revision agitation. *Her interests would be far more advanced, in our judgment, by standing by the old standards of faith and by their reaffirmation by our Presbyteries and General Assembly.*"

What does this language mean in plain English? Is not the following construction a reasonable one?

For a long time now our ministers and religious editors have presented a solid front to the world, and by claiming that black in the creed is white they have succeeded in convincing Presbyterians, at least, that the black parts are at very most not darker than grey or mist and fog color. But now this discussion is in danger of disillusionizing the people. Already it is giving us great trouble and is likely to cause more disturbance and dissatisfaction, not only with our Diana, but also toward us, the well-paid and honored shrine-makers and servers. We are not thinking about the truth and its service, nor about the interests of the true church, whose names are written in heaven; we are merely considering the interests of our sect, the Presbyterian church, and how these matters will affect her interests and worldly prosperity. We feel provoked that Presbyterian ministers who have stifled their consciences for years should be so weak, so pusillanimous, as now to show the white feather and confess that they and we all have for years been hoodwinking and deceiving the Lord's flock who gave us liberally of their golden fleece to lead them into pastures of truth. As for us, we are committed to the prosperity of Presbyterianism—all of our name and title and earthly hopes are attached to it, and hence, false though the Confession be to every instinct of justice and love, we must stick to it—sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish!

Does the foregoing seem to be an uncharitable paraphrase of the *Presbyterian's* position? Let those who so think read carefully the following extract from the Confession and decide then whether anything better or nobler than policy leads it to defend and call for a reaffirmation of those sentiments of a darker period. We have too much respect for the *Presbyterian's* brains to suppose that it does not comprehend the language, and too much respect for its heart to suppose that it at heart endorses the presentation as true and just: hence we can only conclude that its advocacy is insincere and for policy's sake. The policy, as already suggested, is worldly-wise and will serve to keep together a little longer one of the most respected of the human organizations falsely styled churches; but the end of all such is not far distant, as clearly shown in God's Word and pointed out in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. III., Chaps. 4 to 7, and VOL. IV., Chaps. 11 to 13.

The following is the referred to—

EXTRACT FROM THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it can not be either increased or diminished.

"Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, *without any foresight of faith* or *good works* or *perseverance in either of them*, or any other thing in the creature, as *conditions* or *causes moving Him thereto;* and all to the praise of His glorious grace.

"As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power through faith unto salvation. *Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved, but* THE ELECT ONLY.

"The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."

DEFECTIVE EDUCATION OF MINISTERS

Rev. D. S. Gregory, D. D., says:—

"In a ministerial body of say seven thousand there are perhaps several thousands of us that nobody will hear preach: many more that are heard by good people under stress of duty; and comparatively few that are heard gladly. . . .

"The psychology of the average educator is fundamentally defective, and hence his pedagogics must be fatally false. He recognizes the existence of a *cognitive faculty*, the power of acquiring the simple elements or raw materials, so to speak, of knowledge, in perception external and internal; of a *conservative faculty*, or memory, the power of keeping knowledge so acquired for future use; of a *comparative faculty*, the power of thought for working up the knowledge acquired and conserved into conceptions, judgments, and reasonings. But just there his psychology of the intellect strikes a dead wall which it seems powerless to pass. He fails to recognize the existence of the supreme intellectual faculty, to which all the others are merely subordinates and for which alone they exist—*the constructive or systemizing faculty*. He does not find it in his text-books; it has been practically ignored in educational aims and methods. . ."

This is too highflown language for the majority of readers; we give its sense in few words thus,—The average minister learns at college to collect certain facts and theories, and to memorize them; but he never learns how to *systemize* what he has learned.

We reply that this is true; nevertheless, it is the bulwark of Churchianity; for had honest ministers or laymen attempted to systemize their theology (the errors so largely predominating) they would have found long ago that all their theories are as irrational as they are unscriptural. No theology but the old theology of the Bible—the divine plan of the ages—can be systemized; and it is system and plan and order and beauty throughout, and thus bears the impressions of its divine Author, Jehovah.

EPISCOPAL HIGH CHURCH PERFORMANCES

The Christian Commonwealth (London) describes a mass recently performed in St. Michael's Church, London, as follows:—

"The mass 'for the repose of the soul' of the deceased was celebrated, and at the funeral service in the church all the accessories of Vatican mummery were observed. Each of the congregation of ten received a little candle, which was lighted before the Gospel was read, and blown out after the reading. The people's candles were rekindled at the Sanctus, after incense-burning. After mass the celebrant left the chair, and at the sedilia changed his chasuble for a black cope with yellow orphreys and then headed a procession with a crucifix. The catafalque was sprinkled with holy water, and censed, while petitions were mumbled for the soul of the deceased. After the clergy were gone the people were invited to asperse the catafalque with the holy water."

CALAMITIES—WHY PERMITTED

The inundation of the city of Galveston, Texas, accompanied by great loss of life and property, has shocked the world. And no wonder; it was surely a great calamity that five thousand human beings should so suddenly be swept into death—the grave. Yet the real horror, affecting many minds in connection with this matter, is never even hinted at in the great headlines of the daily press announcements. What a shock it would give if these papers were edited in so-called orthodox style, thus:—

JESUS CAME TO 5,000 GALVESTON PEOPLE.
OF THE NUMBER HE FOUND ONLY ABOUT 100 SAINTS FIT FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.
THE REMAINDER, 4,900,
HE BANISHED TO ETERNAL HOPELESS AGONY IN TORMENT,
PREPARED FOR THEM,
ACCORDING TO HIS FOREKNOWLEDGE AND
LOVING DESIGN,
BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.

If our dear friends who profess to believe such blasphemous things respecting our Heavenly Father's plan would come out honestly and state their views thus plainly we should be glad of it. It would be a great service to the truth. It would act upon many as an *emetic*, and help them to get rid of the unhealthy mass of error which now sickens them and hinders their appetite for the true heavenly manna of the divine Word, which then would be to all the Lord's true people "sweeter than honey."

Tract No. 2, of the 'Old Theology" series, treats this subject of "Calamities and Why God Permits Them." We recommend its liberal circulation at times like this when great calamities awaken thoughts respecting divine providences, etc. And we might here remark that we will not be surprised if the next fifteen years shall witness an increasingly large number of calamities. To our understanding there are physical changes necessary to the full introduction of Millennial conditions: these will probably come about gradually, and incidentally cause great trouble and losses. These we understand are so timed as to form a part of the great time of trouble with which our age is to end, which, however, the Lord designs shall prepare man as well as the earth for further, future blessings. "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."

"ZION'S GLAD SONGS"

Our dear Brother McPhail, who has quite a talent for music, has collected a number of new and beautiful hymns,—the music to the majority being his own composition. These, fifty-four in number, are well printed, and appropriately bound in paper covers,—price 10 cents each, or $1 per dozen, *postage free.*

This little book, entitled "Zion's Glad Songs," has another feature which we are sure will be appreciated by many, viz., the addition of the *music* for twenty-eight old tunes, long. short, common, and peculiar meters. These are inserted in the interest of our regular hymn book, "Poems and Hymns of Dawn," the tunes of the remainder being copyrighted.

It is not at all the thought that the new book will supplant the old one; for many of the grand old hymns cannot be equaled by any new ones, either in words or tunes. The thought is to make it supplementary. As such we recommend it to you all. Our first edition of 6,000 is now ready and orders will be filled as received.

THE VOLUNTEER WORK

This branch of the service has lagged a little during the hot weather, because of small attendance at church services. Now that cooler weather has come we expect that it will revive. Some who have finished their own cities are branching out—endeavoring to serve nearby towns. This is commendable. Every faithful soldier of the cross is sure to receive blessings both now and hereafter from "the Captain of our salvation." Let us be faithful.

THE DALLAS, TEXAS, CONVENTION

——SEPT. 29, 30 & OCT. 1.——

We do not expect many from outside the State of Texas at this Convention; for the special excursion rates are restricted to near-by territory. Oklahoma, Indian Territory, Arkansas and Louisiana we believe participate, in whole or in part. As Texas is a very large state we endeavored to arrange for two Conventions, but could not obtain the excursion rates except for Dallas.

Our Convention will take advantage of the cheap rates of fare granted on account of the "Dallas Fair," and such tickets should be called for. If you desire to attend, inquire of your ticket agent at once for rates, train time, etc., and as soon as possible let us know on which road and train you expect to arrive; and how many will be of your party, males and females; if colored, mention it. State if you desire room and board at one dollar per day. Those who cannot afford even this moderate expense will please say so, and some comfortable arrangement will be made for them also.

"Woodmen's Hall" has been secured for the use of the Convention. It is centrally located at No. 349 Main Street. It is an easy walk from all depots, but those who desire can use electric car direct from the depots to the hall.

A Reception Committee will so far as possible meet all who arrive on the morning of Sept. 29th; but any failing to be recognized near the Ladies' Waiting Room door can readily find Woodmen's Hall as above and should proceed there at once.

We hope for a good attendance and warrant a warm welcome and a rich blessing to all true soldiers of the cross; and to those seeking to find and put on the whole armor of God. Come, intent upon doing good unto all—especially to the household of faith, as well as praying a blessing upon yourself, and you surely will not go away empty.

Arrangements for water baptism will be complete, robes, towels, etc. Yes, "Bro. Russell" will attend.

THE CHRISTIAN'S COURSE DELINEATED

David, the Prophet, in the first Psalm, has significantly marked out the proper Christian course and its blessings and outcome. In the first verse he designates three classes from whom the Lord's people should stand aloof—three classes with whom if they have fellowship, it will be to their detriment. (1) The ungodly, or more properly, the wicked (margin, Leeser, Young). (2) Sinners. (3) The scornful. "Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."—Psa. 1:1.

Applying this Psalm prophetically, it is proper that we should determine what classes of persons are meant by the *wicked*, the *sinners* and the *scornful*. We suggest that under the terms of the present Gospel age, not murderers and thieves, etc., can be meant by the wicked, for such, generally at least, are deluded and "binded by the god of this world," so that they have never seen the true Gospel light; and not seeing it they have not had such responsibilities in connection with it as would properly brand them as wicked from the divine standpoint. The "wicked" are to be looked for in the church, and in harmony with this thought is our Lord's parable which, referring to the church and the talents bestowed upon its members, declares respecting the one who received the talent of the Lord, but failed to use it—"Thou wicked and slothful servant." The "wicked" of this age would seem to be those who have enjoyed the light of divine favor, who have come to a knowledge of the truth, been made partakers of the holy spirit, etc., and who then, despite all these favors and blessings, and despite their covenant with the Lord to be his servants and to lay down their lives in his service, neglect the same.

The Apostle also points out a certain class in the church as wicked, saying of them that if they fall away "it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance" (Heb. 6:6), "for it had been better for them that they had never known the way of righteousness, than that having known it they should turn from the holy commandment." (2 Pet. 2:21) The same class is again described as those who sin wilfully after receiving a knowledge of the truth, and for whom, consequently, no further share in the sacrifice for sins remains; and consequently no hope for them in the coming age. (Heb. 10:26) In a word, then, the wicked class of the present age would seem, from the Lord's standpoint, to be those in the church nominal who have received clear light and knowledge respecting the divine plan, and who have either sinned wilfully by turning away from a life of righteousness to a life of intentional sin, or those who repudiate the precious blood of Christ and the atonement made for them by the same, counting the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified a common or ordinary thing.

If then we have found a class denominated "the wicked," let us consider what can be meant by the injunction that the blessed of the Lord should not walk in the counsel of these wicked ones—should not follow their guidance, their suggestions, their instructions, their leading.

Every man and every woman has more or less of an influence which attracts others to walk in his way. And all who repudiate the ransom, all who deny original sin and its sentence of death, and the necessity for our redemption from sin and death,—all who thus deny the foundation of the Gospel, the "wicked" above described, seem to make it their special business to endeavor to seduce the minds of others—to lead others astray by their evil counsel. If they cannot secure prompt attention, they invariably suggest,—Walk with us awhile, keep our company, and see whether you will not *gradually come to believe as we do, that we were not bought with a price*, even the precious blood of Christ—that man needed not to be bought; that he did not fall from perfection; that he was not sold under sin by our first parents; and, hence, that he needed not a redemption in any sense of the word, and therefore the Scriptures are false and misleading in making this the centre and pith of the Gospel.

Their false suggestion is that our only need was a good and holy *example*. They are blind to the fact that all through the past there were many noble examples, and that there are many today, far beyond the ability of the average natural man to follow, and that we needed something decidedly more helpful and efficacious than an *example*. They seem blind to the fact that an example would never justify to life one who was justly condemned to death. They do not seem to realize that God was just in pronouncing the penalty against our race, and that he could by no means clear the guilty through any process of injustice; and that, therefore, it was necessary that a ransom, a corresponding price, should be paid before the resurrection and reconciliation were possibilities. (Rom. 3:26) But they say, Walk with us in our counsels and see; and, as the Apostle suggests, many follow their pernicious ways, denying the Lord having bought them.—2 Pet. 2:1, 2.

Those who would be of the class pronounced "blessed" of the Lord, in our text, must not follow the counsel of these "wicked," but, on the contrary, should stand firmly by the Gospel of the redemption, and seek no other. Let all who desire to be blessed of the Lord mark well this counsel and follow it, and have no fellowship whatever with the "wicked," nor in any degree walk after their counsels.

"Sinners" are mentioned as another class, separate and distinct from the "wicked" above referred to, and they are evidently a class whose transgressions are much less heinous in the sight of the Lord: these sinners we must look for in the church also, not in the world. Since the world is not yet on trial there is nothing to demonstrate the standing of any of its people. The "sinners" of our text we would understand to be those who, without repudiating the covenant, without denying the Lord that bought them, and thus falling utterly from divine favor, are nevertheless failing to live according to the terms of their covenant, their consecration. These would seem to be sinners against the covenant they have made—those who fail to carry out the covenant of self-sacrifice. This class possibly includes some who are described by the Lord as "overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches," and who for these reasons are sinners against their covenant, violators of it. The Lord's people who would be of the "blessed" of the Lord, and receive his ultimate "Well done," are not to stand with these covenant-violators even. To stand with them might imply to treat them as companions, to enter into their plans and schemes; and surely all who would thus do would be likely to become partakers of their spirit, and to become careless of their consecration vows, and overcharged with earthly cares and ambitions.

The "scorners" are designated as a still different class, and might possibly represent some not of the church, but possessing more or less knowledge of holy things and rejecting them, speaking of them lightly and scornfully. The Lord's people are not to be intimately associated with such, nor make them their companions and friends. They cannot have fellowship with such without receiving injury; hence, so far as possible the Christian is to avoid this class, in business partnerships, in society, and especially in marriage. No one who could speak lightly or scornfully of our Heavenly Father or of our Lord Jesus or of the exceeding great and precious things set before the Lord's people in his promises, could be other than a hindrance to those who are seeking to gain the prize of our high calling. He therefore who would be blessed of the Lord, and who would attain that for which he was "called," should take heed to the instructions and avoid the scornful.

This does not signify, however, as the Apostle points out, that we are to have no dealings in the world with any but saints, for, as he tells us, in that event we would needs go out of the world (1 Cor. 5:10); but it does imply a recognition of the principle that evil is contagious, and that the Lord's people cannot be too careful to avoid every contact with evil. They should separate themselves to the Lord, to holiness, and seek to place themselves under influences in harmony with their holy and true and pure aspirations, begotten by the holy Spirit.

The Prophet implies that those who have fellowship with the scornful and with covenant-breakers and with the wicked who deny the precious blood of the covenant, cannot be blessed of the Lord, because they are in a wrong attitude of heart; for, as his words imply, those who are in the right attitude of heart to be blessed of the Lord can readily find something much better, much more interesting, much more profitable, than fellowship with any of these classes; "Their delight is in the Law of the Lord, and they meditate in his Law by day and by night."

This does not imply a reading over of the Ten Commandments, nor of the Mosaic ritual, but to the Christian it implies a delight in the law of righteousness, which law is briefly comprehended in the word "love." The right-minded Christian who is in the line of heavenly blessing now, and of heavenly glory by and by, has found and will continually find in the great law of love something well worthy of his time and his study. He finds this law applicable to every relationship between the heavenly Father and himself; he sees that all of his conduct, his every service toward God as a son, adopted into his family, must be the result of love. He sees also that love is the law which must govern all of his conduct toward the brethren in Christ and toward all men; and he finds in this abundant and satisfactory food for reflection in his leisure hours, so that he is interested neither in the speculations and quibblings of the "scoffers," nor in the worldly matters which overcharge the "sinners," nor in the false Gospel which engages the attention of the "wicked," who deny the ransom.

He finds that this Law of God contains, or is related to, every feature of the divine plan; and hence his meditations and studies of its various ramifications lead his thoughts hither and thither, in contact with all the exceeding great and precious promises which God has bestowed upon them that love him, both as respects the life that now is and also that which is to come. And the more this is his attitude the more is he blessed of the Lord; and the more blessed he is of the Lord the more surely will this be his attitude and experience.

Such an one, the Lord declares through the Prophet, will be like a tree planted near rivulets of water, which will always be abundantly refreshed and never fail in his yield of the fruits of the spirit, which under such circumstances must grow and flourish exceedingly. And as his fruit will be abundant, so his leaf (his hopes) will be ever green; he can and will have faith in him who promised the coming blessings, and whose riches of grace he comes to appreciate more and more daily.

"All that he doeth shall prosper." This is literally true, though not, perhaps, in the way in which the world might view the subject. But what is it that such a child of God doeth? What is his aim? What is his object in life? Wealth, fame, worldly honors? No, none of these. His aim, that which he doeth, that which he seeketh, is to glorify his Heavenly Father and eventually to attain to the glory, honor and immortality which God has promised to them that love him. (Rom. 2:7) If then the Christian but attain these his objects, surely all his experiences will have been prosperous, and that abundantly. What matters it to him if under divine providence he was permitted to err in judgment respecting some business venture, so that instead of earthly prosperity it brought financial loss, if it worked out spiritual gain? To this blessed man the loss was prosperity, and he proved the truth of the divine promise, that all things shall work together for his good. Under such a promise, under such guidance of divine wisdom in his affairs, guaranteeing him just such experiences, trials, difficulties, earthly disappointments and disadvantages as will, under the Lord's providence, bring him richest blessing in the attainment of the great prize of the future which he seeks, and for which every other thing, interest, hope and aim has been sacrificed, how could any be considered otherwise than prospered? (Rom. 8:28) Surely indeed, all that he doeth shall prosper—not because of his own wisdom, not because of infallibility in the management of his affairs, but because his infallible Lord is supervising his interests, and outworking them for good to him.

It is this same class of blessed ones that our Lord addresses, saying, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake"—things may seem to be going contrary to your welfare, and hence to be working out incalculable harm; but have faith—"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven:" and it is this heavenly reward for which you have been called, and for which you have entered the race, and the attainment of which will be exceedingly abundant above all that you could ask or think.—Matt. 5:11, 12; Eph. 3:20.

TIMES OF REFRESHING

The gathering at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., was not expected to be a large one; because the railroad excursion rates extended over only a very limited area. It was therefore a *local* rather than a *general* meeting; but as such it served its purpose grandly, and brought to many clearer views of the divine plan, and fresh energy in its service, because of renewed consecration to the great Giver of all good.

About one hundred were in attendance, and these were nearly all visitors from abroad, as only about three Watch Tower subscribers reside there, and few outsiders attended. The Lord was with the Convention and blessed the two days of its session greatly; and we believe that the grace there experienced will not only be a lasting blessing to those in attendance, but that its overflow upon others not privileged to attend, will be a lasting joy and benefit.

En route we spent Sunday at Toronto, Canada, where another local Convention of about one hundred had gathered. This also was a feast to our souls. We thanked God for the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love—and realized afresh that—

"The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

The home route permitted a meeting between trains with some of the dear friends at Washington, D. C., where about thirty were hastily convened, to whom we spoke on "Pressing toward the *mark* for the prize of our high calling." Departing, we thanked God for the fulfilment of Mark 10:30; and felt that if faithfulness to the truth had gained us many bitter enemies, it had also brought us such devoted friends as very few in this world could boast of.

We arrived home, at Allegheny, in good season for Sunday services (Sept. 9), where our joy further abounded in addressing about two hundred of the home congregation, and in receiving their hearty welcome back after an absence of two Sundays. We can only wish and hope that each of the one thousand dear brethren and sisters "scattered abroad," with whom we communed and shook hands during the past two weeks (beginning with the Chicago Convention and ending at Allegheny), experienced one-half the blessing that has come to your pastor. He most heartily thanks you all for your many kindnesses and expressions of Christian love extended to him and the associated "Pilgrims;" and he thanks God for the privileges enjoyed in serving his flock, in Jesus' name.

"A table God has furnished me
In presence of my foes;
My head he doth with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows."

SABBATH DINNERS AND HOW TO UTILIZE THEM

Luke 14:1-14.—Oct. 7.

Golden Text:—*"Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."*

So far as we know, our Lord Jesus never refused an invitation to feasts, banquets, etc., to which he was asked, with his disciples. The present lesson tells us of such a banquet, probably specially arranged in Jesus' honor, by a Pharisee high in social position as a ruler in the synagogue. The feast was appointed for the Sabbath day, as was frequently the case, many of the Sabbath feasts being quite sumptuous; but the viands were always served cold, it being a part of the Jewish code that fires should not be kindled nor vituals cooked on the Sabbath day. And although we, as Christians, are entirely free from the Jewish law, including the fourth commandment as well as all the other commandments of the Decalogue, but are under a new commandment, the perfect law of love, to God and to man; nevertheless, we concede that considerable blessing might be experienced, and additional opportunities for spiritual development enjoyed, if Christian people were to cook a double portion on Saturday, and thus leave themselves freer from domestic responsibilities on the day which, according to the laws of the land (tho not according to any law of the Scriptures) we appropriately observe by abstinence from the ordinary business of life, utilizing the leisure for worship, study and spiritual communion.

Evidently before entering the dining room, probably in the court-yard, our Lord, while surrounded by many notables of the scribes and Pharisees, noticed a man afflicted with dropsy; and it would appear that our dear Redeemer was so full of love and sympathy that he had a desire to bless and to heal every such person with whom he came directly in contact. The loving character thus manifested gives us assurance that when the kingdom comes and our Lord shall take unto himself his great power and reign, he will assuredly bless and uplift so many as will accept his favors in a proper manner—so many as really desire to be blessed by him. Thus our Lord's general character fully substantiates and corroborates all the prophetic statements made respecting him and the character of his Millennial work of blessing all the families of the earth.

Our Lord well knew the extreme of fanaticism to which the Jews had gone, especially the outwardly pious and formal ones, representatives of whom were now gathered about him. He knew that they would regard the healing of the dropsical person as a violation of the Sabbath. Indeed, as illustrating the sanctity of the Sabbath, the Jewish Talmud tells of an instance in which a house took fire, and three young girls were burned to death, simply because their friends and neighbors interpreted the law against making a fire as implying also that it would be wrong to quench a fire on the Sabbath day, and when expostulated with respecting the matter, the answer was that it was "a sacrifice acceptable to God, who would reward them for having allowed their dear ones to perish rather than break his commandment!"

Jesus wished not only to correct such a false interpretation of the law, but also, in harmony with his custom, to do a large proportion of his miracles on the Sabbath day; because that day typified the coming Millennial day, the great seventh thousandth-year day in which, his Millennial kingdom being established, he will scatter blessings of healing, mental, moral and physical, amongst all the people. By way of instructing his disciples and the Pharisees respecting the improper view of the Sabbath generally entertained then by religious teachers, our Lord enquired of the Pharisees what they had to say on the subject: Is it or is it not lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? They made no reply; no doubt feeling themselves somewhat incompetent to discuss any question with one whom they had all learned to recognize as a great Teacher, however much they rejected his Messiahship.

Then Jesus, as showing his own understanding of the matter, that it would be right, that it would be in full harmony with the spirit of the Law to heal a man on the Sabbath day, touched the dropsical man and healed him. Then, by way of pointing out to his auditors the inconsistency of their line of thought on this subject, he reminded them that it was a recognized privilege and duty of every Jew to deliver his ox or his ass, fallen into some pit or difficulty, and to consider this a work of necessity and mercy, not forbidden by the fourth commandment of the Jewish law. He allowed his auditors to draw the inference from this illustration, that as it could not be wrong to assist a dumb animal out of difficulty on the Sabbath, much less could it be wrong to relieve the distress of a human being made in the image of God. Thus he would show that God's laws are not arbitrary, but that it is always proper to do good.

THE PROPER KIND OF TABLE TALKS

Every Christian family should utilize the excellent opportunities afforded for social converse at meal-times. Not only does pleasant and profitable conversation assist digestion, and thus prove physically helpful, but, additionally, these regular family gatherings should be recognized as opportunities for mental profit and for growth in knowledge respecting both temporal and spiritual things. Particularly for the last fourteen years this has been the custom of the Bible House family at Allegheny,—and a very profitable one. Our topics are usually propounded in the question form, the privilege of questioning being open to all at the table. Answers to the questions are sought from each one present, thus stimulating thought and a proper expression of it, very helpful to all, as subsequently they may be called upon to answer such a question before others in public or in private. We commend the plan to all of our readers, suggesting that in such a gathering the one supposed to be most conversant with such matters reserve his reply for the last.

Where the family is composed wholly of "new creatures" the question would properly differ somewhat in general character from what they would be if it were a mixed company: nevertheless, appropriate subjects should not be refused from anyone present; as, for instance, questions respecting table etiquette, good breeding, proper language, the events of the day that do not partake of the nature of gossip, etc. It is a shame that Christian people, even in the humblest walks of life, and when perhaps surrounded by poverty, have no thought of what valuable opportunities are afforded at such times of breaking of bread—to break to their families mental or spiritual food also, strengthening and elevating.

In proportion as Christian people realize their privileges and duties in such matters they will find that coarseness and rudeness at the table will disappear, refinement and intellectuality gradually displacing them. And one of the features most conducive to true table etiquette, and the drawing together of hearts and minds in true fellowship and intellectual enjoyment at the times of physical repast, will be found to be the giving of thanks to God—the recognition that every good and every perfect gift cometh down from our Father. The family which at table neglects to return acknowledgement to the Giver of every good, will scarcely succeed in properly recognizing each other and having intellectual fellowship one with the other.

That our Lord was prompt to avail himself of all such table-talk opportunities, is very manifest. On each occasion of his attendance at a banquet we find him utilizing the opportunity for the inculcation of some truth—natural or spiritual. In the present instance he evidently did not consider his hearers to be in a favorable condition for high spiritual teachings, and hence his table-talk was on a lower plane, adapted to the natural man, yet nevertheless inculcating lessons which, if learned, would prepare the learners for the heavenly things. And this should be the thought in every family circle,—that the tendency of all conversation should be ennobling as well as instructive—leading upward as well as outward.

The guests had been invited to the table, and our Lord noticed how they were each seeking the seats of chief honor, thus showing the pride and ambition of their hearts. We may safely assume that our Lord and his disciples took the less distinguished seats, in harmony with the Scriptural injunction, "In honor preferring one another."

A favorable opportunity offering, our Lord indirectly called attention to the wrong self-seeking course,—not by saying anything against the action in this particular case, but by suggesting a propriety of conduct in a general way; he based his illustration upon a marriage feast, at which, more than any other, distinctions as to title, honor and position, received much consideration. As was his custom, he taught by a parable, permitting his hearers to draw the inference and make the application in some measure to the banquet to which they were then gathered; and he wound it up by making this a great lesson on a general principle; viz., that "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—a lesson of vital importance to all who would be ready for and enter the kingdom.

This is a great lesson applicable, not only to the natural man, seeking progress back to fellowship and harmony with God, but there is in it also a lesson to the "new creature" all through life's journey,—that if divine favor is desired and to be expected it must be sought; not in pride, not in self-sufficiency, but in humility. The Lord resisteth the proud, the self-sufficient, the boastful, and showeth his favors unto the humble. The Apostle James likewise calls attention to the importance of this grace of humility, assuring us that no true progress can be made in the way to God, except by the humble. (James 4:10) And the Apostle Peter, after exhorting to humility, saying, "Yea, all of you, be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility," adds, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—1 Pet. 5:5, 6.

If the hearers had received the message and been corrected by it, it might indeed have worked considerable difference in their standing amongst their brethren, the Pharisees, but it would also have worked a considerable difference in their favor with God. By receiving such a spirit of humility they would be coming into that relationship with God and the truth which would have divine approval, and be thus the stepping-stone to further favor, by preparing their hearts to receive the good things which God has to give, but which cannot be received by any except the humble-hearted. Indeed, we know of nothing today that is so great a stumbling-block to the majority in nominal Christendom as the prevalent spirit of self-seeking. It is a great barrier before the minds of many, in and out of the pulpit, continually hindering them from seeing, hearing and obeying present truth—they love the approval of men rather than that of God.

The table-talk later turned in another direction, probably considerable being said in the interim that is not recorded, not pertinent; but before the feast was ended an appropriate opportunity came for the Lord to present some words of counsel to his host, and this was done in so kind and so wise a manner that it surely could give no offence, but, on the contrary, must have led the thoughts of all the hearers to higher and heavenly things. He advised that the banquets of the well-to-do in this world's goods be extended to their poorer, less fortunate neighbors and friends; assuring his hearers that such a course would bring the greatest blessing, as every good deed brings its blessings, forthwith—in the consciousness of having done good; and in the reactionary effect upon one's own heart of every good deed, every benevolence. And, in addition to these blessings, our Lord pointed out that for such an one there would be a blessing in the future also—a reward that would fully compensate every such benefaction.

Our Lord's words were in part a commendation of the course pursued by his host in inviting himself and his apostles to dinner, for they were poor. Indirectly his remarks meant that if that very feast were given with a proper sentiment of heart, as we have every reason to presume was the case, his host might expect a reward for his conduct in the future—besides the blessing that had already come to his house through our Lord's presence and words of instruction.

Sunday School lesson comments will be found to misinterpret the blessing which our Lord declared would come to those who received the poor. One of these commentaries says, on this point, that "Our Lord refers to the first resurrection, mentioned in Rev. 20:4, 5, assuring him that he would be raised in that resurrection as one of that glorious class. He would have the rewards that God gives, and can give only, to those who are righteous."

This is a grievous mistake, a misapprehension of our Lord's meaning. The first resurrection is not to be attained merely by the doing of kind acts to either the worthy or the unworthy poor. As explained in the connection (Rev. 20:4) none will have part in the first resurrection except those who have been "*beheaded* for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God." And, although this beheading is figurative and not literal, it nevertheless has a deep significance, implying much more than making a feast to the poor. It signifies, not only death to *self-will*, but also to be cut off from all other heads, governments and law-givers, and to recognize no "head" but Jesus, whom God hath appointed to be the Head of the church which is his body—the head of every member of it.

It means, not only to be *cut off* from institutional heads and authorities, but also to cease to have heads and wills of our own, and to accept, instead, the headship, the will, of our Lord Jesus. It is the same thought that is drawn to our attention by the Apostle in Romans 6:3, where he declares that we are baptized into the *body* of Christ, as members of that body, under the one Head, Christ, by being baptized into his death,—a full consecration of our wills, and ultimately a full laying down of our lives, faithfully unto death. The attainment of this first resurrection and its joint-heirship with

Christ in the Millennial kingdom was clearly understood by the Apostle Paul, and was his aim: and respecting it he said, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. . . . That I may know him, and the power of *his resurrection*." (Phil. 3:8, 10) Had St. Paul understood our Lord's words as the above quoted Sunday School lesson commentator did, he would have chosen the easy and pleasant plan of feasting the poor, rather than the years of privation and self-sacrifice in the narrow way which he pursued. And to this, St. Paul's words on another occasion agree. "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the kingdom."

What, then, did our Lord intend to promise as a reward for a good deed—done without hope of reward in the present life? We answer, that he meant to promise the same thing that he promised to anybody who would give even so much as a cup of cold water to one of his disciples. He wished to assure them that all such would by no means lose their reward. (Matt. 10:42) Not a reward of glory, honor, immortality and joint-heirship in the kingdom of God, but a good reward, more than compensating for the kindness they performed. This rewarding of everyone who has done good, either to the poor of this world or especially to the Lord and his faithful brethren walking in his foosteps, will come to them, not *in* the first resurrection, but *at* that time;—after the first resurrection shall have glorified the church and inaugurated the kingdom, then Millennial blessings and the reign of righteousness beginning will bring rewards to everyone who has done kindnesses, helping them forward and abundantly rewarding them; while all who have done evil shall have some measure of "stripes" in compensation and retribution.

A ROYAL BANQUET DECLINED

Luke 14:15-24.—Oct. 14.

"Come, for all things are now ready."

Jesus continued his table-talk of our last lesson at the Pharisee's dinner. Our Lord had led the attention of his associates, not only to the proprieties of life, but to future things, by the suggestion that feasts should be given in the interest of the poor, whose inability to return the favor would insure a divine blessing more than compensating in the future —in the kingdom. This led one of the company to a remark which we loosely paraphrase, thus,—Ah, yes! that kingdom, for which we hope, will be a blessed time. How blessed it will be to share the bounties which God has promised in the great feast which he shall spread! The speaker probably was well acquainted with Isaiah's prophecy respecting the kingdom (Isa. 25:6) in which God's mercies and blessings to the world are figuratively represented as a feast, in the words, "In this mountain [kingdom] shall the Lord of hosts make unto all the people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow."

Thus gradually the minds of the company present had been led from earthly things and from commonplace matters and social chit-chat, which might have occupied their attention, to the consideration of the gracious promises of God. And undoubtedly this was our Lord's very object in accepting the Pharisee's invitation, and in leading the conversation gradually in this direction. Now he had an opportunity to teach something respecting this kingdom and its blessings and the call to share it; and he improved it. His hearers, if they had in mind Isaiah's prophecy and God's promise to Abraham, would understand that the kingdom or mountain of the Lord would be the house of Israel, in some glorious and exalted condition under Messiah, and that it was in and through his kingdom that the *feast* of divine blessings, for all nations, was to be spread. Our Lord now, by a parable, drew attention to the Gospel call of great blessings and privileges, and would have his hearers note the fact that while in a general way they would all assent to the statement that the kingdom would be a blessed one, and the feast there something to be greatly desired, nevertheless when the offer of that kingdom would be made them temporal things closer to their hearts would make it of no effect to the majority.

The parable represents a great feast, with a large number of friends of the host invited in advance, that they might be ready at such a time as the feast would be ready and announced. God himself is the host in this parable, and the Jewish nation were his friends to whom, as a people, he had given much advantage every way, chiefly in that to them were committed the oracles of God,—much knowledge of the divine plan for human salvation and the promises that if they, as the seed of Abraham, were faithful, they should have the invitation and privilege and opportunities of this great feast. The Lord addresses them through the Prophet, saying, "You only have I known [recognized] of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) Israel only was invited to this feast; but the feast was not ready until our Lord's day, and hence the invitation to partake of it did not go forth until then. Finally, however, the time had come; Christ, as represented in the bullock of the sin-offering, had already given himself,—the sacrifice being counted as accomplished from the time of its offering, when our Lord presented himself to John at Jordan, making a full consecration of his entire being, even unto death. In view of this sacrifice for sins, God could begin at once to call the already promised guests to the great feast of blessing and manifestation of divine favor toward those to whom he had promised it so long before, through their father Abraham.

And thus it was that when Jesus came and called his disciples and sent them forth, the message was, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand;" the great feast of fat things for this nation, that God has so long promised, is ready; and whosoever wills may come and be received and participate in it. The message of Jesus and the twelve, and later the seventy, throughout all Judea, was the invitation of that favored people to come and enjoy the great feast for which they had impatiently waited and hoped and prayed for over sixteen centuries,—the great privileges and opportunities of the kingdom.

But as the parable shows, when the offer of the kingdom was really made, when the invitation to partake of the blessings of the great feast was really put before them, it proved that they loved the kingdom and the future things far less than they and others might have supposed. On the contrary, the unanimity with which the invitation to the kingdom was rejected made it appear almost as though the rejectors had acted in concert in the matter. Their excuses for so little interest in the things which God had promised and which they claimed to be eagerly longing for, were the apparent pressure of other duties which they *must* attend to, and which left no time for responding to the divine invitation to the kingdom. With one the pressure came in the direction of seeing to his farm, and thus being not slothful in business; another felt that it might do very well for people who had nothing else to do to give attention to a spiritual feast, but as for him, his time was fully occupied with his property, his oxen, sheep, store-business, and what not. Another felt that his duties, social ties, wife, children, etc., demanded all of his attention, and that therefore he could not accept the kingdom privileges.

And this, which was the sentiment of fleshly Israel, is largely that of spiritual Israel, also, now that the spiritual kingdom is announced. Many seem to feel that what they would call the real and practical things of life need all of their attention. They want to "get along" in this world's affairs, and to be somebodies in it, and they find such interest in social and material matters a great hindrance to any response to the divine invitation to a share in the glorious Millennial kingdom, as joint-heirs with Christ,—the great feast, the high calling which has come to us. Well, in one sense of the word this is all right, for it merely keeps out of the kingdom a class which the Lord does not desire should be in it, and which if it did come in would need to be sifted out, later. Although God has bidden many, he is seeking for this feast only such as will highly appreciate it above all other privileges—those who would be willing to sacrifice any and every other thing in order to share it.

The first invitation to the feast, recounted in the parable, represents the first years of our Lord's ministry, which were specially directed toward interesting the scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, who, as the leading men of that nation, and as our Lord said, occupying Moses' seat, really represented that nation as a whole; and the rejection of the invitation by these meant the rejection of it by that nation as a whole. Thus our Lord was careful to bring before the priestly class of that time the evidences of his Messiahship, so that when, for instance, he healed the ten lepers, he charged them to tell no man, but go and show themselves to the priests. Thus the priestly class was informed respecting the miraculous work of our Lord, perhaps more particularly than others. They therefore had the invitation to the feast more particularly than others. However, the fact that the chief representatives of Israel were unready for the invitation was not permitted to hinder, and our Lord, through his disciples, subsequently extended the invitation to another class.

The trial of the nation as a whole, represented by its leaders, ended at Calvary, or rather five days before Calvary, when our Lord rode on the ass and wept over the city of Jerusalem, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee: how oft would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!" As a nation, as a people, you have rejected the divine invitation to the great feast, and as a nation you cannot taste of it. Nevertheless, according to divine intention and promise, through the prophets, God extended mercy to various individuals of that nation, after the nation as a whole had proven itself unworthy of the kingdom privileges. The apostles were sent to gather, not the nation, but such individuals as were of humble mind, to share in the feast, and this calling of individuals, instead of the nation of Israel, was responded to exclusively by those who realized their own unworthiness,—the lame, the halt, the blind, who confessed that they were not perfect, but who desired perfection, and who rejoiced in the call to partake of the kingdom privileges, and gladly forsook all else for it. Amongst them, we are assured, there are not many wise, not many great, not many learned, but chiefly the poor, for although the poor are not always humble by any means, yet amongst them proportionately more were found who were of acceptable character; amongst the rich and the great humility would appear to have been at all times correspondingly scarce.

This second invitation to the poor, the halt and the blind, in the streets and lanes of the city, as a picture would be very difficult to appreciate in our day of hospitals and almshouses, etc., provided by general taxation; but in the days of our Lord it would be very easy indeed to have collected a large crowd of indigent and infirm in short order.

It will be observed that both of these first calls belong to the city—that is, Israel, the nominal kingdom of God. But the two calls failed to find the sufficient number which God had predestinated should constitute the kingdom class. He could indeed have induced others to come in, but, on the contrary, he purposely put the invitation to the feast in such a form as would repel those who were not of the right attitude of heart—in such a form as would attract Israelites indeed, who felt and acknowledged their own unworthiness, and who would be glad, on entering the feast, to have on the robe provided for the guests (symbolical of Christ's righteousness), to cover the filthy rags of their own imperfection. But now, because a sufficient number was not found in Israel to complete the elect number, the message must be sent outside the city, outside of Judaism,—to the Gentiles; and thus the third message was, "Go ye into the highways and whosoever you meet, compel them to come in." The word "compel," however, gives a wrong thought here: it should properly be rendered, urge, persuade.

And thus it has been that throughout the Gospel age, since the bringing in to the Gospel favor of as many Jews as were ready for it, the message has been turned to the Gentiles, "to take out of them a people for God's name," to partake of the great feast with the remnant of Israel. As the Apostle Paul said to some of the Jews in his preaching: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles; for so the Lord hath commanded us." (Acts 13:46, 47) They showed themselves unworthy of this great blessing or gift, in that they were interested more in the things that perish than in the glorious promises of the everlasting future.

The Apostle Paul calls attention to this fact in Rom. 9:27: "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant [only] shall be saved." The Apostle further shows that the call of the Gentiles to be sharers in the kingdom is merely the continuation of the original call, and that we are called in to take the places of those who neglected so great salvation and privilege. He illustrates this by the olive tree, saying that the natural branches were broken off that we, who by nature were wild, might be grafted in and become partakers of the root and fatness of the olive.—Rom. 11:17.

This third call to the great feast of the kingdom blessings and privileges has progressed throughout this Gospel age, and to our understanding is now nearly complete—nearly all the places at the table have been provided with guests; only a few are yet vacant; and so soon as these places are filled, the great feast will begin, and we shall indeed enter into the joys of our Lord, and not only be privileged to feast ourselves, but to carry of its bounties and blessings to all the families of the earth.

The same matters which hindered the Jews, under the first call, from accepting this invitation, have hindered to a large extent also many of the Gentiles who have heard the third call. It is impossible to be thorough-going business men, wealthy, influential, etc., and at the same time follow in the footsteps of Jesus, giving all of our hearts, talents and energies to the Lord in acceptance of his invitation to this feast. The acceptance of the invitation to this feast means a deep interest in it, beyond everything else, so that all other matters, whether houses or lands, father or mother, wife or children, shall be secondary to the interests of the kingdom, and to our responsibilities to the terms and conditions of the invitation. Consequently, what was true respecting Israel has been true as respects the Gentiles, viz., that the call to the kingdom has been generally rejected by those who had a considerable measure of this world's blessings and advantages—those who are rich, either in honor of men or social position or talents or reputation or money, have found it difficult to leave these all to follow Jesus in the narrow way: and, consequently, the Scriptural assurance is, not only that those elected in the end of the Jewish age were chiefly the poor and lowly, but that the same has been true amongst the Gentiles, and is true today: "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble;" but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith.—1 Cor. 1:26; James 2:5.

This does not debar those who have riches of any kind, but really gives them all the greater privilege and opportunity; for they have that much greater talent which, if they will, they may sacrifice, and thus the more fully demonstrate their appreciation of the invitation and of the feast, and be correspondingly appreciated by the Host. Let us all, like the Apostle Paul, lay aside every weight, every hindrance, every besetment, everything precious to us of an earthly kind, that we may run with patience the race set before us, in response to this invitation to the great feast of joint-heirship with our Lord in the kingdom.—Heb. 12:1, 2; Rom. 8:16-18; 12:1, 2.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE BIBLE TRIUMPHANT

Evidences corroborative of the Bible's truthfulness accumulate. Genesis notes Nimrod as the founder of the Chaldee or Babylonian empire before Abraham's day. (Gen. 10:8-12) These and other features of the narrative have been doubted and considered mythical; but explorations in Babylonia seem to confirm the Bible record at every point.

We have already mentioned the exploration of the ruins of ancient Nippur, once the royal capital, commenced some years ago by the representatives of the University of Pennsylvania, U. S. A. The past year, it seems, has been a very fruitful one, the ruins yielding to the searchers vast literary treasures,—the once National Library of Chaldea. The *Biblia* gives the following interesting description of the find:—

"The most surprising feature of the discovery is that the persons who collected the tablets and placed them originally in the pot was an old priest, who lived previous to and during the time of Belshazzar, and who was evidently a scientist of no mean discrimination. The pot was, indeed, his archaeological museum, not portentious in size, but the first museum known to man, and therefore more important for the bearing it had on the history of civilization than any of the great museums in existence today. Among the articles found in it were the following tablets:

"1. One of Sargon, which gives his titles. This particular piece of baked clay may give information concerning the doings of centuries. It was the custom in those days for each king to inscribe a memorial tablet not only with an account of his victories, but with his pedigree, showing where he was born, who were his ancestors, the god he worshiped, and in fact, anything else that might serve to impress posterity with his personal glory. These tablets, therefore, reveal the names and origin of many of the writer's contemporaries, predecessors, and, as the accounts of the successive kings dovetail into one another, they will all in the end constitute an unbroken history of this early civilization. There are, however, comparatively few of these tablets yet found which date so far back as 3800 B. C., hence the vast importance of this tablet.

"2. A tablet written in the reign of Ur Gur. This king is famous for building and remodeling the old temple of Ekur, dedicated to the god Bel. This stone tablet states specifically that he rebuilt the temple wall, which had originally been erected by Narim Sin. He also erected many other buildings in Nippur.

"3. A tablet, excellently preserved, stating the great hall of the temple was called Emakh. It also stated, to Professor Hilprecht's great amazement, that there were forty different shrines in Nippur, each of which was dedicated to a distinct god. This important fact will amaze Babylonian scholars, because it has hitherto been supposed that there was but one god, *i. e.*, Bel, worshiped in Nippur.

"4. A text inscribed by Ashur-etil-ilane, a king who ruled a short time over Assyria.

"5. An important text of Assyria's last king, Sin-shar-ishkun.

"Near the spot where Professor Hilprecht found this wonderful little museum there was picked up a peculiarly shaped barrel cylinder recording King Samsu-iluna's restoration of part of the Temple of Bel. This was about 2000 B. C. Near by lay a curious truncated barrel cylinder marked with the name of Assur-bani-pal, a king whose name is well known to the explorers. In addition to these, two hundred Hebrew bowls, excellently preserved and some of them quite large, were unearthed in another part of the mounds. But these were quite modern, having been left by the Jews who lived on the mounds of Nippur as late as 700 A. D.

"No one can read an account of the work of Professor Hilprecht without being struck by the fact that the people of 7,000 years ago lived very much as we do today. There was the same appreciation of literature and art, as shown in the cuneiform scripts and in their sculpture. Wealthy people lived in the cities and employed attorneys to manage their tenantry who lived in the country on farms. When they bought jewelry a written guaranty went with it. In the archive room of Murashu Sons, attorneys of ancient Nippur, there was found a tablet guaranteeing that an emerald set in a ring would not fall out for twenty years. Houses were built on an extensive, not to say modern, plan, and were furnished more or less magnificently, as evidenced in the palace above mentioned above. Fortifications were built, wars were carried on, conquests were made, and heroes were glorified. People, when they died, were not thrown hastily into the earth, but were laid away carefully in clay coffins, which are found today still covered with the beautiful blue glaze with which they were decorated by the ancient undertaker. And for the benefit of posterity, science was studied and museums were planned that they might be found in the dawn of the twentieth century, and the history of the race read as a sermon in stones."

Commenting on these discoveries, the *London Daily News* says:—

"The find has been much more important than could have been anticipated. In the course of three months no less than 17.200 tablets, covered with cuneiform writings, have been recovered. These are not of the character mentioned in my former notice of the discovery of tablets, namely, the recovery of private business contracts, conveyances, letters, and the like, but bear more resemblance to the contents of an ordinary library. The tablets are historical, philological, and literary. They treat of mythology, of grammar and lexicography, of science, and of mathematics. There is reason to believe that they will for the first time enable the world to form an adequate idea of life in Babylonia such as could be possible only by the discovery of a national library, recording the national progress in literature, science, and thought generally. No document is found in this collection of a later date than 2280 B. C. As this date marks the invasion of the Elamites, the fact adds confirmatory evidence that the library was destroyed during this invasion.

"The unexplored remains of the library are even more extensive than those already examined. The tablets are generally arranged with regularity on clay shelves around the rooms of the library, and Professor Hilprecht estimates that at their present rate of working five more years will be necessary to excavate and examine the contents. He thinks it probable, judging from the contents already found in the rooms excavated, and from various other reasons, that the unexplored part will yield 150.000 tablets to be added to those already discovered. As the library was one of great renown, the chief glory of the temple in early Babylonia, the chief college for instruction in law and religion, which, as in all early systems, were inextricably bound together, and, indeed, in all studies judged worthy of attention, it is evident. that no examination of the contents can be too careful. It is, in fact, hardly too much to say that if the unexplored parts should prove as rich in results as that already found, there will be no example in the world's history, not even in Egypt, of so complete a recovery of the records of an ancient civilization. . . . .

"In the course of the present excavations a palace belonging to the pre-Sargonic period was uncovered beneath an accumulation of seventy feet of rubbish on the southwestern side of the Shatt-en-Nil, dividing Nippur in two parts. Professor Hilprecht himself, having never been doubtful as to the actual site of the temple library at Nippur since his first visit to Babylonia in 1889, considers the discovery of this large building, with 600 feet frontage, which will probably turn out to be the palace of the early priest-kings of Nippur, as the most important result of this year's campaign. Already the few rooms excavated have given valuable results in the shape of pre-Sargonic tablets, of seal cylinders of the earliest type, and clay figurines of early date and great interest. The palace was very extensive, and at least two stories high. . . . .

"Beyond doubt the greatest success of the year is that accomplished by the American expedition. The importance of the discovery of the pre-Sargonic palace and of the library of so famous a temple as that of Nippur was at once recognized. The systematic and thorough examination which it is hoped will be made next year promises to give a full and detailed picture of life in what the author of the Book of Genesis regarded as one of the oldest cities in the world, and one whose origin, even in his time, was attributed to the famous hunter whose name has become mythical. The results of the explorations will probably show that Nippur was as important in the fifth millennium before Christ as it was in the third; that it anticipated the civilization and the period when Babylon took the lead by at least two thousand years, and that at this early period the human race in Babylonia had acquired arts and knowledge which hitherto have only been attributed to a much later period.

* * *

How does this agree with the claim of Evolutionists that Adam was but one remove from the highest type of monkey, and too ignorant at first to wear clothing? On the contrary, how these evidences of intelligence amongst the ancients corroborate the old Bible, at which "higher criticism," falsely so called sneers! The Bible's declaration is that the first man was *up*, high up in intelligence, in the very image of God, and that he fell *from* that high estate because of sin. The fact is that during the 1656 years to the flood, the *fall*, the depravity of mankind, was very great; and that in Abraham's day, about 400 years later, the race was still further enervated, through climatic and other influences, as shown by the fact that Arphaxad, born two years after the flood, lived 438 years, while his children, during those four centuries, gradually declined in vitality and years, so that Terah, Abraham's father, died at two-hundred-five: and it is reasonable to presume that the mental vigor suffered equally with the physical. And yet the Scriptures show us Abraham, every way a noble specimen of humanity: and now ancient Nippur's libraries, then in process of formation, show us that a high degree of intelligence was then prevalent among the sons of Ham, as well as in the family of Shem.

But we caution all to beware of the *dates* ascribed to these ancient tablets, cities, etc.; for they are only scientific guesses: and since they are contradictory to Bible chronology, we know that they are unreliable. The worldly-wise, depressing the Bible as unscientific, and relying on their own "findings," endeavor to reconcile such archaeological testimonies with their previous errors instead of with the Bible. And scientists, misled into reckoning on "evolution" lines, have given to human history an age much beyond that declared in God's Word, which we accept as the only authority;—some of them going to more absurd extremes than others.

Blessed is the man who putteth his trust in the Lord and in his Word.

MANNA FOR THE FAMISHING OF INDIA

"The strange appearance of manna on the stems of the bamboo, was reported last March by the divisional forest officer, Chanda, Central Provinces, and notices of this phenomenon have been published in the local papers. The bamboo forests of Chanda consist of *Dendrocalamus strictus*, the male bamboo, a bushy plant from twenty to thirty feet in height, and affecting the cooler northerly and westerly slopes of Central and Southern India. This is said to be the first time in the history of these forests that a sweet and gummy substance has been known to exude from the trees. The gum has been exuding in some abundance, and it has been found very palatable to the natives in the neighborhood, who have been consuming it as a food. The occurrence of the manna at this season is all the more remarkable, since the greatest famine India has known is this year visiting the country, and the districts where the scarcity is most felt are in the Central Provinces."—*Nature.*

WHAT WILL BECOME OF PROTESTANTISM IN JAPAN

"*The Japan Advertiser* has it upon the best of authority that one of the American mission boards is next month to withdraw from Japan its only remaining representative, and is to leave its work, henceforth, entirely in the hands of the Japanese, who have become interested in it. 'The latter(says our contemporary) are to have the use of the buildings and property (of no inconsiderable value), and some pecuniary aid will continue to be granted them, but the work itself will be practically free from foreign guidance.' "

A literary man, residing in Japan, Mr. Penman, makes comment on the above as follows:—

"This extract shows clearly the failure of Protestant Christianity in this country; for it is failure, and not large-hearted trust in the Japanese Protestant, that has caused this retreat. There are at present independent Protestant churches in Japan; but, in the first place, their Christianity has become so vague that it can hardly be called Christianity at all; and, in the second place, they are not making headway. A Japanese journalist, who relates his experiences in the columns of the *Kirisuto Tokyo Shimbun*, says that he examined the roll of one of these churches some time ago, and found out of a total membership of 323 no less than 86 persons were marked absent. He was informed that out of the remainder, 123 persons were Christian only in name, so that the work of the church had to be carried on by a little over 100 converts; and even out of these the average attendance at church meetings did not exceed 77. And the last report of the *Kumiai* (Independent Japanese churches—Protestant, of course,) shows that the number of self-supporting churches has fallen from 40 to 34, and, if the truth must be told, there are not more than 24 or 25 of these that are self-supporting in reality.

"Not only are the 'Independent' churches thus going backward in point of numbers, they are, as I have just hinted, going woefully backward in regard to doctrine as well. I shall give a concrete example of what I mean. The Doshisha is a fine educational institution established by a Japanese Protestant who was, I believe, a sincere and able Christian. It was run for a number of years as a religious establishment in connection with the American Mission Board, and of course the trustees were all Christians of good standing, and generally clergymen. For some time they *were* Christians, but changes—mental and otherwise—occur rapidly in Japan, and only last year they had progressed so far toward Agnosticism that a breach with the American Mission Board occurred. I visited personally some of the leaders of the movement, and they told me that they certainly did not believe in the divinity of Christ; in fact, I failed to discover any one point of Christian belief that they did believe in. . . . . Ten years ago Protestantism had a very good outlook in Japan, and many highly educated Japanese embraced it. But it took the 'advanced thinkers' among the converts only a year or two to out-Spencer Spencer, and today the vernacular Protestantism of Japan is getting on as best it can without any burning or shining light whatsoever. The burning and shining lights—in other words, the leading native ecclesiastics—became all of them 'philosophers,' and, while still professing to be Christians, attempted to call in German and other materialism to their aid. The English and American missionary bodies to which they belonged, naturally objected. The American Episcopal church of Japan fell foul of Dr. Sagiura, a Japanese minister (who has had, by the way, the advantage of an excellent American education), who denied the miraculous birth of Christ. Many of the leading Japanese clergymen resigned, and, in another direction, the organ of the Lutheran Church in Japan, a magazine which maintained that the Bible is a revelation, was discontinued because 'no suitable editor could be found who was prepared to defend such a theory.' "

Mr. Penman quotes a Japanese writer in a Tokyo magazine as follows:

"Can it be said that our Christian philosophy has been more successful than our preaching of morality? I trow not. After attempting to call in German materialism to the aid of Christianity with poor results, our philosophers fell back on the ultra-idealism of Brahmanism and Buddhism, with the outcome that they have gradually explained away the personality of the Christian God, reducing him to a mere controlling force, or to a fixed law called *Temmei*. What possibility is there of building a system of morality on belief in the existence of such an entity as this? . . . . If we ask what amount of real faith in Christianity there exists in this country, the answer must be discouraging. Christians dispute about opinions and discuss this doctrine and that, but beneath it all, it seems to me, there is little real *belief*. Christianity, in coming to us, has had the advantage of being associated with a system of civilization whose merits are acknowledged. It has been represented as part and parcel of that civilization, and hence has in the past received a certain amount of prestige that it is no longer likely to retain. The feeling of the nation in reference to the various elements composing what is called Western civilization has changed, and hence Christianity is no longer likely to be regarded as an inseparable part of that civilization. If things proceed thus, in thirty years Christianity in Japan will be effaced."

We cannot vouch for the correctness of these pessimistic views of the Protestant situation in Japan: doubtless honest people view these things through various spectacles. We do know, however, that Mr. Penman's picture corresponds well with what we see right here at home—that the colleges and theological seminaries of this so-called Christian land are hotbeds of infidelity called "advanced thought," "higher criticism," "Evolution," etc. We cannot wonder, then, that the same spirit has reached Japanese institutions; nor can we wonder that the Japanese, less bound to the Bible by traditions of the past, should be more free to speak and act out of their unbelief—especially when popularity, the masses of the people, etc., would all favor such a course.

Surely the shaking and sifting will be thorough (Heb. 12:26); for it is the Lord that is back of it, wishing to thoroughly separate the little handful of wheat from the vast quantity of tares constituting nominal "Christendom," "Babylon." We may be sure, however, that not one grain of the true wheat will be neglected by the great Reaper.—Matt. 24:24.

SEEKING 2,000,000 HEADS OF WHEAT AND TARES FOR "METHODISM'S BIG FLOCK"

The public press has the following announcement:

"Methodists Seeking 2,000,000 Converts—The Twentieth Century Movement has Opened Offices in Chicago—200,000 Workers Enlisted—Greatest Harvest of the Year's Revival Expected in the Large Cities

"CHICAGO, Sept. 8.—The twentieth century movement of the Methodist Episcopal church to save 2,000,000 souls is well under way.

"Bishop James M. Thoburn proposed the plan at the General Conference of the church in May. It has been the chief topic at the ministers' meetings. The order has gone to the Bishops and will be handed down to each member of the church. Briefly, the scheme is to have 200,000 members each pledge themselves to bring ten converts into the church before Dec. 31, 1901. The Methodist church is so thoroughly organized that the movement will be carried out without a hitch throughout the country.

"W. W. Cooper, secretary of the movement, has opened an office in the Methodist Church block in Chicago.

" 'A large part of the work ought to be done in the big cities,' says Mr. Cooper. 'This is the beginning of a revival that will extend through the first half of the coming century. Every organization connected with the church will be utilized to further this grand plan. There is much dead timber in the church, which, it is hoped, will respond to this invitation to extend the influence of Christ.

" 'It is quite true that church membership is not increasing in ratio to the census, so the Methodist church has decided to start a great agitation.' "

Last year witnessed a decrease in Methodist numbers, and this and other offsets are proposed. No doubt *results* will follow. It is as much a part of this harvest work to gather the tares into "bundles" and "bind" them, as it is to gather the "wheat" into the light and liberty wherewith Christ makes free and safe in his "garner." Should any ripe "wheat" be gathered into these "bundles," we may surely expect them to be gathered out again, speedily; for "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and is calling in a voice which all his true ones will hear and recognize and obey, "Come out of her, *my people*, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues!"—2 Cor. 6:17; Rev. 18:4.

No doubt this "Twentieth Century Movement" will spread among all denominations, and favor the "Union" movement. No doubt also it will lead to an increased bitterness against present truth and all who are loyal to it as the true gospel. It would not surprise us if this led to persecution, for no doubt many now, like Saul of Tarsus, will verily think that in persecuting the truth and its servants they are doing God service.

REV. R. A. TORREY'S ARRAIGNMENT

At the convention of Christian workers, Chicago, Sept. 19, Rev. Torrey, as reported by the *Chicago Evening Post*, said:

"Unbelief is rampant. Many regard it as a mark of intellectual superiority to reject the Bible, and even faith in God and immortality. It is about the only mark of superiority many possess, and perhaps that is the reason they cling to it so tenaciously. Many of us who are professedly orthodox ministers are infidels. Worldliness is rampant among church members. Many church members are just as eager as any in the rush to get rich. They use the methods of the world in the accumulation of wealth, and they hold just as fast to it as any, when they have it. Many do not believe in the whole Bible. The book of Genesis is a myth; Jonah is an allegory; and even the miracles of the Son of God are questioned. The doctrine of prayer is old-fashioned, and the doctrine of the holy Spirit is sneered at. Conversion is unnecessary, and hell is no longer believed in. Then look at the fads and errors that have sprung up out of this loss of faith. . . . Praylessness abounds among church members on every hand. Many Christians spend twice as much time every day wallowing in the mire of the daily papers as they do bathing in the cleansing waves of God's holy Word."

ZIONISM PROSPERING SLOWLY

While the last Zionist Congress (London, August) was a success as respects numbers and enthusiasm, it revealed no progress on the part of its leaders in the accomplishment of its aims, or steps thereto. The *London Spectator* says of it:

"The main arguments of the speakers are the horrible position of the Jews in countries where, as in Roumania, they are actively persecuted, and the benefit they may be to Europe, as the vanguard of an army of intelligence for penetrating Asia. Both are sound arguments, but some hotter impulse than either would seem to be required before the majority of Jews will quit countries to which they are accustomed, for a country which has for ages been represented to them as desolate beyond experience. The English Jews in particular are too comfortable to move; the Jews in professions on the Continent fear to be declared foreigners; and the poor majority have no means of influencing the Turkish government, which is not favorable to the movement. Some day or other, when the Seraglio is in acute want of money, a great experiment will be tried; but meanwhile Zionism is rather the highly interesting aspiration of a great race, than a practical design for the restoration of the Jews to their own land."

Addressing the Congress and speaking on the "General Position of the Jew," Dr. Max Nordau is reported to have said:

"'Since they began to review the position of the Jew among the nations, during the sittings of the Congress, the drama had developed before their eyes, and every act was progressively heartrending. The book of Job must be taken to be the picture of the Jewish position. Anti-Semitism was growing more virulent. The press of Europe bore testimony to Jews being cast in prison for a crime to none so revolting as to the Jew. In Prussia these ridiculous charges had received their quietus, and the energetic action of the government deserved the best thanks of Jewry.

"'Why are we thus treated? Are we not as human as our neighbors? Are we not as innocent? Is our desire to support our wives and children less laudable in us than in them? There have been other religious persecutions, but none so gruesome.'

"One historical parallel occurred to his mind. In 1729-31 all the Protestants in Salsburg, Austria, were expelled from their homes on account of religious intolerance. They took all necessary comforts with them. Church dignitaries offered them valedictory blessings, and even accompanied them some distance towards their new land. King Frederick William I. of Prussia offered them a home, and their new neighbors vied with each other in the heartiness of their greeting. But the poor 270 000 Jews exiled from Roumania carry nought but the rags on their backs; for their sick there was no medical consolation; and their future was as uncertain as their past was dark. They are accompanied on their rough road with suspicion and hatred; are met with repulses and rebuffs, and with the cry, ever growing sterner, 'Go further, further.'"

ARE THE HEATHENS SAVED OR LOST?

Inconsistency seems to be stamped on every doctrine and practice of "orthodox" Churchianity. For instance, point out to them that only one-fifth of the world's population make the slightest claim to be Christians, in the most formal sense, and that therefore the four-fifths who are professedly heathen can in no sense be *saved in Christ*, and that unless there be hope for them in the future, by an awakening from death to "a resurrection by judgment," there can be no other hope; and they will at once reply, Oh, no! we believe and teach that the heathen can be *saved* and go to heaven if they believe in Mohammed or Buddha or Confucius or some other divinity, if they do the best they know how.

You ask them, Will not *heaven* then be a place of common rather than choice spirits, with such a preponderance of heathen? and, What advantage then have Christians? and they are sorely perplexed, but generally not sufficiently perplexed to start a fresh investigation of the divine Word to see where the difficulty lies. When we further ask, Why the expenditure of millions of dollars annually, and the sacrifice of many lives of missionaries, if the heathen are *saved* anyway? they are confused at their own inconsistency. And if we then inquire, Do you not claim that the *hearing* of the Gospel, with the natural ear, brings condemnation to eternal torment if it be rejected? And do you not admit that the vast majority of those who thus hear do reject the Gospel? And putting this part of your faith with the other, do you not admit that one or the other must be wrong, or else that missionary effort is keeping millions of heathen people *out of heaven?*—Then they are confused and want (not to search for the truth but) to change the subject and stop thinking lest they lose their "faith." Poor things, they hold fast to their nonsensical delusions, calling them *faith!*

But now, in line with the above, we have another question to propound to so-called Orthodoxy, based on the following clipping from the daily press:

"POPULATION ANNIHILATED

"Five Thousand Chinese Driven into the Amur River, Where They Perished Miserably—Shot if They Attempted to Land

"London, Sept. 21.—'Authentic accounts have been received here.' says the Moscow correspondent of the *Standard*, 'of a horrible massacre at Blagovestchensk, which was undoubtedly carried out under direct orders from the Russian authorities, and which then let loose the tide of slaughter through Amur.

"'The entire Chinese population of 5,000 souls was escorted out of town to a spot five miles up the Amur, and then, being led in batches of a few hundred to the river bank, were ordered to cross over to the Chinese side. No boats were provided and the river is a mile wide. The Chinese were flung alive into the stream and were stabbed or shot at the least resistance, while Russian volunteers, who lined the bank, clubbed or shot any who attempted to land. Not one escaped alive. The river bank for miles was strewn with corpses.'"

It is the claim of certain religious journals, and of many ministers of the gospel, that the present war in China for the protection of ministers and missions is a holy war in the interest of Christianity and its civilization, as against heathenism and its civilization. Now our question is whether this war is adding to the population of heaven or of hell, according to "orthodoxy?" It is surely a very important and proper question from their standpoint. Let us see; the succoring of the ministers and missionaries (every one of whom no doubt would have been passported to heaven by his own denomination) has cost the lives of probably 50,000 persons thus far, about 5,000 of the number being soldiers representing Christendom (as the Russians of the above clipping). Now did the entire 50.000 go to heaven?—the heathen because they did not know of Christ and the soldiers of "Christendom" because they were "soldiers of the cross?" If so, then the war already has *saved* 50,000 and should be prosecuted vigorously.

If our question be answered negatively—that the heathen 45,000 went to torment, and the "Christian" 5,000, being no more "saints" than the heathen, went to the same awful fate, then another question would be in order, namely: Would it not have been more Christ-like for the few rescued ministers and missionaries to have taken death as martyrs, in their faith of an immediate entrance to heaven; and to have allowed the 50,000 thus far slain in the war, to escape the *torture* for a few years more at least? How inconsistent "orthodoxy" is in its every proposition respecting the very subject it professes to know all about; *viz.*, the divine plan of salvation!

But how consistent the Bible teaching on these subjects; —(1) That only consecrated believers in the atonement are Christians—"saints." (2) That the vast majority of those killed on both sides were merely "children of this world," and not to be reckoned among the "children of God," whose trial for "glory, honor and immortality" is *now* in progress. (3) That the hour is coming in the which not only these, but "*all that are in their graves* shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth," the masses "*unto* [*i. e.*, to have an opportunity for] a resurrection [raising *fully* out of death, in perfect and everlasting conditions] by judgments,"* disciplines, corrections in righteousness, which will prevail toward all men during the Millennium.

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* The word in this text (John 5:29) rendered "*damnation*" is very improperly translated. It should be "*judgment*," as in the *Revised Version*, and in verses 22, 27 and 30 of this same chapter and many other places in the Scriptures where this word *krisis* occurs.

CAN RESTITUTION CHANGE THE ETHIOPIAN'S SKIN?

The following, from the *New York World*, is the third we have seen reported. These suggest and illustrate the process of restitution soon due. The item reads:

"From Black to White He Slowly Turned"

"PARKERSBURG, W. Va., Sept. 8.—It has fallen to the lot of the Rev. William H. Draper, pastor of the Logan Memorial church, of Washington Conference, A. M. E. church, of this town, to give a living affirmative answer to the famous Biblical question, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?" Though once as black as charcoal, the Rev. Mr. Draper is now white. His people say that his color was changed in answer to prayer. Many years ago Draper was employed by a fair-skinned man, and he was often heard to remark that if he could only be white like his employer, he would be happy. While in the white man's service Draper 'experienced' religion.

"From that day forward he prayed constantly and fervently that he might become white. Thirty years ago his prayer began to be answered. He first experienced a prickling sensation on his face, and upon close investigation found a number of small white spots scarcely larger than the point of a pin. He became alarmed, thinking he had some peculiar disease but he did not suffer, and aside from the prickling sensation felt nothing unusual. Gradually the white spots became larger and extended themselves, until now, after the change has been in progress for over thirty years, Draper has not a single dark spot on his body.

"Many years ago, before this strange metamorphosis took place, Mr. Draper was in charge of the same church he has now. He was popular with his flock and his departure was a source of great regret. When he recently returned to Parkersburg there was great rejoicing among the churchmen because their favorite pastor was coming back. When, however, Draper appeared in the pulpit the first Sunday, not one of the congregation recognized him. In fact, it was all he could do to convince them that he, a white man, was the same old black preacher they had years before."

DIVINE CARE FOR THE LOST

LUKE 15:1-10.—OCT. 21.

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

Lost, as used in connection with mankind, has quite a different meaning in the Bible from that commonly given it in modern theology. The latter uses the term "lost" in connection with reprobates, for whom there is no hope; it implies, according to "orthodoxy," hopeless, endless, eternal torment. But from the Scriptural standpoint the word "lost" is used in an almost opposite sense, as will be noted in the lesson before us.

Our Lord, holy in word and in conduct, naturally would draw to himself especially the holiness people of his day, and these were the Pharisees, amongst whom, however, were many whose holiness was of a hypocritical character—delighting in outward show rather than in purity and holiness of heart. Recent lessons showed us our Lord the guest and companion of prominent Pharisees, and how he improved the opportunity to preach the gospel to them as well as to others. But the Pharisees, accustomed to thinking of themselves as the holier class of the Jews, had gradually separated themselves from the lower elements of that people, so that in our Lord's time the two classes mingled very little; the Pharisees refusing to acknowledge the others as brethren and fellow-heirs of the divine promises. Consequently, when they perceived that the lower classes of the Jews were interested in Jesus' teachings, and that Jesus did not hold himself aloof from them, but mingled with and taught them just the same as others, they wondered, and this inclined them to repudiate Jesus, whom they would have been glad to have had as one of their number if he had been willing to be known as a Pharisee and to conform to their customs. It was to correct the wrong ideas of these Pharisees that Jesus gave five parables, which we are about to consider—two of them in this lesson.

The parable of the true shepherd who, loving his sheep and caring for them, left the ninety and nine well cared for by under-shepherds in the wilds (not in a desert) and went after the one lost sheep until he found it, gives us an illustration of the divine care. Possibly our Lord meant no further lesson than this to be taken from his words; but if we shall suppose that the parable was intended to be applied in its varied particulars, and to illustrate features of the divine plan of salvation, we would be obliged to suppose that the one sheep that was lost represented Adam and the human family, and that the ninety and nine never lost, but remaining under the shepherd's care, were the angels and other spirit beings, who never wandered into sin and away from God; and who always have been under his supervision and care. In this view the shepherd going after the straying sheep would represent our Lord Jesus, leaving the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and coming into human conditions in the interest of mankind.

To take any other detailed view of the parable than this would seem inconsistent; as, for instance, to suppose that the lost sheep represented the degraded element of humanity, and ninety-nine sheep a holiness class, would be inconsistent in two ways: (1) "There is none righteous, no, not one," is the Scriptural declaration; and again, as the prophet has declared, "we *all* like sheep have gone astray." (Rom. 3:10; Isa. 53:6) (2) Even if it should be claimed that the ninety-nine represented some who are relatively whole, tho not actually so, the illustration would be inapt; because it will not be questioned that only a small minority—one in ten thousand, or one in a hundred thousand of earth's sixteen hundred millions, is even in a condition of reckoned and relative harmony with Jehovah, the Great Shepherd.

Viewing the one sheep as representing the whole of humanity, fallen in Adam and straying far from paths of righteousness, and viewing Jesus as the Good Shepherd, the representative of the Father, the Great Shepherd (Psa. 23:1), we see that the work of going after the lost sheep began at our Lord's first advent. We see the cost to our Saviour incidental to his start for the recovery of the sheep, but we do not yet see the sheep recovered; for in no sense of the word is mankind brought back into harmony with God. We do, however, see that during this Gospel age God is selecting from humanity an elect church, to be the body of Christ—members of the Good Shepherd, under Jesus as the Head; and we see that it is costing every member of the body something to prepare to join in this work of seeking the lost sheep—humanity in general—during the Millennial age.

Already the sheep is found, in the sense of being located; indeed, in that sense of the word it was not lost. But as it was lost, in the sense of having wandered from God into sin and degradation, in the same sense of the word it must be recovered or brought back, by processes of *restitution* (Acts 3:19-21) out of degradation, out of the mire of sin, and the horrible pit of iniquity and death. It will require the entire Millennial age to bring back the sheep in the full, perfect sense of the parable; but meanwhile our Lord assures us that every step in this great plan for human salvation is viewed with interest by the heavenly host, the sheep who strayed not from the Father's fold: and the figure changing a little in our Lord's explanation, and no longer represented by one sheep, but by many (even as the human family, tho originally one, is now many), he declares that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth—that returns to the fold, to harmony with God.

Those now returning to harmony with God are accepted in the Beloved, and justified freely from all things by the grace that was in him, and are, in the language of the Apostle, "returning to the Shepherd and Caretaker of their souls" (1 Pet. 2:25); and called to be co-laborers with the Good Shepherd, as members of his "body."

In the case of Father Adam, the one original straying sheep, as in the case of many of his posterity, the lost condition is not the desirable one—far rather would he and many others have gone back again to the fold from which he strayed; but in the degradation and mire of sin, they became so degraded and helpless that it was impossible for them to *return* in their own strength by the way in which they went. They needed a Savior—one able to save them unto the uttermost—able to recover them fully from all condemnation of sin, and to bring them back completely into the fold of God; and just such an one the heavenly Father has provided in our Lord Jesus: "He is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto the Father through him."

True, there will be a class, as the Scriptures clearly show, who, after having received at the Lord's hands all the blessings and opportunities which his love has provided for their recovery, will still persist in wilfulness—self-will, and thus spurn the Good Shepherd's proffered assistance. These, in the Scriptures, are said to "sin wilfully after they have come to a knowledge of the truth;" for such, the Apostle declares, there remains no longer an interest in the great sacrifice, and "it is impossible to renew" or recover them. Respecting the course of such it is written, "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that ye should pray for it." Whoever thus sins wilfully and persistently puts himself beyond the reach of the Good Shepherd, and dies the second death, and thus ceases to have any part or lot in the divine plan. (Heb. 6:4-6; 1 John 5:16) It was not for the "goat" class that the Good Shepherd gave his life, and seeks in the desert; nor for the "wolves;" but merely for those who retain something at least of the "sheep" nature, despite their degradation in sin. Adam was a "sheep," or, as the Scriptures declare, a "son of God" (Luke 3:38); and while his transgression was a wilful one, in some respects, we have no reason to suppose that it was more than a *wandering* of the "sheep" from the fold, into ways of self-will: it did not mean a change of nature from a sheep disposition to that of a goat or a wolf. It did not mean that Adam preferred to be a "child of the devil."

Had Adam at heart become intelligently and wilfully an enemy of God and of righteousness we cannot suppose that the all-wise Shepherd would have sent his Son after him as a "sheep." True, many of the children of Adam today have attained marked characteristics of goat nature, and, as the Apostle declares, are "enemies of God through wicked works." (Col. 1:21) Nevertheless, the Apostle also explains that many of these are in this condition, not wilfully, but because they have been deceived by Satan into putting light for darkness and darkness for light—the eyes of their understanding have been deceived. He explained that the "god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them that believe not" lest they should see the glorious light of truth. (2 Cor. 4:4) Many of these, then, who through association with the adversary have become goat-like in many respects, still have something of the sheep nature, which, under proper enlightenment, would assert itself and be glad to have the Good Shepherd restore them fully to divine favor and the fold.

From this standpoint, which we believe is the true one, and the only one in harmony with the various features of the parable, we perceive that God takes no account whatever of those who will go into the second death; they will have no existence whatever, so far as God and his plan are concerned, from the moment they lose the sheep nature. And the one sheep which our Lord will recover during restitution times, and by the close of the Millennium bring fully back into the fold of God, will be *the human family* as God has recognized it from the first; *viz.*, those created in God's image and likeness, and who never fully lose that image and likeness, and in whom his image and likeness will be revived and restored during the Millennium. The lost sheep, which originally was represented in one (Adam and Eve) in its recovery will be represented by hundreds of millions of the redeemed and restored of mankind.

THE LOST PIECE OF SILVER

The parable of the woman who, having a bracelet on which were hung ten pieces of silver—a marriage token—on losing one of these set diligently to work until she found it, is another representation of the same thought expressed foregoing. The woman's energy in seeking for the lost piece of silver is given by our Lord as an illustration of *divine energy* on behalf of *lost humanity*. And here again we see that the Scriptures use the word "lost" in reference to the original loss, and not at all in respect to those who will be destroyed in the second death—the latter are not said to be lost; they cease to exist; they are not reckoned in the divine calculations at all, and not worthy to be mentioned. They are not at all like the original that was lost, which God recognized and proposes to recover.

The ten pieces of silver were not only of value, but each had stamped upon it, as is the custom with coin, a certain image or likeness. And so with all the sons of God, angels, archangels, and we know not how many other orders of spirit beings, were made in the *image* and *likeness* of God. It was one of these that was lost—the human one, man. And it was that which was lost that was sought, and ultimately found.

The houses of olden times, lighted mainly through the doorway, with the floors of earth (clay or sand or stones) more or less littered and defiled, well represented the condition of sin and degradation in which mankind was lost, as represented in father Adam, who bore the image and likeness of God, as represented in the lost coin of the parable. The parable does not represent the processes of restitution, but merely the original loss and the ultimate recovery of the *same thing that was lost*, and the energy put forth to this end. The lighting of the candle and the sweeping diligently represent the work of God through the Christ, which will be accomplished by the end of the Millennial age, when that which was lost and sought for, will have been fully recovered.

The restored race, when returned to the heavenly Father at the close of the Millennial age will, each and all, be as perfect in his image and likeness as was Adam in his creation, with the added benefits of larger knowledge and fuller appreciation of the divine One, whose likeness they will bear. No account is taken in this parable, either, of the increase in the numbers of the human family, nor of those members of Adam's posterity who, by reason of wilful sin (the love of sin more than righteousness) will be "destroyed from amongst the people." (Acts 3:23) They have no standing in the Father's sight; indeed, the Father takes no cognizance of any except that which was lost, and that which will ultimately be restored to him by his faithful representative, Christ, who seeks and finds.

The great time of rejoicing, both in heaven and in earth, will come at the close of the Millennial age, when all things in heaven and in earth will be heard praising Him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb; but now, in advance of the complete rejoicing, our Lord assures us that all the heavenly host rejoices in every evidence of the accomplishment of the great work; rejoices over one sinner that repenteth—who fully turns from sin to harmony with God. And if the angels in heaven rejoice, so, in proportion as they are in harmony with God and the heavenly beings, will all who profess to be God's people on earth have rejoicing in the recovery of fellow-creatures out of the snare and blindness of sin and Satan.

This was the particular lesson which our Lord sought to impress upon the Pharisees—that instead of holding themselves aloof from, and feeling offended at, those who were hearing Jesus gladly, they should, if they were in harmony with God and the heavenly holy ones, have rejoiced to see any evidence of repentance and reformation; and should have been glad to assist back into harmony with God those who, as the Apostle expresses it, were "feeling after God, if haply they might find him."—Acts 17:27.

And this must be the attitude of all the Lord's people today: if they have not this sentiment of heart it is an evidence that they have not the spirit of the Lord. And to have such a feeling of loving interest in the recovery of others out of sin, and a disposition to assist them back to harmony with God, not only is an evidence of a condition of heart which is in harmony with God, but will be found to be an aid to such themselves, an assistance in making straight paths for their feet, that they themselves, under the Shepherd's care, may ultimately reach the fold in safety.

So then, let all of the Lord's dear people who have already been found by the Good Shepherd, and who have accepted his loving care and assistance back to God, cultivate more and more the spirit of sympathy for others, and of helpfulness and coöperation in the work in which the Good Shepherd is engaged—not yet in seeking for humanity as a whole, but now specially in rendering assistance to those whom the Lord is, in the present age, seeking out as the "first-fruits" of his work and victory—edifying one another, building one another up in the most holy faith, encouraging one another: helping one another to put on the wedding garment, and to be meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, as joint-heirs in the kingdom.—1 Thess. 5:11; Jude 20; Col. 1:12; Rom. 8:17.

THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN

Luke 15:11-24.—Oct. 28.

"I will arise and go to my father."

Having given in the foregoing parables of The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin, an outline of God's general dealing with the human family, our Lord now gave a third parable as illustrating God's special dealings with the people of Israel. He wished not only that his hearers should have the general illustration of God's goodness and care for the recovery of the lost, but now he would give a special lesson that would bring the matter close home to his hearers—both Pharisees and publicans—and show to all the real situation and the proper line of conduct for each to take.

It will be noticed in this connection that while our Lord was known to be friendly toward sinners, he was never known to condone sin. The friendship of the publicans was not gained through our Lord's falsifying matters to them and claiming that they were not sinners; but on the contrary, by his declaring them to be sinners, by showing his sympathy and love, and that their case, so far from being a hopeless one, as the conduct of the Pharisees would imply, was hopeful, if they would but repent and turn to God. The "father" in the parable represents Jehovah God, and the "two sons" represent two classes in Israel, the elder son representing Moses and the prophets, and all who "sat in Moses' seat," as representatives of the law, with all who sought to conform their lives to its requirements, Pharisees, etc. The younger son represents the remainder of that people Israel—the class which was inclined to wilfulness and waywardness as respects the divine law.

These two classes, all Israel, were inheritors together of certain wonderful blessings and promises—the blessings being equally divided between them, but the promises remaining for those who would be faithful to the will of the Father. The elder son represented the class which, having respect to the promises, enjoyed the blessings at home with the Father, that is, in fellowship with God as his people. The younger son represented the class which ignored the promises, took its share of present blessings, and departing from God wandered afar from him, in sin and disregard of the law.

The latter class had anticipated much pleasure in the wayward course; but as a matter of fact found, as all transgressors do, that "the way of the transgressor is hard." And in this respect the sinner-class of Israel was no different from any other class of sinners at any other time living in violation of the known law; it is an attitude of want, of hunger, of dissatisfaction, discontent; it is a condition of slavery to sin and of receiving of sin's wages; in the present life, wages of unhappiness, melancholia, heart-aches as well as body-aches. The parable represents this son as thoroughly disgusted with his condition, resolving to return to his father's house—not expecting to be an inheritor of the great promises, the rights to which were admittedly forfeited, but merely hoping to have the privilege of being admitted to the house as a *servant*, not hoping to be received as a *son*.

Our Lord thus illustrates the condition of some of the publicans and sinners hovering about him and listening to his teachings, respecting whose reception and instruction the Pharisees were finding fault. Our Lord would have them see the attitude of the heavenly Father toward these returning ones, and in the parable pictured him as seeing the repentant prodigal a long way off, and as having compassion for him, and great willingness to receive him. How this must have touched the hearts of the publicans who heard—to think that God was willing to receive them back again, not to spurn them as the Pharisees did! Our Lord proceeds with the picture further, to show that the Father not only received the prodigal, but, beyond his expectations, received him as a son, not as a servant—providing for him a new robe of righteousness, and making for him a great feast of welcome.

Then, as illustrating the attitude of the complaining Pharisees, the elder brother is pictured in the parable as disappointed at the return of the prodigal brother. Thus our Lord revealed to them how different was their attitude of heart from that of the heavenly Father; and thus he gently reproved them. The parable shows the attitude of the Pharisees in declining to call the prodigal "brother," saying—"This *thy son*," while the view of the heavenly Father to the contrary is expressed in the words, "This *thy brother* was dead and is alive again."

The Pharisees and others of the Jewish nation who sought to keep the law—to be faithful to God's requirements, were, so far as that was concerned, in the right attitude; and up to that time and point were heirs of all that God had promised, and had to give; and had they been not only outwardly religious but religious in heart also, they would have been fully prepared to have received at our Lord's hands the great blessings of the kingdom privileges which being in a wrong attitude of heart, they despised and rejected and lost. This their loss is represented in the parable by their refusal to go in to the feast made by the Father, to which they were as welcome as the returned prodigal, and in which feast, had they been in a proper attitude of heart, they would have had a prominent place with the Father in bestowing the welcome on the returned one. But as they were not in the right attitude of heart to receive their repentant brethren, neither would they have been in the right attitude of heart to be the Lord's instruments of general blessing in his kingdom. He selects for joint-heirs with himself in the kingdom, not the self-righteous, who despise others, but such as are of an humble heart, and who, receiving divine mercies and favors as a grace, are filled with thankfulness, and having the spirit of humility and of harmony with the Father, rejoice to co-operate with him in all of his benevolent plans for the recovery of the lost.

To hitch this parable on to the general theme presented in the two preceding, we might view the prodigal son as representing, in a secondary sense, all the remainder of mankind outside of those few in Israel who were seeking to do the Father's will; and from this standpoint we can see that the feast of fat things provided for the sinners in Israel corresponds to the feast to be opened ultimately to the whole world of mankind under the kingdom (Isa. 25:6), that all may return to the Father's house and that all who thus return will be received of God through Christ, not as slave-servants, but as sons.

The two preceding parables make no reference to the human will in the matter of the recovery of the lost; but this parable makes the human will very prominent. It was the *will* of the elder son which for a time kept him in the Father's house; it was the *will* of the prodigal son that led him forth, his wilful going into the depths of degradation not being hindered by the Father. Likewise, it was his own *will* that led him to retrace his steps to the Father's house; and it was only the *will* of the elder son that hindered him from entering into all the joys of the festal occasion with which the parable closes.

This parable also ignores the second death, and the class that will ultimately be cut off therein. The son that was lost, and subsequently was found, was lost in his going away into sin, and not lost in eternal torment. He was found in his return to God. He was dead, so far as the Father was concerned, when he was away; but he was alive again when he willingly returned.

The lesson to the Pharisees, in this parable, like the others, was in respect to their proper duties toward their brethren, who in receiving Jesus were showing evidences of a return to God. Indeed, so far as we know, few, if any, of our Lord's disciples were of the religious class of that time, who claimed to sit in Moses' seat, and to be in every sense of the word the favorites of the Father in that covenanted nation. That the Pharisees did not profit greatly by the parable seems evident; few from that class were willing to abandon their position of vaunted superiority, and to acknowledge that in everything they were wholly dependent upon the Father's grace, and of themselves could do nothing.

Some parallel to those conditions which obtained in the end of the Jewish age might be found now in the end of the Gospel age, even as we have found that in every particular the Jewish people and their harvest time were a pattern or figure or illustration of the Gospel age and spiritual Israel. Amongst spiritual Israelites today, in our Lord's second presence, a message is going forth to the groaning creation, a message respecting the Father's love, and its lengths and breadths and heights and depths; a message respecting the ransom given by our Lord Jesus, that it was "a ransom for all," and that his death was "not only a propitiation for *our* sins [the church's but also for the sins of the *whole world;*" a message that the whole world, thus redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, is to have full opportunity of returning to divine favor during the Millennial age, "the times of restitution of all things, spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."

Now, how is this message received by nominal Christendom, as to some extent corresponding to the elder brother of the parable? Does it not appear that the message of restitution for a "groaning creation" (Rom. 8:22) is received in much the same manner that evidences of God's grace toward the Jewish prodigal were received? Does it not appear that many of our dear friends, whom we would have expected to rejoice to find the heavenly Father willing to receive back the repentant world, and that he has made full provision for their return to fellowship with himself through Jesus, and full preparation to let them all know of his grace in Christ,—does it not seem that this gracious message of "good will toward men," "good tidings of great joy to all people," should be to all Christians a gladsome message?

It surely should be such to all who have the Father's *Spirit;* to all who love their neighbor as themselves. But we know how bitterly the message is rejected by some who, to outward appearances, have long been favored of the Heavenly Father, and who are well versed in his law, and who have been seeking to keep close at home, in the sense of outward obedience to the laws of righteousness. What would their course of conduct in respect to his message of present truth imply? Would it not imply that outwardly they had been sons of God, in obedience to the laws of righteousness, but that they had at heart been far from him, even when with their lips they drew nigh unto him, and when they bent their knee in prayer to him?

Would it not seem that if they had the Father's spirit of love and kindness and generosity and justice and truth they would be glad, yea, rejoice exceedingly to know that after the selection of the church of this present age to be the bride and joint-heir with Christ in the kingdom, the Heavenly Father had a great and wonderful plan of *restitution* for the world of mankind in general? If they had the Father's Spirit, if they had the spirit of him who left the Father's glory and humbled himself to our conditions, even unto death, to be a co-worker together with the Father in the great work shortly to be accomplished for the recovery of the lost, it certainly should fill the Lord's "brethren" with joy to know that it will be a part of their privilege as members of the body of Christ to join with him in this great work of bringing back the lost sheep, of sweeping diligently and finding the lost coin, and, in every sense of the word, of welcoming back to the Father's house the lost brother.

It is not for us to judge the hearts of men; that is beyond our power; but the Lord seems to be using his truth in such a way that it shall become the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts, and that, sharper than any two-edged sword, it shall separate, shall discover, shall manifest, who have the spirit of the Lord, and who have not his spirit. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his."—Heb. 4:12.

AN INTERESTING QUESTION

Heb. 12:23.

THE SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT

Question.—How should we understand the statement of Heb. 12:23, respecting "the spirits of just men made perfect?"

Answer.—To appreciate this we must take the statement in its connections: The Apostle is contrasting the introduction of the Law Covenant with the introduction of the New Covenant; and let us remember that altho the church is justified by the blood of Christ, which seals the New Covenant, nevertheless, the New Covenant itself is not considered as having gone into effect during this Gospel age; it is a covenant for the world of mankind, and the putting of it into effect brings the times of restitution of all things at the second advent. The church, altho justified by the sacrifices which sealed the New Covenant, is really accepted under the Abrahamic covenant—accepted as the Seed of Abraham—members of the body of Christ—through which Seed all the families of the earth are to be blessed under the New Covenant, sealed at Calvary, during the Millennium.

The Law Covenant, of which Moses was the Mediator, and which was given at Mount Sinai amid the thunderings and lightnings and voices, etc., was typical of the New Covenant of which Christ (Head and body) is the Mediator, and which is to be introduced to the world of mankind after the whole body of Christ has shed its blood and been completed and glorified.—Acts 3:22; Col. 1:24.

The Apostle draws a parallel between the marching of Israel from Egypt and the Red Sea, up to Mount Sinai, where, under the leadership of the priesthood, they came under the Law Covenant, and all who hope to become God's people, marching under the lead of Christ and the "royal priesthood" toward another mountain—to Mount Zion, the kingdom of God, the Millennial kingdom. Following under the banner of the antitypical Mediator, will come all of God's Israel, all who are willing to be delivered from the power of the antitypical Pharaoh, *viz.*, Satan.

When we consider how the Israelites approached Mount Sinai as a host, and that they did not all get there at the same moment nor the same hour, nor even in the same day, we find the parallel of this in the fact that the Lord's people throughout this age have been gradually approaching this kingdom—not all at once, but one after another throughout the age. The last members of the royal priesthood are only getting close to the kingdom, Mount Zion, now; and are to be followed in turn by all the hosts who *will become* true Israelites during the Millennial age, when light and knowledge shall be freely granted.

With this picture before the mind, and reading the Apostle's words as translated in the *Diaglott*, we see a beauty in the expression: We have not approached the natural mountain with the terrors of the law, the smoke and the clouds and thick darkness and lightnings and voices of words that spoke condemnation and death to any who erred; but we are approaching, and all of the church throughout the age have been approaching, the glorious Mount Zion, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of blessing.

And what shall we find in this kingdom when we have fully reached it? We shall find the heavenly city, God's kingdom of power and great glory. We shall find ourselves introduced to a new company of brethren—the heavenly host; and we shall find our loved ones who have traveled with us in the narrow way, in that first general assembling of the church of the first-borns, whose names are written in heaven. There we shall find our heavenly Father, the great Judge of all; there we shall find the spirits, the new natures of the justified ones fully perfected in the likeness of their Lord and Head—"We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." There we shall find in due time perfected human beings fully restored to the divine likeness in which father Adam was created; and there we shall find Jesus, who mediated the New Covenant; and there we shall ever appreciate the blood of sprinkling which cleansed us and presented us faultless before the Father in love.

But altho we are approaching these grand and glorious things, we are not to expect that they will all be ushered in in a peaceful manner; on the contrary, as the Apostle points out (verses 26, 27), there will be a correspondence between the great time of trouble, with which the Millennial age and its New Covenant for mankind will be ushered in, and the way in which the Law Covenant to the Jews was ushered in—only that the New Covenant will be ushered in on a much grander and antitypical plane. There will be a shaking here, as there was a shaking there; but instead of its being the physical earth that will shake, it will be the symbolical earth—society. And not alone the social structure, but also the heavens, or ecclesiastical structure, is to be shaken here. As the Apostle's words clearly intimate, the shaking will be a much more wonderful one than was its type, even as every antitype is much greater than its type. He explains that the shaking here is to be so thorough that it will shake everything that is shakeable, and that only the fixed, permanent, righteous things shall ultimately remain. And those things that shall be permitted to remain, he declares (verse 28) pertain to the kingdom of God, which is immoveable, unshakeable.

It is this kingdom toward which all of the Lord's people march throughout this Gospel age, that will then be fully attained amidst all that great shaking and confusion of the great day of trouble which is just before us. And as Moses went up into the quaking mountain, and was lost to the sight of the people below, so at, and in conjunction with these mighty manifestations of the time of trouble the entire church will be "caught up," gathered to the Lord, changed to his likeness—passing through the portals of death, though they shall not sleep, but be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FAITHFUL WORKERS

Dear Brother Russell:—Some time ago Brother Woodworth witnessed my method of handing out the Volunteer Towers and was so well pleased with it that he made me promise to write to you about it. I don't consider it anything out of the ordinary, but for the sake of my promise I will give it to you.

With a bow and a smile I say, "Sample—Watch Tower;" or "Free sample Watch Tower." If any questions are asked, I say, "An unsectarian religious magazine." My reasons for this method are, I seek to interest them thus, or rather to arouse their curiosity in knowing what the paper is; rather giving them the impression that I am seeking subscribers. In this way they will read with an unprejudiced mind—it does not arouse their antagonism my giving them the impression that you have something to refute the arguments they have just been listening to. If any know of the Watch Tower and do not care for it, they can refuse to take it, and thus one is saved for some one else. I think I am justified in giving the impression that I am seeking susbscribers; if anyone becomes interested, he *will* become a subscriber, and it is for such that we specially labor. With much love, I am,

Yours in the best of bonds,

Joseph L. Hoagland.—*Pennsylvania.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—The TOWER for Aug. 15 is at hand and read, and I cannot resist writing to you on the subject, but by no means for the purpose of getting an answer as I well know the value of your time. When first, in the great joy of having received the truth, I hastened to tell my dear brothers and sisters in Holland, I met with terrible rebuffs. My very dear youngest sister sent me a tract, in which a parson, Cjeharsi—hireling (whose the sheep are not) warned his flock (pen) against the "soul-damning doctrines of MILLENNIAL DAWN." "It added," said he, "and lopped off Scripture," and to prove that *he* never did such a thing he went on to say that "the wages of sin is death and eternal torment."

Ever since '94 I have quietly but persistently spoken of my Lord as I know him now. Lately my sister's notice has been drawn to the fact that I was concerned about her "soul's condition," and I pointed out to her how she, knowing that I had imbibed "soul-damning doctrines," had never taken a step to prevent my going into the tortures of hell fire, while she would give her time to, and get concerned about the welfare of some man in prison, who had merely transgressed the "traditions of men." My letter was largely prompted by one from a second sister, who has youth, beauty, wealth, talent and society in her favor, but who gives all to nurse the sick. She has worked her way to be directress of the Reformed hospital in Amsterdam, our native city. Hers is a life of actual service, and, tho still in orthodoxy, she confessed that she was touched by the evident love and interest I manifested in Christ's teaching, and that I had the "gift to analyze thought." Oh, how glad I will be if I may have stepped out so far past myself to show them my only Head and Master! Souls full of love and consecration, but yet of the heart "slow to understand." Just think of lives like those clearly seeing, so that they too may receive the "gift to analyze (order) thought."

Oh, how dearly I hope I may have sufficient light in me that it may shine clearly enough for others to see! I fully appreciate what you say about sudden deaths. The fact that we have an understanding of the plan of the ages is not a guarantee that the mind of Christ is in us. If, in one sense, it is a sign of exceeding love and benefaction, it brings with it no less a responsibility. Not all those who understand these truths are destined for one office and one purpose. I do not care for the reward, I do not ask for one; all I ask and all I care for is to render efficient service to at least some sin-laden, faltering one for His Name's sake. The 15th Psalm has been my choice one from childhood; and from it I learned, amid the luxurious surroundings of a banker's home, to ask why I had received so much when others had so little, others whom I loved and honored, and who were more worthy than I. Good as my father was, both as man and Christian, I saw that he did not earn his wealth, and that the world was but little better for his being in it. I made up my mind (I can easily remember) at the age of 12, that I would right the wrong if I could, and today I am still laboring towards that end. I feel that I swore then—and whether to my hurt or not I do not know—and I have not changed since. I do know that, according to the Psalm, I have been blessed far beyond my deserts, for "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation;" yea, I behold Canaan's glittering shores. It is therefore quite immaterial to me, reverently speaking, what occurs. The kingdom cometh not by observation, that they should say, Lo here, or lo there, and I would pluck my right eye (that wherein I thought I saw aright) rather than lose the kingdom.

With prayers, brother, that the spirit of meekness, love and humility may be increasingly yours, that so you may prove faithful to the last, I am

Yours in the service of the truth,

DANIEL F. BOISSEVAIN,—*Canada.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I take the first opportunity to personally thank you for your attendance at the Saratoga Convention. I realize that to be present costs you some sacrifice and inconvenience, perhaps, but if you could have heard the expressions of satisfaction at its close, and the expressions of regret that it was so soon over, I know that you would have felt well repaid. But, dear Brother Russell, your reward is in the hands of him who is the "rewarder of all those that diligently seek him," and our thanks are feeble indeed when compared with the satisfaction which he gives in this life, and the hope which he sets before us to be given us in the life to come. All the brethren expressed themselves in these words, "'A feast of fat things' if ever there was such a feast," and I found it in my own heart to echo the same words. I was very sorry to miss the sessions during the day on Tuesday, but it could not be avoided. However, it seemed that my cup of satisfaction was full.

It seems, as one brother expressed it, that every Convention is a little better than the preceding one, and that this must be true is indicated by the fact that we are in the end of the days, and the end draws on apace. How good our Master is to so freely disclose to us things which are intended for our consolation and hope and purification.

As we comprehend more and more of the plan of the ages and of the love of God, which he manifested in his Son, we exclaim, "Who is a God like unto thee; great and marvelous are thy works!" And as we come to comprehend also that the plan and the love, both, include even us, we feel constrained to adore such a God, and to spend our lives in his service. Remember me, as I remember all saints, before the throne of grace.

Yours in his service,

R. H. BARBER.—*New York.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Just a word to tell you that all our plans are turned over,—no doubt with the Lord's permission. I cannot go to Giengen: just today I received a letter from Sister Finkh, in which she informs me that the fact of renting a dwelling for me has aroused such an excitement and hostility amongst church people there that the people who rented me the rooms are so afraid as to annul it. Two ministers came three or four times to the woman, and finally told her that she would bring a curse upon herself, if she would take me in her house, they would write to the church authorities, and went to the police, etc. Sr. Finkh was attacked in the street by a woman, who cried aloud after her ugly words, and the ministers themselves used such expressions in speaking of me as would be punished here, if spoken publicly. Sr. Finkh and the other three seem to be most earnest, and will follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, even unto death. There is already such hatred as to kill the Lord's true people, if they were permitted at all.

I do not know, at this moment where to go, but trust the Lord will show me soon, as I wish with all my heart to follow his leading only. Pray for me, dear brother, and for the dear sisters in Giengen.

Yours in our glorious hope,

M. E. GIESEKE.—*Germany.*

[It is remarkable what an antagonism the truth awakens among the preachers and church officials of Babylon. We hear much of Christian union and liberality and fraternization of Catholics and Protestants, but such things apply to and among those who preach "bad tidings," and is not considered applicable to us who proclaim the "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." Strange, is it not? And yet how it reminds us of the bitterness of the hatred of the church officials of Jewry at the first advent. As our Lord declared, they "hated the light," and the greater the light the more was their hatred, until they attempted to extinguish the Light by killing him. The hatred above described indicates the spirit of murder (1 John 3:15): will it ever lead to literal murder?—How soon?—EDITOR.]

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VIEWS FROM THE TOWER

WORLD MOVEMENT TOWARD DENOMINATIONAL UNION

A contemporary thus sums up the recent tendencies toward union on the part of Churchianity,—in full harmony with what our pages for the past twenty years have shown will be the procedure of "Babylon" just prior to her fall "as a great millstone into the sea." We quote as follows:—

"The question of denominational union is fast becoming one of the most important questions of the day in all Protestant lands. In Germany, as we have lately pointed out, a strong movement exists for the federation of the state churches, amounting to nearly fifty in number; and federation is one step on the road to organic union. In Scotland, the Congregationalists and the churches of the Evangelical Union—sometimes called Morrisanians—amalgamated their forces a short time ago; and the Free and the United Presbyterian churches are to become organically one next October, as already mentioned in these pages. In South Australia the three leading Methodist denominations, and in Canada all the various Methodist bodies have for some years been one. This is an encouraging record.

"Besides this measure of union already attained, there are promising movements under way in England. All the great Protestant churches outside the Establishment have for some years had a strong federal organization, as we have several times pointed out. During several years past an attempt has been made to unite organically two of the Methodist bodies—the Princeton Methodists and the Bible Christians. Both are offshoots of the original Wesleyan parent stock, but separated from it on questions of church government."

CHRISTIAN THEORY AND PRACTICE CONTRARY

The following is from *The Orient*, a Japanese journal:

"Japan enjoys the unique distinction of being the only non-Christian power that has been admitted into what is called the comity of nations on a footing of perfect equality, and, to judge from the utterances of the European and American press she is by no means the least respected power. Unfortunately the cause of this respect is not such as to satisfy all Japanese. Japan has made great progress in the arts of peace; but that is not really why she is respected. That respect was earned in a short nine months by the achievements of the Japanese army and navy. Now that sort of thing is pleasing enough to a nation's *amour propre*, but on calmly thinking the matter over some Japanese would wish that the respect of Western nations had been earned by something else than by mere proficiency in the art of slaughter conducted on modern scientific principles. Russia, too, is respected and feared. Yet she is the only non-constitutional country in the comity of nations. The liberty of the individual and of the press is under the tyranny of mere administrative orders in Russia, and official peculation is nearly as rife as in China. And this gives rise to strange misgivings. Are the so-called Christian nations really followers of the religious cult they so ostentatiously and proudly profess? . . .

"Without going so far with Count Tolstoi as to say that his rendering of the real meaning of Christianity is the correct one, we do go so far as to say that the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount are the most important in the so-called Christian code of morality. And these precepts, unquestionably, are against war, and all against according honor to any nation or any man on the mere grounds of success in the exercise of brute force, much less of success in slaughtering enemies. And yet it is precisely on these grounds that non-Christian Japan has been accorded the respect of so-called Christian Europe and America!

"We can very well understand the old Hebrews respecting us for success in war, for the old Hebrew God was a God of battles. But we have always understood that the Christian Father in heaven was no mere tribal war-god, but a God of love. The present situation is not a little puzzling to us poor benighted heathens of Japan, who have earned the respect of those who profess to follow the precepts of Christ on the Mount, by success in slaughtering our enemies, and by that alone. Will real Christians kindly explain what it all means?"

* * *

In our "View" of last issue we made a typographical error, in stating that Terah, Abraham's father, died at seventy. It should have read—two hundred and five years.

THE CHRISTIAN'S GOAL

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE CHICAGO CONVENTION

Perfect love—the mark for the prize;
  How shall I reach it, O Lord?
The way thou hast walked is a narrow way,
  So we read in thy precious Word.
We eagerly start in the way with joy,
  Thinking our love is pure;
But the Father, seeking our perfectness,
  Purgeth us more and more.

Till, by dint of strokes and of tears
  Made to look back o'er bitter years
Our hearts in anguish deep exclaim
  "Woe is me!" "Wretched man that I am!"
We know that in us dwelleth no good thing,
  But in the Beloved do we stand;
O glory and honor and praises to him
  Who holdeth us in his hand!

Perfect love! O Lord can it be
  Thou in infinite mercy canst see
In one so unworthy, so helpless as I,
  A heart that unto thee would draw nigh?
Perfect love! Lord, can it really be
  Thou hast so loved and cared for me,
That when in me did sin so abound
  Thy grace more abundant was found?

Perfect love—the mark for the prize
  Thou hast placed beyond the skies!
O yes, our dear Lord, we will patiently run,
  With our eyes on thee alone;
Not looking back on the way we have come,
  Battles fought, and victories won;
But forgetting those things which are behind
  Press along our reward to find.

Perfect love—we do see it in him,
  Who gave his life, our poor lives to redeem;
That we might as sons to our Father draw near,
  For in Jesus we've nothing to fear,
As in the light of his glorious face
  We press to the end of the race;
Standing complete in his Righteousness,
  He alone our perfect dress.

—Mr. C. A. Owen.

SEASONS OF REFRESHING

As the time for the Dallas, Texas, Convention drew near, it became evident that it would serve only a small proportion of the Texas friends who would desire to attend, and so arrangements were made for two other gatherings in that large State—about 300 miles apart;—namely at Houston and at San Antonio. And another local convention of nearby friends was held at Columbus, Ohio, on the Editor's return trip. All were seasons of refreshment in spiritual things, profitable, we trust, to all who attended.

At Dallas the attendance was about 300; from all parts of Texas, from Oklahoma, Indian Territory, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama and California. The three days were practically one continuous meeting with necessary intermissions for food and rest. Fifteen brethren and seven sisters symbolized their real baptism into Christ's death, by immersion in water.

At Houston we had only a one-day meeting, but it was a good one; full of love, joy, fellowship of kindred minds; its influence will abide, with some at least, through life, yea throughout eternity, no doubt. The attendance was about one hundred and twenty-five, chiefly local.

At San Antonio we had great refreshment during two days' meeting with about one hundred and fifty of God's dear people, mostly from local points. Two informed us that they had driven over one hundred miles in a wagon, there being no good railroad connections, and, anyway, the expense being a consideration. The Lord's blessing was with us all in bountiful measure as we considered together the grandeur of our high calling, and the "mark" to which all must attain if they would win it.

At Columbus we had but one day, but it was one full of refreshment, as we met about one hundred dear brethren and sisters from local points, and communed together concerning the exceeding great and precious promises and arrangements of God for the elect, and through them for all the families of the earth, in God's due time.

The arrangements at every point were most complete, and with the cordial reception accorded ourself and all visiting brethren, bespoke—amongst all—a

"Love divine all love excelling."

We shall cherish fondly to the end of our pilgrimage the remembrance of the hearty greetings and many kind atten-

tions, great and small, lavished upon us by loved ones whom we had never met before, but who, for all that, were far from strangers. We accepted these attentions as done "unto the Lord" and to us a representative of him and his truth; and not as personal tributes. If, as our Master promised, even a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple shall be rewarded by him, surely these many kindnesses to us as his servant will bring showers of spiritual blessings to many; and in this we rejoice.

Much as we enjoy these conventions and realize that they are spiritually profitable to many, we feel nevertheless that they must not be indulged so freely next year, nor until the concluding two volumes of the DAWN series are prepared. The conventions of this year have retarded VOL. VI. a full year. We have not as yet gotten started on it, and yet our daily increasing mail clearly shows its need. We have in mind for 1901 a convention at Buffalo, N. Y., to which point the Pan-American Exposition will undoubtedly secure low excursion rates.

"THY SAINTS SHALL GLORIFY THEE"

"They shall speak of the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his Kingdom."—Psa. 145:5-12.

Various are the view-points from which mankind regards its Creator. The world of mankind in general notes merely his mighty acts, without appreciating his glorious character. This is suggested by the Prophet, saying, "I will speak of [meditate on] the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous deeds, and men shall speak of thy terrible acts: but I will declare thy greatness." (Vss. 5, 6) The world speaketh of its own, and according to its intelligence respecting the Almighty; but the Lord's people, specially instructed by him and taught of the holy spirit, know of the Lord and his greatness in a sense that the remainder of mankind know them not.

As the Apostle declares, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. . . . But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." (1Cor. 2:14, 10) As our Lord again declared, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom." "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." (Mark 4:11; Matt. 13:16) We are not, then, to be surprised at the wide difference of understanding of God and of his mightiness and of his character, as viewed by the saints and by the world; rather we are to expect such a difference of view. The Apostle explains the reason, telling us that the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, so that the glorious light of God's goodness, shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, does not shine into their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the divine character and plan. (2 Cor. 4:4) And he explains again that we who were at one time in darkness, are now enlightened by the Lord, having been translated out of the dominion of the prince of darkness, into the dominion of God's dear Son. (Col. 1:13) And it is this enlightened class that the Apostle urges should make progress in the knowledge of the Lord, growing in grace, growing in knowledge, and thus growing in the love of God and in the appreciation of his character. He urges this, saying that it is necessary, to the intent that we may comprehend with all saints, the lengths and breadths, and the heights and depths, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth all [human] understanding.—Eph. 3:17-19.

Alas! the great majority of Christian people, while they have escaped from much of the blindness of the Adversary, are still subject to his confusing errors and misrepresentations of the truth, and are thus blinded still in great measure to the divine plan; looking at things more from the human standpoint than from the divine standpoint, and framing their creeds and confessions accordingly. Ah, they forget how the Lord has declared, "My plans are not your plans, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my plans than your plans." (Isa. 55:8, 9) Because of this measure of blindness that rests upon the mass of the nominal church—even amongst Protestants—it follows that, not seeing the divine character and plan in their true light and beauty, the vast majority of Christian people cannot take the standpoint of the *saints* in this prophetic testimony before us, but they take rather the standpoint of the natural man: when they think of the Almighty they think rather of his wonderful and terrible acts than of his own greatness, because they know comparatively little of the glorious honor of his majesty, and do not see how his wonderful deeds declare his greatness.

From the standpoint of the average Christian, God is anything but gloriously honorable in his majesty; indeed, thinking of the Almighty from the standpoint of their creeds, the majority of noble-minded Christian people feel ashamed of God and of his plan. One class declares that his glorious honor and majesty is manifested in his election of the church to glory and eternal life, and in the passing by of the great majority of others, condemning them to an eternity of torture —and that since "known unto the Lord are all his works," God foreknew and foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, and thus purposed the eternal torment of the vast majority of his hundreds of millions of human creatures before creating them. Can these dear Christian friends declare the honor and majesty, the greatness and goodness, of their Creator? No! Hindered by such a false view of God's plan and of his mighty works, they cannot discern in such a course either justice, or love, or any other great or honorable quality, that they should honor or reverence it. Hence, like the world, they merely take note of the mighty power of Jehovah, and fear him, but are unable to take the position of the saints and to glorify his name and declare his righteousness.

Another large body of Christian people repudiate the foregoing false view, asserting another equally untrue, and almost equally dishonoring—tho their thought is to glorify God, and to relieve his character of the stain of injustice, inequity and lovelessness with which the foregoing view would besmirch it. These, therefore, claim that God loves every member of the race, and is doing and has been doing since the fall, everything within his power to rescue Adam's fallen race from their difficulties. But with such a view how could they extol the greatness and the honorable majesty of the Almighty? If for six thousand years he has been unable to accomplish anything, where is the power, where is the honor and majesty to be seen?

Surely all would confess that any bright, honorable man, if granted the one-hundreth part of the omnipotent power of the Creator could accomplish more in one hundred years than all that has been accomplished in six thousand years, toward the rescue of the race from ignorance, superstition and sin! How, then, could these dear Christian friends who, with good purpose of heart, are nevertheless blinded by a false theory—how could they tell forth the glorious honor of the divine majesty, and show this and his greatness from his wondrous deeds? Surely they would be dumb in any such effort.

THE SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

Only those who see the divine plan of the ages, and the relationship between the past, the present, and the future, are in any degree able to make known the greatness of our God, his glorious power, and his honorable majesty. This class is referred to by the Revelator as singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb—they sing in the sense of declaring in harmonious and beautiful cadences the relationship of the types and figures of the Law and the Prophets of the Mosaic dispensation with the antitypes of these of the Gospel dispensation; showing that all things written in the Law and in the Prophets are finding glorious fulfilments in the Lamb of God and in the great plan which the heavenly Father is working out through him.—Rev. 15:3, 4.

The Revelator tells us the substance of this song: namely, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!" But what great and marvelous work has God performed, and how shall we see that he is both just and true in all his ways and dealings? From the standpoint of those who can sing this song everything must be clear as noonday!

First amongst the great and marvelous works of the Almighty was the sentence of death upon father Adam and his posterity because of disobedience—not a sentence of eternal torment, which would be as unjust, and unreasonable, as it is untrue and contrary to the Word of God—not the false presentation respecting this divine act that is held forth in all the creeds of Christendom,—but the great and marvelous act which God declares he accomplished when he let fall upon our race the sentence of death, which has brought in its train all the various disasters and difficulties mental and physical, to which our fallen flesh is heir, all of which are tending to, and resulting in death, the penalty. As we look at this marvelous work, we must concede that it was just (in that it was merited), that it is true (in the sense of not being an unreasonable penalty), true in the sense that it was exactly what God forwarned father Adam the penalty of disobedience would be. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

But Jehovah's first great and marvelous work of condemnation was, after four thousand years, followed by another great and marvelous work; *viz.*, the work of redemption. How stupendous this work of the ransoming of all Adam's race of hundreds of millions by the sacrifice of one man! How great and wonderful indeed this act, and how just and true, and how fully in harmony with every feature of divine justice and love! Even the philosophy of the ransom is explained to the Lord's people,—how that all mankind were included in one man's sentence, to the intent that in due time the penalty of sin could be paid on behalf of all mankind by the one sacrifice for sins, "the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Rom. 5:12, 18, 19) Was not this a great and marvelous work? Who that realizes the lengths and breadths, and heights and depths of this manifestation of divine justice and divine love, can do aught else than sing this song of Moses and the Lamb, declaring to all who have ears to hear it, "Great and marvelous, just and true are thy ways, Lord God Almighty." But few see it clearly; and hence few can sing this wonderful story to others.

But there is still another feature to this song, and it is glorious also, tho it pertains not to the things that are past, but to the things yet to come. It declares, "Who shall not reverence thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?" It looks forward to the time when this great redemption, accomplished by the blood of the Lamb, shall be made available to every member of the human family. It looks forward to the glorious Millennial age, to the time when, under divine providence, the knowledge of the Lord, essential to faith, and to any acceptance of his favor and mercy through Christ, shall be extended to every creature,—who indeed will not reverence the Lord and glorify his name? Surely, as the Scriptures have declared, at that time, "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess," and while this bowing and confessing may at first be compulsory, and not with all the volition of the heart, yet the Scriptures assure us that ultimately all who will not come into heart harmony with the Lord and with all his gracious arrangements and provisions, shall be cut off from amongst the people,—in the second death. (Acts 3:23) So that ultimately, instead of the universe being filled with hundreds of millions who to all eternity will wail and gnash their teeth and blaspheme God's holy name in agony—instead of this the time shall come when every tongue in heaven and in earth shall be heard praising God, and giving honor to him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb, forever; for by that time all evildoers, all lovers of unrighteousness, shall be cut off from amongst the people.

But this song continues, and has yet another strain. It declares, "Thou only art holy"—all holiness, all perfection, wherever it is found, must proceed from God, the great fountain of holiness. How strange, then, that any of God's dear people (and we ourselves were once amongst this number) should so misunderstand the divine character and plan as to misrepresent the same as being the very essence of unholiness, injustice, unkindness, inequity, lovelessness, toward the great mass of God's creatures! It will indeed be a glad day when all shall reverence God's name, and when all shall recognize that he is indeed the fountain of holiness.

But there is still another strain in this song, and it is a grand one also, like all the others,—reaching down into the Millennial age. It declares, 'All nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." "All nations" will include, not only all the nations then living, but all the nations of the dead, just as does the promise which God made to Abraham, saying, "In thy seed [the Christ, Head and body] shall all the families of the earth be blessed"—all nations.

How few, how extremely few, are able to *learn* this song! How extremely few learn it so well as to be able to *sing* this song to the glory of God! How many who supposedly were trained to sing "the good tidings of great joy" for all people, are in the pulpits today singing totally different songs; some of them songs of "Evolution," declaring that there was no fall, consequently no redemption from a fall, and consequently that there is to be no recovery from a fall; but that man is grandly climbing up, up, up, and proving to be his own Savior, and hoping to attain they know not what,—they know not when.

Others are singing the song of Calvinism, predestination, foreordination and election. Others are singing the song of Arminianism, and hoping that God will be able to accomplish much in the future through their assistance,—which they hold he has unsuccessfully been trying to do for six thousand years. Others are singing the song, "In union there is strength," and seeking to combine for what they term a "social uplift," or "the salvation of society." Others are singing the song of works and universal salvation. But how few are able to sing this song of Moses and the Lamb, or to see how God's great and marvelous works of the past reflect gloriously upon his character, both for justice and love, and give us the best of all assurances for the working out in the future of the glorious plan which he has already outlined and begun!

And we are told the reason why so few can sing this song —that it is only *for those* to sing who have "gotten the victory over the beast and his image and his mark and the number of his name." These symbols, representing earthly institutions which now hinder and bind and enslave the Lord's people to creeds, must be overcome by every soul that would hope to be able to appreciate this song, and to sing it in his daily life to others according to his opportunities. Those who try to sing this song while yet in Babylon find their mistake.

PROCLAIM LOUDLY THE MEMORIAL

Coming back to the Prophet's testimony respecting the message, showing forth the Lord's honor and majesty, we find in the 7th verse a wonderful testimony to the central feature and greatest manifestation of the divine character and plan. The Psalmist says (Leeser's translation), "The memorial of thy abundant goodness shall they loudly proclaim, and they shall sing joyfully of thy righteousness." What *memorial* has God given us of abundant goodness? Which of all his great and wonderful works could be thus termed a *memorial* of divine favor? We answer that this memorial, this great act, was none other than the gift of God's dear Son, to be our redemption price, as the Apostle declares, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." (1 John 4:9) But as very few realize the great act of justice accomplished in the sentencing of father Adam and his race to death, so very few can appreciate, as a special manifestation of God's abundant goodness, the death of Christ as the full offset for Adam's sin, the full ransom, the full payment of his penalty and that of his race.

The reason for this is that they esteem that the ransom was paid only for the church, a little flock. From this standpoint it was not a manifestation of the abundant grace and goodness of God, but of a very limited grace and favor for a very limited number, a handful, as it were, out of the great mass of humanity. But when we come to see that our Lord Jesus' sacrifice was "a propitiation for our sins [the church's sins] and not for ours only, but *also for the sins of the whole world*," and that this "*ransom for all*" is "to be testified in due time" to all and made available to all, that ultimately all may benefit thereby if they will, and return to harmony with God and to eternal life,—from this standpoint only can we see the greatness of that transaction, finished at Calvary, and how it is a "*memorial*" of God's abundant goodness. And only such as see this can heartily and loudly proclaim it, and sing joyfully of the righteousness of God, which not only was manifested in the righteous penalty against sin, but which again manifested itself in the righteous payment of that penalty on behalf of every creature.

The Psalmist continues, "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger and of great mercy. The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works" (vs. 8). Is not this just what we should expect in our Creator, if we recognize him to be the full embodiment of justice and of love and of wisdom and of power? And yet how different is this description of the divine character from the general view, as held by the masses of Christian people, blinded by the adversary and misled by their creeds! Instead of thinking of the Lord as gracious, do they not think of him as awfully ungracious, and have they not pictured him, not only in their creeds but also in their hymns of praise, as being awfully bitter and malignant against his creatures, ungracious, pitiless, full of anger and of no mercy?

Have they not, on the contrary, represented that Jesus our dear Redeemer must plead with the Father, and show his wounds and appeal for us, ere any compassion could be exhibited, and then only in the most limited degree?

But not thus false was the Prophet's view of Jehovah, given by inspiration. Jehovah is gracious and full of compassion; he knows that the motions of sin are in our flesh, tending downward, and in his great mercy and compassion he has provided in Jesus for our every difficulty, our every trial, for the covering of our every weakness and imperfections, and with those who become his people, and who even haltingly seek to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, he is slow to anger and of great mercy. False ideas of the divine character and the divine dealings with the world of mankind have not only perverted the hopes of God's people as respects the world, but have also inculcated in their hearts misconceptions of God's sentiments toward his church, so that the majority of his people do not appreciate the kindness, the mercy, the love, the compassion of our Father in heaven, and failing to appreciate these they have more or less of the fear of which the Apostle speaks, saying, "Fear hath torment," and correspondingly they lack "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" to rule in their hearts. It is only when by the grace of God the eyes of our understanding are opened to see how our heavenly Father is not against us, but *for us*, and how under his providential arrangement all things are working together for good to those who love, and who are seeking to attain to the gracious things which he has offered them in his Word,—only then are we enabled to know him, appreciate him, and to offer him, in the best and fullest sense of the word, the tribute of our hearts and the praise of our lips.

Now we come to the climax, as it were, of our text, and note that while the Lord's saints see his greatness and honorable majesty connected with every feature of the divine plan, and while they are telling these good tidings to others, and speaking of his mighty doings in the past, their message would not be complete without a testimony respecting his glorious kingdom. "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom"—the Millennial kingdom. They cannot tell of the majesty of the divine plan and not tell about the kingdom. To tell of the fall, and to tell of the righteous sentence upon the fallen race, and to tell of the redemption accomplished through the precious blood of Christ, and that it was paid on behalf of every member of the Adamic race, would not finish the good tidings of great joy. It is necessary, therefore, to speak of the glory of God's kingdom, and to talk of his power as it will be manifested in that kingdom. As the sentence and the execution of the sentence manifest the justice of God; and the redemption through Jesus manifests the love of God, so the kingdom of the Lord will manifest his power to save to the uttermost all those who come unto the Father through the Son.

The glory of the Lord's kingdom will not consist, as some have supposed, of some saints sitting with the Savior on a bright cloud and looking over the battlements of heaven to see the remainder, the numberless millions of mankind, writhing in agony. O no! If this were all that we could say of the kingdom of our God we should rather prefer to say nothing. There would be no glory in such a kingdom; it would be an everlasting reproach to the King that he had conceived a plan which had resulted so horribly, so indescribably bad, that it should mean the eternal torment of hundreds of millions of his creatures. Nor will the glory of the kingdom consist, as some others of God's dear people suppose, in a manifestation of a handful of saints, the glorified church, with the Lord, and with the remainder of the race blotted out of existence without ever having had knowledge and a full opportunity under favorable conditions to avail themselves of the great *memorial* of God's love, the redemption. O no! There would be no glory, but a discredit to such a kingdom and to so meagre an outcome to the great " memorial."

Nor will the kingdom be, as some others of God's dear people have conceived it to be, one in which Christ and his church shall, during the Millennial age, bless merely the living nations of the world, and bring to them the blessings which God has promised, but leave all the remainder of the race who have died for six thousand years, from Adam down to the present time, in darkness, in ignorance, in death, without any opportunity under that kingdom. O no! A human plan might thus favor the millions living at the time of the establishment of the kingdom, but forget or ignore or pass by the hundreds and thousands of millions who have gone down into the great prison-house of death; but God's ways are not as man's ways nor his plans as man's plans. The glory of the kingdom of which we are authorized to speak, is a kingdom which is to bless all nations, the dead who have gone down into the tomb, as well as those who have not yet gone into death. It is a kingdom in which God's power will be most marvelously manifested.

Let us "talk" together now of his power as the Prophet has suggested. It will be a mighty power which will overthrow the reign of sin, which will bind the power of Satan that he shall deceive the nation no more, and which will establish the Lord Jesus and his glorious church in power and great glory, with dominion over all the earth, with authority to execute judgment,—to punish sin and to reward every effort toward righteousness. But the power of God as it will be manifested, will be still greater than all this; it will be a power which will lift up out of the miry pit of sin; out of the weaknesses of the flesh, out of his imperfections, mental, moral and physical, every member of the human family who desires to make progress and to return to the grand perfection of human nature represented originally in father Adam, and from which he and all in him fell, through disobedience. In this sense of the word it is a resurrection *power*, raising up, up, up, from the low conditions of sin and death to the high conditions of perfection and righteousness. It not only will thus take hold of the people who will not at that time have fallen asleep in death, but this mighty power of the kingdom will take hold also of those who have gone down into the tomb, and who are in the great prison-house of death; even as our Lord declared, that he will open the prison-doors and say to the prisoners, "Show yourselves; come forth." "And all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth" (John 5:39), and the coming forth shall be unto a resurrection by judgment—that so many as will, may avail themselves of the blessed privileges and opportunities of that great judgment day (the Millennial age), and profit by the stripes and corrections in righteousness which will then be administered, and grow in grace, grow in knowledge, grow in love and grow in perfection of being, until by the close of the Millennial age, if they will, they shall have arrived back again into full harmony with God, and received fully all the perfections of human nature lost through the fall, and redeemed by the great *"memorial"* of divine favor.

No wonder, then, that the saints, when they glorify God, speak of the glory of his kingdom and talk of the mighty power of God which shall then be manifested, and how then shall be made known to the sons of men God's mighty acts; how they shall then see clearly the meaning of the original sentence as they do not now see it; how they shall then see clearly the meaning of the great redemption, as they do not now see it, and how they shall then see clearly the provision of divine power in the kingdom for their blessing;—that seeing these mighty acts of God in their true light, they also may glorify the Father which is in heaven, and they may appreciate the majesty of his kingdom.

"THY SAINTS SHALL BLESS THEE"

The Prophet intimates that *all* the saints shall have the privilege of thus declaring the kingdom, and of thus honoring the name of our God; and this seems to be literally fulfilled today, for the Lord seems to be bringing to the attention of all of his saints (his consecrated people everywhere) the present truth; to the intent that they may have its light upon their pathway, making manifest unto them the glorious character of our God, through a knowledge of his great plan of the ages. Moreover, the Lord seems to be putting it within the power of every one of his saints to thus glorify his name and to speak forth the truth to others. To some he has granted the talent of oratory and opportunity to use it and to speak forth his praises in this way; to others he has granted a talent for private conversation, that they may thus tell of his kingdom and speak of his glorious majesty and make known his plans to such as have hearing ears. To others still he has given the privilege of declaring his message through the circulation of the printed page; and to some he seems to have given opportunities for using all of these various methods of *singing* the song of Moses and the Lamb. And we may rest assured that none can be of the company of the Lord's saints in this time, and know of his goodness and his wonderful honor and majesty, and not have a desire to tell the good tidings of great joy to all who have an ear to hear; and those who are most earnest, most zealous in proclaiming the message, are sure to have the most blessing in their own hearts, and in their own experiences, and to grow the most in grace, in knowledge and in love.

"I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous deeds. Thy saints shall glorify thee; they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power, to make known unto the sons of men thy mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of thy kingdom."

FOLLOWING THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE

A brother writes us interestingly as follows:

We omit names for obvious reasons.

I want to thank you for your last letter. The Lord has poured out upon my distracted mind a great blessing since I fully and unreservedly gave up all. So far as I understand my present attitude toward the dear Master, I am now "beheaded," having bowed reverently and joyfully to his will. It seems that the mere unconditional resolve to separate wholly from Babylon brought me a blessing. But I have not yet sent in my contemplated letter to the Presbytery. The same meets in regular session the 9th of Oct. I shall endeavor to have it ready to go before that meeting for action. The pastor of the local church (Presbyterian) here has promised to help the matter along and to defend my case, should a defence be called out. This promise he made after I had explained to him, one day this week, my reasons for the step. At first he tried, by arguments and persuasion, to induce me to change my mind.

"Wait a while," he said, "until you see the outcome of the revision movement. The Confession of Faith will, and must be changed. I am out of harmony with several of its doctrinal statements myself, and the brethren of the Presbytery know it too, and some of them hate me for it like poison. Let us stand by our guns and fight the thing out, brother."

"No," I said, "I cannot follow your advice, brother, tho I know it is well meant. My mind is so fully made up that I cannot be induced to take a backward step."

"Well then, if that is the case, where do you wish to be dismissed to—what church, or association? We cannot dismiss you at large or at random, you know. Our *book* makes no provision for such a case. In fact, I have never heard of such a case before."

"My request is, and must be, for unconditional dismissal" I answered. "I wish to be absolutely free from ecclesiastical bondage. I recognize no human organization as *the* church of Christ. All of them exist without the authority or recognition of the Lord Jesus Christ; hence none of them are his. His church has no name on earth. But I can conscientiously say this of the Presbyterian church as I know it: In practice it is the best of the denominations and sects, but in doctrinal teachings it is nearly as bad as the Roman Catholic system."

Not one word of comment in reply! Instead he gave me this item of confidential information:

"Brother I will tell you something by which you can see how most of our brother ministers stand on the Westminster Confession: At our last meeting a young man from the German Theological Seminary in Iowa came to us for examination and ordination. Dr. ——, our Stated Clerk of Presbytery, was chairman of the examining committee, and I was also on the same. After Dr. —— got through with him and expressed himself as satisfied, I took the *book*, and turning to the statements on election and reprobation I read the whole chapter to him, and then asked him solemnly, 'Do you believe this?' He looked at me a minute, and then said: 'If you will let me explain it, I will show in what sense I believe it.' 'No, no,' I said, 'you cannot and you must not try to explain it; you must believe it or you are not entitled to ordination according to our form of government. Now let me ask you once more, Do you accept this doctrine as it stands?' Brother, that young man answered very emphatically, 'No!' Dr. —— said, 'And neither do I!' And I also said, 'Neither do I!'"

"Did the Presbytery ordain him on such a confession as that?" I asked.

"Not one dissenting vote in the committee."

"Such inconsistency is inexcusable, and wrong before God," I said. "It is only another strong argument in favor of my decision to get out and be free." Then we parted, he cordially offering me his assistance if needed, as above stated.

Your counsel with reference to the *spirit* of my letter of request for dismissal, is appreciated and fully approved. I believe the Lord will suggest to my mind the words he would have me say. I will send you a copy of the letter when I write again. I think of you daily, and my love goes out to you as a brother high above a brother by birth.

THE UNJUST STEWARD

Luke 16:1-13.—Nov. 4.

"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

While the previous parables of this dinner-table talk were addressed specially to the Pharisees, this parable, and the one following it, concerning a rich man and a poor man (Dives and Lazarus), were addressed not so exclusively to the Pharisees, but, as the first verse of our lesson declares, to the disciples *also*, as well as to the Pharisees at the same table. The reason why the first three parables were addressed to the Pharisees only, and not to the disciples, is evident—the disciples needed no such instruction, having no prejudice against the poorer classes, recognizing themselves as amongst the "lost" who were glad to be found by the Good Shepherd.

The steward of this parable corresponds to the elder son of the preceding parable, and to the rich man of the succeeding parable; it applies specially to the scribes and Pharisees, who, as our Lord declared, on another occasion, "sat in Moses' seat"—represented Moses, and the Law Covenant of which Moses was the Mediator, and the blessing obtained through that covenant, of which Moses was the original steward, and they now the steward, as his representatives. In what did this stewardship consist? The Apostle Paul asks this question, and answers it, saying, "What advantage then hath a Jew? Much every way; chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God," the knowledge of God, with typical justification and at-one-ment with him, and an interest in the promises made to the fathers.

The Jews, as represented in Moses and his successors, failed of their stewardship—failed to use in a manner satisfactory to God the favors committed to their care. Nor, indeed, were they wholly to blame for this, as the Apostle Paul points out; they were weak through the fall, incompetent to be administrators of so great a trust; and God knew this when he gave them the stewardship—he knew that they would fail to keep the Law perfectly. He had fully intended that in due time he would depose them from the stewardship and give it to the one whom he had foreknown—to Messiah.

Now the time had come when this change of administration was about to be effected, and God was calling upon the representatives of Israel to give an account of their stewardship, and informing them that a new dispensation was about to be ushered in. Our Lord Jesus in this parable wished to point out to them what would be the wisest course for them to pursue under the circumstances. He shows them what an earthly steward would do under such circumstances, and tells them there is wisdom in such a course, saying, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light:" you, as God's people, more favored than any others with light on the divine character and plan, are not acting as wisely as you would do if you were earthly stewards.

Here we are met with the difficulty that the majority of people do not clearly comprehend—the scope of a steward's privileges in olden times. We have no such office today amongst civilized people. A steward's office was a confidential one; he had the liberty and full authority to do anything and everything that the owner himself could do with his goods. He could make presents, or cancel debts, or use in any manner he chose the goods under his care, and could not be held responsible as a culprit before the law, because the nature of his office as a steward was such that he fully represented and acted for his employer. The latter could discharge him from the stewardship as a penalty for unfaithfulness, but this would be his only punishment, because in making him steward he fully authorized him to use his judgment.

In the parable the unjust steward—unjust in his previous use of his master's affairs, that is, unrighteous, unsatisfactory, imperfect—as soon as he realized the situation, made no attempt to defend himself, nor to claim that he had done perfectly; but before rendering up his accounts he dealt leniently with some of his lord's creditor's, remitting parts of their indebtedness. (This may have been a wise course, as, for instance, today bankruptcy laws similarly release debtors from obligations which they could not pay; and similarly creditors frequently, in their own interest, agree to accept sixty per cent, fifty per cent, forty per cent, or some other proportion of the original sum as for the whole of a debt, seeing that the debtor is unable to pay the account in full, and with a view to his encouragement to do the best he can. The Jewish Jubilee year of full release from all debts was along the same line of leniency and wise business policy represented in the "Bankruptcy Law" of today.) It is not because of this last conduct of the steward that he is called unjust (unrighteous) in the parable, but because of his previous stewardship, not having come up to the full, perfect demands of his master.

Now, applying the parable to all of the Jewish nation, especially to those who sat in Moses' seat and had the control of matters, and who decided what was and what was not the proper interpretation of the law, our Lord intimated that if they were as wise as earthly stewards they would make use of their opportunities in a somewhat similar manner. Now how could they have done this—supposing that they recognized the fact that they had not fulfilled the requirements of God under the Law, and supposing also that they realized that the time had come for a change of dispensation, and that God was demanding an account of them and informing them that a new steward would take possession of matters—under such circumstances how should these in Moses' seat have acted? We answer, that in harmony with the lesson of the parable, they should have said to themselves: We realize that we ourselves have not kept the law of God perfectly; indeed, that it is not within our power to do so. We realize that a change of dispensation is impending, and that we are called upon to make an accounting, and that we can only admit before God that we made a failure as respects the carrying out of the demands of his Law and the gaining of eternal life under it,—and as respects the use of the many advantages every way which God has given us. We have used our advantages in some respects well, but we failed on the whole to accomplish anything in the world, or to gain eternal life, either for ourselves or for any,—and we cannot dispute, therefore, that "By the deeds of the law no flesh should be justified in God's sight."

Since, therefore, it must soon be evidenced to all that our stewardship has resulted in failure and that we are dispossessed, the wise thing for us to do is to turn about at once, and deal kindly and generously with these sinners (the prodigal son class) and, instead of denouncing them as sinners more than ourselves, we should say to them frankly, We cannot keep this perfect law of God, and we know also that you cannot do so, but now, instead of being hopelessly discouraged and cast down, do the best you can; we will remit part of the exaction of the law, admitting that you are unable to keep it perfectly, and will merely require of you that you keep it to the best of your ability—fifty per cent., or eighty per cent., according to your circumstances and conditions—according as you are *able*, keep the law.

Had the scribes and Pharisees taken this position they would have healed the breach as between themselves and the people, and their honesty in admitting that they themselves could not keep the law would have been a distinct advantage to them, subsequently, in connection with the new dispensation. And this very conduct of candid admission and of sympathy for others, and assistance in lifting their burdens would have brought them into such a condition of heart that they would have been ready for the *Gospel;* and the lower classes, from which they had hitherto held aloof as sinners, would have had a kindly feeling toward them, and as a result they would have retained a measure of their sympathy, at least, in the time of trouble which came upon them when their polity was overthrown.

But did the scribes and Pharisees follow any such course? By no means. On the other hand they put on a brassy front, made broad their phylacteries, made still louder claims respecting their own perfection of heart and life, deceiving their own selves probably as much as or more than they deceived others. They boasted that they should ever continue to be stewards of the manifold grace of God; and, as our Lord declares, so far from lifting the burdens and condemnations of the law from the shoulders of the people, who were honest enough to confess inability to keep the perfect law, these scribes and Pharisees, on the contrary, bound upon the people heavy burdens which they would not assist to lift with their little finger.—Matt. 23:1-4.

Thus doing they became more and more hypocritical and case-hardened, until, in his later descriptions of them, our Lord declared them to be whited sepulchres, outwardly fair and beautiful, inwardly full of corruption, dishonesty, hypocrisy; knowing themselves to be infractors of the law they were outwardly claiming and boasting perfection. This not being said to the Pharisees alone, but to the disciples "also," implies that they were to notice how the parable fitted and how unwisely this steward class was acting. Even at the table the Pharisees, perceiving to some extent at least the trend of the parable, "derided"—being covetous. But our Lord pressed the lesson home to them saying, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts." You are the unjust steward and soon all will witness your rejection. "The law and the prophets [of which you are the representatives] was [recognized of God] until John [the Baptist]; since that time the kingdom of God is preached [the new, the Gospel dispensation], and every one [should] press toward it." (Verses 14-16) You, leaders of the people, however, not only will not enter yourselves, but those desiring to enter you hinder. (Matt. 23:13) You should see that your institution is bound to Moses and the law as a wife to her husband—so long as it liveth. It is needful, therefore, that the law which you represent should die, that Israel may be liberated and thus be prepared to be united (married) to Messiah by a new covenant.—Verses 17, 18: Rom. 7:1-4.

We are not informed that this parable had special application in the end of this Gospel age, but since we know from other Scriptures that natural Israel and its harvest time were a pattern or illustration of spiritual Israel and this age and the present harvest time, therefore we are justified in looking for some parallel as between the condition of the unjust steward in our Lord's day and a similar class in this present time. And looking about us today for a class corresponding to those who sat in Moses' seat, we find a class today sitting in Christ's seat, as respects the Gospel church. This class is composed of elders, Sunday School teachers and superintendents, ministers, bishops, archbishops, etc. These as a whole are representing a great stewardship of divine favor as respects the Lord's people today. They perceive that a change of dispensation is upon us, that their creeds and traditions from the past are being called in question, and that they are being required to render up an account. They perceive that the account will not be a very flattering one, and that if the whole truth were known to the people as it is known to God, they would be found derelict, unfaithful to their stewardship in many respects. They fear the crisis; they put off the day of reckoning as far as possible; they hush the murmurs of the people and the questions respecting creeds, and as the Lord said of the steward of his day, so it will be true of these: "That which is highly esteemed amongst men is an abomination in the sight of God."—Verse 15.

These representatives of the nominal church, who hold a position of stewardship as respects the masses of the Lord's people, are disposed, as were the Pharisees, their prototypes, to put a bold face upon matters, to brave it out rather than to confess the truth. As for instance, in the matter of creeds that are being called in question: Many, even of those who were at first disposed to demand the revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith, have concluded that this would be showing the white feather, and admitting that they had been in error in the past, and imperfect in their interpretation of the divine Word, and hence calculated to discredit them with the people; and now the tide is rapidly turning and the same ones who were demanding a revision are now voting to the contrary, that the creed is good, thoroughly satisfactory to them, that they would not change it for anything. They are so anxious to be highly esteemed of men that they seem to forget altogether the one from whom they received their stewardship, and who is about to take it from them.

What would be the proper course for this steward class of the Gospel age? We answer, that the proper course would be to do what our Lord recommended to the Jewish stewards; *viz.*, they should candidly confess to the people the errors of the creeds and their own imperfection in attempted exposition of the divine Word, and their own failures in the past in respect to a proper use of the oracles of God and a proper application of the exceeding great and precious promises. And while acknowledging their own errors and shortcomings, they should modify the demands made of the people and bring them into conformity with their ability. For instance, they should say to the people, How much did we say that you owed to God, and what penalty did we say would be imposed upon you? If we said that you were to receive a penalty of eternal torment, count that now as being an error, and write down instead, "A just recompense of reward." If we taught you that your obligations to God are according to the Jewish law, and as represented in the Ten Commandments, and that unless these were kept *perfectly* in letter and in spirit you would have no hope of eternal life, alter and amend that feature of your faith, and write instead that under the *New Covenant God will accept the most imperfect works of those who have consecrated themselves to him, providing those imperfect works are the best that they are able to offer; and providing they are offered in the name and merit of him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood.

If the present stewards would follow such a course they would undoubtedly be respected through the future. but following their present course, the time is surely coming when they will be despised as hypocrites and blind guides, who mislead their confiding flocks into the ditch of skepticism and the great time of trouble.

This parable may be considered as ending with the eighth verse, the instructions which follow being separate and distinct, and along a somewhat different line, and addressed specially to those who accepted the Lord's teaching, his disciples.

"YE CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON"

This after-lesson is on the subject of the impossibility of having two masters, God and Mammon. Mammon represents earthly riches, not only financial wealth, but honor amongst men, etc.—the thing which was particularly hindering the Pharisees from taking the proper course and acknowledging their error and seeking for and obtaining mercy. Mammon still is a great hindrance to all who desire to be the Lord's disciples. Whoever worships Mammon—and it may be self or wealth or fame or position and honor amongst men, one or all of these—whoever worships Mammon cannot at the same time be a true worshiper of God. a true follower of Christ. because God and Mammon are rivals before our hearts. If we attempt to divide our love and attention, and to give part of it to God and to his service, and part of it to Mammon, the results will be unsatisfactory to God, unsatisfactory to Mammon and unsatisfactory to ourselves.

We must, therefore, decide either to live for self and earthly things or to renounce and sacrifice these in the interest of God and of heavenly things. The worshipers of Mammon may have certain advantages as respects the present life, in the way of earthly prosperity. but Mammon cannot give eternal life. It is the gift of God, and those who would have God's gift must be God's friends, God's children; and he demands of such that they shall manifest their love and devotion to him by renouncing Mammon, by joyfully sacrificing earthly name and fame and favor and interest, thus showing their higher appreciation of his love and favor, the riches of his grace, and the exceeding great and precious things which he has promised to give them in the life to come.

These are to "make to themselves friends;" in other words, to lay up treasures in heaven, by the sacrifice of the Mammon of unrighteousness;—that is to say, the sacrifice of the various interests of this present time of unrighteousness, "this present evil world."

Some may have very little of Mammon at their disposal to sacrifice; but the Lord encourages us all by saying that he that is faithful in that which is *least*, thereby gives evidence of how faithful he would be if he had *much;* and the Lord accepts the little sacrifices which we are able to make as tho they were greater ones. "She hath done what she could" is the best of testimony as respects the use of present opportunities in the Lord's service, whether it refer to a mite or a million, a little influence or a great one. It is not the *amount* that God is seeking, but the character, the disposition of heart; and whoever has the right disposition of heart and is careful in the small affairs of life, to serve the Lord with all that he possesses and to the extent of his ability, such an one will have committed to him the true riches—the heavenly riches. Not merely may he expect to enter into the glories of the heavenly kingdom, but even in the present life he will begin to get a first-fruits of those riches in his own heart, in his own experiences; for it is unquestionably a fact that the heirs of glory, those who are in the right relationship with God and running faithfully in the race, not only will get the prize at the end of the race, but already get blessing which the world can neither give nor take away;—the joys of the Lord, the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts; so that they can sing for joy, even in the house of their pilgrimage—even in the present unsatisfactory tabernacle condition, in which we groan also, being burdened with its weaknesses.

But if we are not faithful in the little things which confessedly are not our own, and merely given to us as a stewardship—the things, the opportunities, the talents, which are merely put within our grasp as stewards of the Lord,—if we are not faithful in using these with an eye single to the Lord's glory, how can we expect that he will ever give us true riches of grace, to be our own forever, either in the future or in the present life.

The sum of this lesson to the disciples, then, is that as no man is able to serve two masters and satisfy both, and do justice to both, their interests conflicting, no more can we serve God and righteousness, and at the same time be pleasing and acceptable to the adversary and those who are in harmony with him who now rules in this present dispensation, the "prince of this world." All of the Lord's consecrated people, those who would lay up treasures in heaven and be rich toward God, must be willing to become of no reputation amongst those who are not consecrated, and who, whatever their possessions, are really serving Mammon, selfishness, the present life, and not sacrificing these interests to the attainment of the heavenly kingdom.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

THE RICH MAN (DIVES) AND THE POOR MAN (LAZARUS)

Luke 16:19-31.—Nov. 11.

This parable is a continuation of the series, a part of the table-talk at the banquet at the Pharisee's house. It is the culmination, so to speak, of the entire series of parables. The first represents mankind in general, as the lost sheep, and the Lord's interest therein, and its final recovery to the fold; the second respecting the lost coin, represents the same thought, with the additional feature of the diligent sweeping and bringing in of the light in order to the recovery or restitution of the lost race. The third applies this same principle to the Jewish nation, and reproves the Pharisee class, the elder brother, for not having the Lord's spirit of love and mercy in respect to the sinner cless, the prodigal. The fourth represents the unwisdom of this Pharisee class in hypocritically pretending to others that they kept the Law and were acceptable stewards, whereas they themselves were well aware that they came short of the glory of God, came short of fulfilling their stewardship, and must therefore be ejected from it; and points out to them a proper course, which they did not, however, take. And now, finally. this parable of Dives and Lazarus, the fifth of the series brings the instruction to a climax by picturing the favored class as the rich man, who enjoyed, but did not rightly appreciate the blessings showered upon him,—selfishly shutting up his heart against the poor sinner at his gate; not acknowledging that he himself also was imperfect and came short of the glory of God and the perfect keeping of his law.

This parable shows what the results would be as respects both classes—the final outcome. We will not deal with it here, since we have already treated it with considerable elaboration in our issue of March 15 and April 1, 1900. But inasmuch as some may have loaned or given away that copy, and since we have a good supply of them on hand, we conclude to send an extra copy of that one with this issue to supplement this lesson. Those who find themselves possessed of two copies will no doubt have good opportunity for using the extra one to the Lord's praise and to the blessing of some who in more or less darkness are "feeling after God [his plan], if haply they may find him."

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

STILL DEBATING INFANT DAMNATION

In debates on creed revision among Presbyterians no feature has called forth such heated discussion as that relating to "elect infants dying in infancy." This clause of the Westminster Confession, with those clauses which have popularly been taken as interpreting it, follow:—

III. 3. "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

III. 4. "These angels and men thus predestined and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it can not either be increased or diminished.

. . . .

X. 3. "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved through the Spirit, who worketh when, where, and how he pleaseth; so also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being called by the ministry of the Word.

X. 4. "Others, not elected, although they may be called by the Word and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come to Christ and, therefore, can not be saved. Much less can men not professing the Christian religion be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess; and to assert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious and to be detested."

From a *remote period* these statements have been popularly supposed to teach, by implication, that non-elect infants dying in infancy are damned. However, the recent General Assembly of the Presbyterian church (South) claimed that no such interpretation could rightly be put upon the clause, and refused to consider a proposition to alter it. For instance, Dr. Warfield, of Princeton, says, "I think we may characterize the interpretation of Chapter X., section 3 [of the Westminster Confession], which finds a body of non-elect infants dying in infancy implied in its statements, as one of the most astonishing pieces of misrepresentation in literary history." Rev. Dr. Eugene Daniel also asserts that it is unjust to say that the Confession implicitly teaches the damnation of non-elect infants. He points out that it teaches *positively* the salvation of elect infants, but makes no attempt whatever to solve the Creator's intentions with regard to non-elect infants.

It seems peculiar indeed that anyone claiming to believe in Calvinistic *predestination* of adults could dispute that the same conditions prevailed in infancy. But hearken to other interpreters of the Westminster Confession, as follows:—

Rev. Dr. Horace L. Singleton (*The Homiletic Review*, September), states that prior to the Westminster Confession all of Christendom had believed that infants dying without baptism are *damned*, but that Confession took a step forward in asserting that *elect* infants, even if unbaptized, are saved. He says:—

"The sacramentarian doctrine of the papal and other prelatical churches, and the logical conclusion of Arminianism, left no other provision for infant salvation than baptism. To die without it was to be lost forever. This detestable doctrine the Confession of Faith was designed to destroy. It does destroy it. The Christian church and the world are debtors to it for removing the gloom which surrounds the death of babes. The Assembly divines were all Calvinists, in entire accord with the second Scotch Confession, which on this subject 'abhors and detests among the doctrines of the Roman Antichrist his cruel judgment against infants dying without the sacrament.' The Calvinists of the Westminster Assembly who indorsed or approved that Confession, would surely not frame an article on infant salvation which would imply that any dying in infancy were without the pale of God's grace and redemption. So they made provision for all by referring all to the sovereign will of him 'who worketh when and where and how he will.' Only Calvinistic theology and a Calvinistic Confession can say that. The phrase contains the essence of Calvinism. What is that? Why, the grace of God is sovereign both in its source and application.

"As to the device of the doctrine of infant damnation, not one of the other denominations can point at the Presbyterian church and say: 'Thou didst it.'

"The Roman Catholic church in the Council of Trent decreed, and the decree still stands:—

" 'If any denies that new-born children must be baptized, or says that they do not derive from Adam anything of original sin which makes the washing of regeneration necessary to cleanse them for an entrance into everlasting life, let him be accursed.'

"The Lutheran church did not rid itself altogether of Roman sacramentalism. Its Augsburg Confession teaches that 'Baptism is necessary to salvation.' It condemns all 'who affirm that children are saved without baptism.'

"Archbishop Cranmer, the first primate of the English church, said in his 'Catechism': 'If we should have heathen parents and die without baptism, we would be damned everlastingly.'

". . . . The founder of the Methodist Episcopal church, John Wesley, in his 'Treatise on Baptism,' 1756, says:—

" 'If infants are guilty of original sin, then they are the proper subjects of baptism, seeing in the ordinary way they can not be saved unless this be washed away by baptism. It has already been proved that this original stain cleaves to every child of man, and that they thereby are children of wrath and liable to eternal damnation.' "

The Independent (August 30) says:—

"It is a mere evasion to assert that 'elect infants' can mean all infants. It would be as easy to say 'all infants', as 'elect infants' if that were intended, and if it were not contradicted by the doctrine clearly expressed in the Confession, that original sin is worthy of eternal death. That the plain meaning of the Confession and its implications throughout includes infants among those who are lost, is sufficiently proved from the language of Dr. Twiss, prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly, who says distinctly in his 'VINDICÆ' I., 48:—

" 'Many infants depart from this life in original sin, and consequently are condemned to eternal death on account of original sin alone. Therefore, from the sole transgression of Adam condemnation to eternal death has followed upon many infants.'

"What Dr. Twiss said was the belief of the rest and the teaching of the Confession."

The Rev. Henry Frank quotes John Calvin himself, saying:—

"John Calvin says with his accustomed clearness: 'The children of the reprobate [*i. e.*, the non-elect] whom the curse of God follows, are subject to the same sentence.' (Opera II.) Again: 'You deny that it is lawful for God, except for misdeeds, to condemn any human being. . . . Put forth your evidence against God, who precipitates into *eternal death harmless, new-born children* torn from their mother's bosom.' (*'De Occulta Dei Providentia'*). 'As the eggs of the asp are deservedly crushed, and serpents just born are deservedly killed, though they have not yet poisoned any one with their bite, so infants are justly obnoxious to penalties' (Molineaux of France). . . .

"Once again hear John Calvin: 'Very infants themselves bring in their own damnation with them from their mother's womb; who, although they have not yet brought forth the fruits of their iniquity, yet have the seed thereof enclosed within them; yea, their whole nature is a certain seed of sin; and therefore it can not be otherwise than hateful and abominable to God.'

"Now let us learn what the framers of the Confession themselves said concerning this damnable doctrine. William Twiss: 'If many thousands, even all the infants of Turks and Saracens, dying in original sin are tormented by him in hell-fire, is he to be accounted the father of cruelties for this?' For a vivid picture of the disposition of these eternally damned infants by this mild and maudlin Presbyterian God, read Samuel Rutherford, one of the Scotch commissioners who assisted in framing the creed. 'Suppose we saw with our eyes a great furnace of fire, ... and all the damned as *lumps of red fire*, and they boiling and louping for pain in a dungeon of everlasting brimstone, and the black and terrible devils, with long and sharp-toothed whips of scorpions lashing out scourges on them; and if we saw our own neighbors, brethren, sisters; yea, *our dear children*, wives, fathers, mothers, swimming and sinking in that black lake, and heard the yelling, shouting, crying of our young ones and fathers. . . .' "

* * *

It will now be quite in order for some very conscientious Presbyterian brother to tell us that John Calvin knew nothing about *Calvinism* anyway; or to assure us that though there were damned non-elect infants in times past, there are none today, though God and his Word have not changed in the interim.

If, instead of saying elect and non-elect infants, Brother Calvin had said the children of the non-elect are damned when they are born, he would have come much nearer stating the matter truthfully, however erroneous his conception of the facts. For the word *damned* in plain English simply signifies *condemned*, and the same is true of the Greek word translated in these two ways in the Bible.

No one can dispute that the Scriptures plainly teach that *condemnation* (*damnation*) passed upon all men because of father Adam's transgression (Rom. 5:12), and hence the declaration that mankind are "born in sin." (Psa. 51:5) The only exceptions to this rule of being born *condemned* (*damned*) being in the case of children one or both of whose parents are believers.—1 Cor. 7:14.

But then, the great difficulty of "Orthodoxy" lies in the fact that it has accepted theories respecting this original *condemnation* (*damnation* or curse of God) framed in "the dark ages," that it means *condemned* (*damned*) to everlasting torture, either in fire and brimstone or something worse: a thought as opposed to the Scriptural teachings as to sound reason and common sense. If, however, the Scriptural thought be attached to the *condemnation* (*damnation*) and it be seen that all of Adam's race are born aliens and strangers from God, his enemies and under *condemnation* (*damnation*) to death is imperfect beings unworthy of God's favors, including everlasting life,—then all is plain, all is reasonable.

It will then be seen that as Adam's sin and its penalty were entailed upon his children, so the harmony with God of a believing parent would properly and consistently attach to his children until they shall have reached years of discretion and ability to accept or reject divine favor for themselves.

However, the children of unbelievers have the opportunity of accepting God's grace when they come to years of discretion, provided they have the necessary "ears to hear"—ears of the heart. And even such as, under Satan's influence, are deaf to the voice of God now speaking to us through his Son—and who therefore continue through the present life under *condemnation* (*damnation*), we have the assurance will in the Millennial age have the *ears of their understanding* opened and then have opportunity to obey and be blessed with the gift of God—eternal life.

N. B. We will send FREE, as a sample, on receipt of a Postal Card request, a ten cent pamphlet, *"What Say the Scriptures About Hell?"* It discusses every occurrence of the word hell and every passage generally supposed to teach eternal torment.

DEAD BODIES AND QUICKENED BODIES

"O wretched man that I am: who shall deliver me from this dead body? I thank God [*for deliverance*] *through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with my mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."*

Rom. 7:24, 25.

Much perplexity has been caused to many Christian minds by the statements of the seventh chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Some have concluded that he here teaches that he lived a life of sin, according to the flesh, but a life of righteousness according to his mind; and yet they are ready to concede that this is rather a perplexing, unreasonable and unsatisfactory view of the matter. Others reach the conclusion that the Apostle must here be describing his condition of heart and mind before conversion, while he was still a sinner; yet these also find difficulties, and confess that many features of such a view are quite inconsistent with the Apostle's language. We submit the following interpretation of the chapter, as proving itself correct by its harmonizing with all the Apostle's statements in this chapter and elsewhere.

The Apostle is addressing believers at Rome, "beloved of God, called saints" (1:7). Some of these were probably converts from amongst the Gentiles, while undoubtedly a considerable proportion were converts from Judaism. This is implied by the fact that the Apostle in this Epistle so particularly explains the Law, not as to Gentiles having no knowledge of the Law, but as to Jews having full knowledge of it. The Epistle is a very comprehensive statement of the entire plan of God. The Apostle begins in the first chapter by showing that God was not responsible for the prevalent degradation, ignorance, sin, etc., throughout the world, and concludes with the crushing of Satan under the feet of the saints during the Millennial reign of the Christ. He explains that at one time God gave to mankind in general certain knowledge and blessings, but that "when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools." He explains that thus gradually men came down to idolatry and bestiality, dishonoring and degrading themselves, and "perverting the truth of God into a lie;" "for which cause God gave them up to vile affections and to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not proper;" and they became filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, dispute, deceit, malignity, etc., etc. Thus he accounts for the various degrees of degradation, ignorance and superstition prevalent throughout the world.—Chap. 1:21, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29.

Proceeding, he shows that while Israel had received God's law, under a special covenant, and with special favors at his hands, they had not been *saved* by the law, any more than the Gentiles had been saved without the law; and that therefore both Jews and Gentiles needed just such a Savior as God had provided. Answering the supposed argument of the Jews, he declares, "Not the *hearers* of the law are just before God, but the *doers* of the law," and he argues that the Jew who rested in the law, and made his boast of being of God's favored people, and who by reason of these favors knew the will of God more particularly than the Gentiles, would not, by reason of this knowledge and advantage, be justified under the law, but could only be acquitted by a perfect keeping of that law; and that since the Jews did not keep the law perfectly they could not claim the reward promised by the law, namely, eternal life. Hence, so far as eternal life was concerned, they had no more claim upon it than had the Gentiles, who had less knowledge as well as less outward piety. He asks: "Are we [Jews] better than they [Gentiles, living according to the light that they possessed]? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none *righteous*, no, not one."

The Apostle's argument is that none being righteous, none could be acquitted or approved before God, whether they had the law or did not have it. Thus he proved that the Jews as well as the Gentiles, up to the time of Christ, were all under sin, all under condemnation, and that none of them had any claim upon eternal life, according to divine arrangements thus far made. For "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight."—Chap. 2:13, 17; 3:9, 10, 19, 20.

Next the Apostle proceeds to show that whoever would be justified before God, whether he had previously been a Jew, favored with the knowledge and advantages of the Law, or a Gentile, in blindness and ignorance doing to the best of his knowledge, God has now provided for both, *one* way to be saved and to come into harmony with him—namely, through Christ. He shows that the law, so far from justifying the Jews, showed them to be in a condition of sin, by their inability to keep it perfectly. But this law which had condemned the Jews, because of their failure and inability to keep its conditions perfectly, served the more abundantly to attest God's justice; it became a witness to God's righteousness—that he had been right in his declaration that Israel had not kept the law, and that all mankind, being in a fallen condition, were unfit to receive his favors; and it witnessed more than this: it witnessed to the justice of God in providing the ransom for sinners, in the person of his Son our Lord—"even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto *all* and upon *all* them that believe [whether Jews or Gentiles]: for there is [now] no difference, for all have sinned [and consequently all are unworthy of divine favor upon any basis of works of their own, and must therefore needs be redeemed with the precious blood, and their penalty met for them, ere they could be received back into harmony with God]; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [satisfaction] through faith in his blood."—Chap. 3:19-26.

Appealing to those who had formerly been Jews, and who had been inclined to boast of themselves as God's favored people, and inclined to think that in some sense of the word they were still more favored of God than those formerly Gentiles, the Apostle says, in view of the preceding facts, "Where is [the room for] boasting then?" and he answers, "It is excluded." There is no room for boasting; the Jew and the Gentile having come into Christ are on a common level—both have been justified by faith in Christ; neither was benefited or injured by his previous experience, whether under the law or without the law, if now by God's grace they had received adoption into his family through Christ. Boasting on the part of those who previously had been Jews would certainly be excluded, for they had not been able to perform the works which their Law Covenant had demanded, and now being exempted of God, under the law of faith, it would hinder them from any boasting as respects the law of works. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without [necessity for] the deeds of [works demanded by] the law."

The Apostle proceeds to show that the Lord's operation of favor on account of faith does not make void the law, with which for centuries he had dealt with Israel,—the law of Righteousness. On the contrary, the fact that it was necessary to justify the Jews by faith, and the fact that they could not be justified under the law of works, proves, not that the law of works was bad, but that it was good, and that the Jew was imperfect through the fall, so that he was unable to obey the perfect law given. Thus God's dealings through the new law of faith really upholds and magnifies his old law of works, for the latter had to be fulfilled by Jesus on behalf of his people, in order that he might be the Redeemer of the world in general, and set free from the law of works those who had been under it, that they also, with the remainder of the world, might be accepted of God under the law of faith.—Chap. 3:27-31.

Buttressing his argument, the Apostle shows that Abraham was not justified by the law of works, the Law Covenant, but by faith; and hence the claim advanced by some that the Mosaic law was necessary, with faith for justification, was an erroneous one; because Abraham was called the friend of God, and had his faith counted to him for righteousness, not only long before the law was given at Mount Sinai, but even before the outward sign of circumcision was given to himself—the latter being given, not as a requirement to his justification, but as a seal or mark of justification and harmony with God, to which he had already attained.—Chap. 4:1-15.

As Abraham was justified by faith, and received into favor with God because of his exercise of faith, so, says the Apostle, it is with us. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." And how and why through our Lord? Because, says the Apostle, "He was delivered for our offences [bearing the condemnation which those offences implied and involved—the very offences or weaknesses of the flesh which hindered Jews from keeping the perfect law at Sinai, and being justified under it by works of obedience to it]."—Chap. 4:25; 5:1.

This justification, which we receive through faith in Christ, becomes to us the basis of our new hopes in him,—of becoming his disciples, and, if faithful, ultimately joint-heirs with him in the kingdom. This the Apostle expresses in the words, "By whom also [additional to justification and its peace] we have access by faith into *this grace* [the privilege of adoption into God's family] wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God [in the hope of sharing in God's glory and kingdom with our Lord and Head]." The Apostle proceeds to prove, not only that the death of Christ was necessary as the off-set to Adam's transgression, and the payment of his penalty, but he demonstrates that this penalty was fully paid, and that God has accepted it on behalf of the world in general, and not of the Jews only, and has transferred all to Christ; for as "the judgment was by one to condemnation, the free gift is of many offences unto justification. As one offence resulted in a pronouncement which affected all to condemnation, even so by one righteous act a pronouncement was made [by the same justice] which affects all men [permitting their attainment] unto justification of life."

And, adds the Apostle, the Law Covenant was introduced, not for the doing away of sin, but that sin might be more distinctly seen to be sin, and in its true colors; not, however, with a view to the injury of the Jews, with whom that Law Covenant was made, for if sin abounded amongst them the more by reason of their greater knowledge through the law, then God's grace abounded proportionately the more; for as sin hath reigned unto death, even so there is to be a reign of grace unto eternal life under righteous provisions through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Rom. 5:12, 17-21.

The next point is, If God's grace will be caused to abound in proportion to the sentence, so that he who has many and deep sins can be as fully and completely forgiven and released as he who has fewer and smaller sins, shall we then argue that we may as well delve deeply into sin, assured that God's grace will be that much the more abundantly provided for us? No, says the Apostle; those who have come into the position to *see* and comprehend this much of divine mercy and favor must first have made a consecration of themselves to God, otherwise their eyes of understanding would not be opened widely enough to grasp the subject with clearness and definiteness; and if one had made a consecration of himself, and immersed his will into the will of God in Christ, and thus reckoned himself dead to the world and to sin, how could such persons live lives of sin or take pleasure therein? So surely as they have received the holy Spirit, the new mind, that surely that new mind would be out of harmony with sin, craving, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, truth, etc.

We are therefore to reckon ourselves dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ; and we are not to let sin reign in us, because we, as new creatures, are begotten of a different spirit, that is at warfare with sin, as sin is at warfare against righteousness. Instead, therefore, of continuing to be servants of sin, and yielding our bodies to that service, we are to recognize ourselves as "*new* creatures in Christ," servants of God, his ambassadors and representatives; and are to seek to use our members, our bodies and their talents, in the new service of righteousness,—remembering our past experience in sin, that its wages are degradation and ultimate death, and that this privilege which we have now entered upon as new creatures, redeemed by the precious blood, is God's covenant through Jesus Christ our Lord, and means to us eternal life, if we maintain it.—Chap. 6.

Having reached this climax of the argument, and having demonstrated the process of our justification and our subsequent adoption into the divine family; and having shown the necessity for maintaining our standing as new creatures, and gaining victory over the weaknesses of the flesh; and that all these privileges, nevertheless, are not of the Law but of grace and of faith—the Apostle next turns his attention to another phase of the subject in Chapter 7. He has in mind, and is specially addressing the Christian brethren at Rome who were formerly Jews, as he says, "I write unto you who know the law." He wishes to demonstrate to them logically that although the Jews previously, through the Law Covenant, had "much advantage every way," yet now since the introduction of the New Covenant they were to some extent at a disadvantage—hindered or bound by the old dead covenant, unless they recognized it as dead, and cut loose from it. They were tightly bound by the Law given at Sinai; because as a nation they entered into a positive covenant with God, through Moses, the mediator of their covenant. St. Paul represents this as a marriage contract between that people and the Law Covenant, picturing the Jews as the wife, and the Law Covenant as the husband. He shows an incompatibility between them, but that nevertheless the Jews would be bound by their covenant, as a woman would be *bound* by her marriage contract, so long as the husband would live.

Hence the Jews, as a people, were less at liberty to enter into a New Covenant with Christ than were the Gentiles, because they were already *bound* to the Law Covenant through Moses. The Apostle proceeds to prove three things:

(1) That the Law Covenant, or husband of Israel, had not been abrogated, had not been executed, as a bad law, but had died a natural death, through the fulfilment of the purpose of its creation; and that hence,

(2) Every Jew might properly consider himself as released from all obligation to the (dead) Law Covenant, and might properly be united or married to another, Christ, accepting the terms of the New Covenant, with its grace, mercy and peace through believing, now offered to them.*

(3) It was proper that they all should see how much better was the New Covenant, into which they would enter by becoming united with Christ, than was the old covenant, which, he declared, had died a natural death.

However, he would not have them think evil of the first husband, the Law Covenant. On the contrary, he assures them that it was a good husband to them—"The law is holy and just and good," all must speak well of the Jews' first husband. Nevertheless, argues the Apostle, we all realize that we did not receive from the Law Covenant the blessings we so earnestly coveted; we did not receive an actual cancellation of our sins, but merely a temporary covering of them, which required to be renewed and made mention of year by year continually (Heb. 10:1), nor did we obtain the longed-for everlasting life. As Jews, we cannot blame the Law Covenant; we must only blame ourselves;—nor can we blame ourselves (for I may consider myself a representative, in thought and conduct, of all true Jews, and may speak for them, says the Apostle); and I can truly say that while living under this Law Covenant I approved it with my mind, with my heart, and I endeavored to serve it accordingly, but when I came to perform its requirements I found another law, a law of sin working in my members, which hindered me from rendering the obedience I desired to render to that Law Covenant.

Not that it hindered me entirely, for I certainly succeeded in some degree in conforming life and conduct to its requirements; but since I could not render perfect obedience to its every requirement I necessarily failed, because in that Law Covenant no provision was made for my weaknesses and imperfections which I had inherited, and which were my share of the fall of our race. I found, on the contrary, that even though I had been able to perform the requirements of the Law in nine points out of ten, and had failed in the tenth point, and even though that failure were properly attributable to inherited weaknesses, and was entirely contrary to my desires of heart, nevertheless it was *failure*, and my efforts as a whole were branded *failure*, and the great prize of eternal life was denied me under that covenant.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

Thus I found myself in a terrible predicament; my heart crying out for God and for righteousness, and earnestly desiring to fulfil the requirements of my covenant and to gain life everlasting, but I found myself wholly unable to fully obey its requirements; I found them entirely beyond my reach. Not that they were beyond the reach of my mind, for with my mind I grasped them and enjoyed them and appreciated them; nor that they would have been beyond the reach of obedience of my body, had my body been perfect; but, O wretched man! I find that my body is a dead body, that sin has gained such a power over it and so chained it down to things that are evil, in fact and in intention, that I cannot do the things that I would,—that when I would do good and keep the perfect law, sin is present with me, and hinders,—being an integral part of my body; so that the good that I would do, the perfect life that I would live, I am unable to perform, and the evil things that I would not do, which my mind, my will, rejects, and which I strive against, those things to some extent I find myself unable to resist; and here was my helpless condition as bound to the Law Covenant. I realized that I never could gain, through its assistance and offers, the glorious perfections that I desired, and the eternal life which could accompany only these perfections.

What shall I do? How can I escape this condition of things? I thank God that a way of escape has been provided; I thank God that in his due time he has sent Jesus, as a great Redeemer, and that through his death the world of mankind has been redeemed from the original sentence, and additionally that all we who were Jews and under the Law Covenant are *set at liberty from that covenant*—that the death of Jesus on our behalf means the death of our Covenant, which, though in some respects an advantage, was very unfavorable to us because of our inherited weaknesses. I thank God that now I am at liberty to become united to Christ, at liberty to consider my union with Moses and the Law Covenant as at an end, at liberty to take on me the vows and covenants required of all called to be the bride of Christ. Thanks be unto God for this deliverance from the bondage of the law of works into the liberty of the law of faith in Christ Jesus!

The advantage of this new position in Christ over the old position in Moses is that now God accepts my new mind, my heart desires, accompanied by my best endeavors; and under this New Covenant, through the merits of the *ransom*, he justly ignores and hides from his sight the imperfections of the flesh, which are contrary to my wish, and against which I am striving. It may be said of me, then, and of all such, that it is with our minds, with our hearts, that we are serving God—even if to some extent, contrary to our wish and endeavor, our flesh should, either through weakness or ignorance, serve the law of sin at times.—Romans 7.

THE NEW CREATURE ALIVE, THE OLD DEAD—Rom. 8:1-11

Under the covenant through which we are united to Christ, our mortal bodies are reckoned as dead, as sacrificed, as no longer us, and our minds are reckoned as the new creature adopted into the family of God, and seeking to serve God and to grow into his likeness, by being conformed to the image of his dear Son. It is therefore according to the standpoint from which we view the matter that we could say of these new creatures that they are holy, and that the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in them, and that the wicked one toucheth them not.—1 John 5:18.

In such expressions we are referring exclusively to the reckoned *"new"* creatures, and are ignoring entirely, as dead, their mortal bodies. But if we should speak from another standpoint, and attempt to say that we are actually perfect in the flesh, it would be untrue. and not only so but would be an ignoring of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, and our continued need (while in the fallen flesh) of a share in the justification which it provides. Those who would thus speak of their flesh as perfect, should hear the Apostle speaking to the reverse, saying, "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing,"—no perfection; and all imperfection is un-right, and all unrighteousness is sin. Hence, says the Apostle John, "If we say [speaking of our flesh, and ignoring the justification provided in Christ to cover its blemishes] that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—1 John 1:8.

St. Paul proceeds to clearly mark the distinction between the *new* mind, which consecrated in Christ is accepted as the "new creature," holy and acceptable to God, and our mortal bodies, which he calls "this dead body"—originally dead, under divine sentence, because of sin, but redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and justified, and then included in our sacrifice, when we gave our little all in consecration to the Lord, as living sacrifices—to be dead with Christ, to suffer with him even unto death. He declares that it is to those who are walking *after* the spirit, seeking to serve the Lord in spirit and in truth, from the heart, that are freed from the condemnation; and that this includes the thought that they do not now walk *after* the flesh, desiring to fulfil its desires. And here we are to closely distinguish between the walking *up to* the spirit, and walking *after* the spirit. We should of course follow as closely to the spirit of truth and righteousness as possible, and yet we cannot hope, so long as we are in the imperfect flesh, that we could ever walk *up to* the spirit of the divine requirements, though we are to strive in this direction continually. One thing is positive, however,—we must not walk *after* the flesh. To do so would imply that we had lost the new mind, the new disposition, the new will,—that we had become dead to those hopes and covenants which had led to our consecration.

Any who get into this condition of walking after the flesh,—seeking to serve the flesh, therein have the evidence that their minds had become "carnal," that they had lost much, if not all, of the *new* mind, the *new* disposition. All such should know most unequivocally that the carnal mind is at enmity against God, and hence that God could not fellowship it or favor it in any sense or degree The Apostle urges, then, that all remember that they who are in the flesh, who live in harmony with their fallen propensities, serving their fallen fleshly natures, are not pleasing God and that such an inclination or course leads toward, and, if persisted in, would end in death.

He proceeds to reason that if the Spirit [mind, disposition] of God [the spirit of holiness] dwell in us we cannot be in sympathetic accord with the fallen fleshly nature and its appetites and ambitions. We may know, on the contrary, that if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is not of the body of Christ at all, and not to be considered as identified with the elect church,—and Christ's spirit is not a spirit of harmony with sin, but of opposition to sin, for did he not lay down his life to vanquish sin, and to deliver us from its power and dominion? Whoever, therefore, claims to have the spirit of Christ, but loves and *wilfully* practices sin, and with *his mind* serves sin, such an one deceives himself ,for he has neither part nor lot in Christ.

The Apostle proceeds further along the same line, arguing that our adoption into God's family, our begetting to newness of heart and mind, and our acceptance thus as members of the body of Christ, while it means, first of all, that the body is ignored and reckoned as *dead*, because of sin, and only our spirits or minds are reckoned righteous and alive, the beginning of our eternal existence, nevertheless this good condition is not to be considered the limit of our ambition and attainment in Christ-likeness. On the contrary, we are to remember that the spirit of God is powerful: that in the case of our Lord Jesus it was powerful enough to raise him from the dead; and as we become more and more imbued with and controlled by the holy spirit of God in our hearts, in our minds, divine power will come gradually to us through this channel of the holy Spirit, which will permit a figurative raising of our mortal bodies from their death-state into activities of spiritual life, in the service of the Lord. "If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you [in sufficient measure, aboundingly], he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [energize] your *mortal bodies* [not your immortal resurrection bodies] by his spirit that dwelleth in you."

It is our hope that in due time the Lord by his spirit will give us new bodies in the resurrection; and that those new bodies will be immortal, perfect in every respect; and that then not only our minds, but our bodies also will be fully in harmony with God and his every law and work of righteousness. That will be glorious—it is already a glorious prospect; but the Apostle holds before us the thought that even our present mortal bodies, sentenced, then justified, then reckoned dead because of sin, consecrated, may be so quickened or energized now, that instead of being any longer servants of sin, or even merely *dead to it*, they may, under the careful watchfulness of the new mind, be used as servants of righteousness, of truth. This means, of course, a high Christian development, a large attainment of "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." It is the measure or attainment, nevertheless, which every one of the Lord's people must continually strive after, and their success will be proportioned to their attainment of the mind [disposition] of Christ, holy conformity to the Father's will in all things. And how comforting, in this connection, is the promise of our Lord, that our heavenly Father is more willing to give the holy Spirit [spirit of holiness] to them that ask him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts unto their children!—Luke 11:13.

"UNTHANKFUL, UNHOLY"

LUKE 17:11-19.—Nov. 18.

"Be ye thankful."—Col. 3:15.

Leprosy is a very prevalent disease in eastern lands, and amongst the Jews lepers were specially proscribed—separated from others—not allowed to have intercourse with their own families nor to come near anybody, but obliged to keep at a distance, and on the approach of a stranger to cry out, "Unclean! unclean!" From the standpoint of the Law it is evident that leprosy was meant to represent sin and its loathsome, contagious and consuming character.

A traveler in the Orient writes: "As our traveling party passed out the western gate of Nablus, the site of ancient Sechem, a group of repulsive lepers greeted us with calls for help. They showed various forms of that terrible disease: the nose or the lips or a hand or a foot eaten away; the limbs distorted, and one case at least was a leper 'white as snow.' When we were fairly in our tents beyond the city westward, those lepers came, fifteen in all, and seated themselves afar off, in a semi-circle, facing our tents, with one of their number a little in advance of the others, holding out a dish for alms, and, as with one voice, they cried aloud to us to have pity on them and give them aid." Another writer describes leprous conditions thus: "The hair falls from the head and eyebrows; the nails loosen, decay and drop off; joint after joint of the fingers and toes shrink up and slowly fall away; the gums are absorbed and the teeth disappear; the nose, the eyes, the tongue and the palate are slowly consumed."

The horrors and loathsomeness of leprosy and its contaminating qualities, both by heredity and infection, well illustrate the disease of sin, which has taken hold of the entire human family, and which separates and alienates from God and all that are pure and in harmony with him. The isolation of lepers was distinctly enjoined in the Law, but no cure or remedy was prescribed. The disease was treated from a religious standpoint, and in every case made amenable to the judgment of the priests: they decided whether or not a case of leprosy had developed, they banished the leper, and in the event of anything occurring to cure him, the priests must pass upon his cleansing before he would be reädmitted to society. So, in the great malady of sin, God commits to the hands of the antitypical priesthood—Christ and the faithful under-priests now being selected from the world—the work of pronouncing and making manifest what is sin, as distinct and separate from what is righteousness, and thus to separate between the clean and the unclean, between those who are in harmony with God, and those who are out of harmony with him. And in the coming age, when the royal priesthood shall be glorified and in official power to bless the world with the knowledge of God and the knowledge of how to become free from sin and, through the merit of the precious blood, to attain to full restitution,—to purity and perfection of mind and heart and body,—it will be this royal priesthood that will have the deciding of when the purification has been complete—when sin has ceased to exist in the condemned, and they have been brought back into full harmony with God and righteousness.

Travelers tell us that in the locality mentioned in our lesson—the borders of Samaria and Galilee—leprosy still abounds rather more than elsewhere; and that groups somewhat like the one described in our lesson, are frequently to be seen. This group stood afar off, as they were compelled by law to do; yet recognizing Jesus as the great Teacher, of whose miracles they had heard something, they conceived the hope that he might have compassion upon them and heal them of their loathsome disease. Therefore, they lifted up their voices together, crying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." There is no doubt as to the meaning of their cry; although they usually begged for money, they evidently now were seeking for healing from the great Physician.

Hearing their voices, Jesus turned compassionately toward them, and we can better imagine than describe the sympathy which he felt for them in their pitiable condition, and no doubt also his mind at the same time took in the thought of the great malady of sin, from which the whole world was suffering, and whose sufferings he had come to relieve, whose bonds he had come to break, by giving his own life a ransom price for theirs. Our Lord merely said to them, "Go show yourselves to the priests." This implied that the leprosy had ceased its ravages, and that they might expect to be pronounced free from contagion and permitted to return to their homes and families, even though the maiming and marring occasioned by the ravages of the disease would still be with them. Thankful for such a release from their sufferings, the entire ten obediently hastened to comply with the injunction, but in the way they discovered that the blessing they had received from the Lord was not merely a staying of the disease, but a restoration to normal conditions. Their faith had brought them far more than they had expected.

One of them turned back and prostrating himself before the Lord rendered homage and thanks to his deliverer. The other nine passed on to comply with our Lord's words, and to show themselves to the priests, not having a sufficiency of love, appreciation and thankfulness to return in their cleansed condition to, first of all, acknowledge the giver of the blessing they had received. Our Lord remarked this, and called attention also to the fact that the one who did return was a Samaritan, and not one of the Jewish household of faith; saying, "Were there none found that returned to give glory to God save this stranger?" And he said unto him, "Arise, and go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole."

Nothing is said in the record respecting any spiritual blessing or favor which came to the Samaritan whose thankfulness of heart led him to Jesus' feet in acknowledgement. We are not told that Jesus invited him to become one of his followers, nor that he received any spiritual blessing; indeed, we know that it was not possible that he could receive any spiritual blessing, because, being a "stranger," like all Gentiles, he was debarred from any share in divine favor until the full measure of favor was granted to the Israelites—Cornelius, three and a half years after our Lord's crucifixion, being the first Gentile to be received into favor, and that time being the earliest at which the favor might go to the Gentiles—the end of the "seventy weeks" of favor promised to Israel.—See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., pp. 69-71.

Neither are we told that the nine who received the favor of God without being moved at heart to return and render thanks were, because of their unthankfulness, in any degree deprived of the blessing already received. We can readily imagine, however, that their condition of heart would not be favorable to them in connection with a hearty acceptance of the Lord and the kingdom privileges he was offering. We may reasonably suppose that if they were unmoved by so great a manifestation of divine love toward them, experienced in their own persons, they would be equally unmoved by any preaching of the Gospel which they might hear at any future time, either from the lips of Jesus or the apostles. We may even surmise that those nine never came into the church of Christ. On the contrary, we would have good reason to hope for the Samaritan, whose gratitude manifested itself;—that his condition of heart was nearer to the kingdom requirement, and that when subsequently the gospel of Christ was preached to Gentiles and Samaritans, this one would be a ready hearer and have a ready heart to receive the good message and to be healed from the moral leprosy of sin, and to come into harmony with God by presenting himself before the great High Priest of our profession, who died for our sins and who accepts as clean all who come unto the Father through him. Though we have no record of it, we believe that the Samaritan was of the kind the Lord is now drawing and calling to sacrifice with Christ, and that receiving that message of the kingdom he would be ready to lay down his life and become dead with Christ—presenting his body a living sacrifice unto God.—1 John 3:16; Rom. 5:1, 2.

Viewed from this standpoint, thankfulness of heart is a very sure sign of the character God is seeking,—especially in matters pertaining to our great salvation. And we find parallels to this illustration all about us. We find those who have suffered from the leprosy of sin, and who have appealed to Jesus for mercy and help, and who have been justified by faith—cleansed from their iniquities, covered with the righteousness of Christ; and yet amongst all these who have experienced such blessings and favors at our Lord's hands how few, comparatively, there are who return to him and prostrate themselves before him, to offer thanks for release from the bondage of sin and condemnation, and lay themselves at his feet, living sacrifices—making a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, their reasonable service. (Rom. 12:1) Only the truly thankful are constrained thus to do,—only the truly appreciative. As the Apostle declares of himself and all such, it is true that "The love of Christ constraineth [draweth, impelleth] us; for we thus judge that if one died for all then were all dead [yea, worse than dead in trespasses and sins and condemnation], and that we who live [justified to life through faith in his blood] should not henceforth live unto ourselves but unto him who died for us."—2 Cor. 5:14.

Unthankfulness is unholiness, lack of that proper appreciation which would lead to a full consecration of life and every interest and affair to the Lord—regardless of what reward he may bestow. The "exceeding great and precious promises" of God's Word are not given to inspire thankfulness and consecration, for they are given only to the thankful and consecrated who already have presented themselves living sacrifices to God. "To *you* it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom," "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," which is granted only to the consecrated. These promises are to strengthen and nerve us and to enable us to "overcome," in fulfilment of our covenant of consecration.—2 Pet. 1:4; Matt. 13:11; 1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

Let us each and all seek and cultivate more and more the spirit of thankfulness, the "*reasonable*" spirit or disposition. Thankfulness will make every trial and sacrifice on our part seem small, and proportionately easy to be offered, and it will make all of God's mercies and favors toward us proportionately grand and great and inspiring.

PROPER CHRISTIAN DAILY LIVING

Titus 2:1-15.—Nov. 25.

"We should live soberly, righteously, godly, in this present world."

The Apostle Paul penned the words of our lesson, instructing Titus, an overseer (bishop) of the church—ministering to the believers in the island of Crete. The instructions are not intended for, nor applicable to others than consecrated believers, and refer specifically to six classes in the church at Crete. (1) The elderly men—not merely the aged, but rather the advanced, the matured, who doubtless oftenest would be also advanced in years. (2) The aged women—advanced, matured. (3) The younger women. (4) The younger men. (5) Those who, though freemen in Christ, were bondmen according to the flesh,—servants. (6) To Titus himself. (7) The lesson ends with an exhortation applicable to all classes in the church.

Titus, as a preacher, should have before his mind a certain standard or ideal in respect to each class in the church, and should as a wise workman labor to the attainment of that ideal, which the Apostle here brings clearly to his attention,—intimating that instructions along the lines here laid down are in fullest accord with "sound doctrine." It has been claimed by some that the people of Crete were specially degraded and lacking of good character, and that this thought is necessary to the Apostle in giving such an exhortation to those who had left the world and joined themselves to the Lord as his church. We shall see, however, that every word of the exhortation is quite applicable to the Lord's people today, even though they live under the most enlightened conditions.

The Elderly Men, the advanced, were to be sober, grave, temperate (moderate)—not light, frivolous and excitable. Not only their years of natural life, but also their years of experience in Christian life, should bring them to conditions of maturity and sobriety. These three qualities would belong to a large extent to their mortal bodies, exercised and influenced by their new minds; but in addition to these there should be three other graces, characteristic of their new natures; *viz.*, soundness in the faith, and in love, and in patience. It is of intention that the Apostle here emphasized (in the Greek) *the* faith, *the* love and *the* patience, for there are various faiths, various loves and various kinds of patience, and he meant to be understood as inculcating the faith, the love and the patience which are of God, and respecting which he is instructing his people through his Word, as it is written, "They shall be all taught of God."

It was not by accident that the Apostle placed "sound in the faith" before "sound in love," for since love is one of the fruits or graces of the spirit of truth, and since one cannot receive much more of the spirit of the truth than he receives of the truth itself, therefore the importance of the truth, in the having of *the* sound faith.

Often we are told it matters not what a man *believes*, but matters all how he *does;* but to this we answer that a sound faith is all-important, not only in shaping conduct, but also in inspiring it. It is only in proportion as we have the truth that we have the sanctifying power: in proportion as we hold errors which vitiate or nullify the truths which we hold, in that same proportion we will be lacking and deficient in the sanctifying power; and hence deficient also in the sanctification itself. We should ever remember and coöperate with our dear Redeemer's prayer to the Father on our behalf, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

Neither was it by accident that the Apostle placed love before patience; because, although patience may be cultivated from a natural standpoint, as, for instance, in the interest of worldly aims and desires, nevertheless, such patience does not affect the heart, but is merely a forcing or curbing of the outside life, and when the force is removed there is a rebound as of a spring, to the original condition of impatience. The patience which will last and become an integral part of character must result from a change of heart: the mainspring of love must first replace the mainspring of selfishness.

How grand the characters thus portrayed! We could not wish for more amongst the Lord's people of any place today than that the matured brethren should be sober-minded, dignified and moderate, with their new minds well stored with the sound faith of God's Word, and their hearts full of love, manifesting forth all of the various good qualities represented by this word,—kindness, meekness, gentleness, all of which might briefly be summed up in the word *patience.* We exhort all of the advanced brethren in the truth everywhere to note well this likeness of a matured man of God, well grown up into Christ, the living Head, and well conformed to his image; and we exhort that we all keep this image well before our minds, and make it our ideal in our Christian course.

The Aged Women, matured, developed, have also a model set before them by the Apostle. They should be "reverent in demeanor" (Revised Version). They are supposed to have professed holiness, full consecration to the Lord, full desire to know and to do his will, and such consecration is to show out in their lives. The Apostle proceeds to mention a few of the ways in which it would be manifest. They will not be "slanderers" (Revised Version)—neither false accusers nor accusers in any slanderous sense of the word. On the contrary, as the Apostle shows further on, they will be examples in the matter of minding their own business. They will not be enslaved to much wine, but be teachers of that which is good, by precept as well as by example, to all with whom they have an influence. Naturally their influence will be greatest over the younger women, and it should be exercised as becometh women professing godliness, professing to be guided by the Word of the Lord, the spirit of the truth.

The Younger Women should find ensamples in their elder saintly sisters, the influence of whom will not be in the direction of insubordination and a battle between the husband and wife in the home; and their advice will very rarely be, "Stand up for your rights;" "Give him a piece of your mind," etc. On the contrary, they will be peacemakers, and assist the younger women with such advice as will help to make home happy by obedience to the directions of the divine Word. Instead of helping to cultivate in the younger women the spirit of selfishness, which inheres naturally in every human being, through the fall, they will assist them, by both word and example, to cultivate the opposite spirit, the spirit of love—"to love their husbands and to love their children."

If love were thus inculcated as the first law of every home, the chief of the Christian graces to be developed and practiced, it would indeed make a wide distinction between Christian homes and others; and thus, perhaps, better than in almost any other manner, the Christian mother can preach the glorious gospel of salvation, and illustrate in her own life and home its power to deliver from the bondage of sin and selfishness, even in this mortal state.

They will learn from them also to be discreet, or sober-minded—not too emotional;—to do some sober thinking along sober lines, and thus to cultivate both heart and head, and to increase their own joys in the Lord as well as to prepare themselves the better for their family duties and privileges. Chastity, modesty, purity, should also be learned—an instruction deep and powerful in its influence for good; not only to the younger women themselves, but also in their families. They should learn to be "keepers at home," or "workers at home," as the Revised Version renders it, appreciating the fact that the duties of a wife and mother are chiefly home duties; that the home is her workshop and her pulpit, where her influence should be greatest and most valuable.

They should also learn to be "obedient to their own husbands," or, as the *Diaglott* renders this, *"submissive"*—not attempting to usurp the place of the husband in the home, not keeping up a continual strife and battle about life's' affairs, so that the husband will have one battle of life to win their daily bread and another battle while they eat it. By "obedience" and "submission" we do not understand the Apostle to mean *blind* obedience or *dumb* submission, nor in any sense of the word that the wife shall not enjoy fully all proper liberties and privileges; but that while enjoying these she shall use them with propriety, so as to make life a blessing and not a burden to her husband, with whom lie chiefly the responsibilities of the home, according to both divine and human law.

As a Christian wife she should have a judgment respecting the Lord's will, as presented in the Lord's Word, respecting the affairs of the home, and all the interests of the family, and these views she should express, in love and moderation, and kindly, however emphatically; but having expressed her judgment respecting the Lord's will in the matter and the reasons therefor, she should be "submissive" to the decision of the husband (in all matters not involving her conscience); because, according to divine arrangement, the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the church—the final arbiter respecting family affairs.

Should the Christian wife at times find that the pursuance of this Scriptural course had brought her disadvantages or were about to work ill to the general interests of the family, let her protest kindly, and point out to her husband, without "harping," what she foresees to be the results, and urge a change; pointing out (especially if the husband be not a Christian) that the responsibilities of the transaction lie wholly in his hands: and let her then console herself with the thought that she, at least, is following the divine direction, and that the ultimate result is sure to be a *spiritual* blessing, in harmony with the Lord's promise that all things shall work together for good to them that love him—and who demonstrate their love by obedience. Let her take the matter to the Lord in prayer and "bear a song away." As the Apostle points out, this course is the one least likely to bring reproaches upon the cause we love and to which we have consecrated even life itself.

To the Young Men of the church the Apostle sends an exhortation that they be sober-minded—not rash, thoughtless, conceited—that they exercise self-control. And then, in view of the fact that Titus himself was a young man, he exhorts that he shall be a pattern to all the young men of the church, and thus incidentally he exhorts all of the young men of the church to note carefully and to be exercised by the qualities and considerations then urged upon Titus.

Upon Titus the Apostle urges that he shall be a model man, a pattern of good works and soundness of doctrine; not permitting his teachings (doctrine) to be corrupted either with vain imaginations of his own or those of other people. He urges upon him, and thus incidentally upon all young men also, gravity, the opposite of frivolity, levity: as Christians we have something to occupy our minds that the world has not; and the greatness and grandeur of their hopes and ambitions, based upon the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word, should give to their lives and general conduct a weight which, like a good cargo in a vessel, would keep them from being top-heavy and prepare them to outride the storms and difficulties of life through which they must pass to reach the desired haven.

Sound speech, with which no fault could be found, is another of the qualities that Titus and all of the Lord's people, especially the young men, are to strive for. Not merely sound speech in the sense of accurate and grammatical expression, but sound speech especially, in the sense of having their conversation and the influence which one exerts through conversation, of a truly helpful, strengthening kind—to mind and heart and character. Alas, how much of the conversation of even Christian young men is anything but sound anything but helpful to themselves and their companions. Young men in Christ are to be copies of God's dear Son, so that by their common conversation as well as by their general demeanor they shall continually preach Christ and properly represent before the world his noble characteristics,—truth, righteousness, purity, gentleness, goodness, love. Sound speech cannot be condemned by anybody, friend or foe, heathen or Christian, saint or sinner; and, as the Apostle suggests, such a course will be a constant reproof to those enemies who must always be expected; in the face of such noble living they of the contrary part must surely be put to shame eventually.—Jas. 3:13.

To Servants the Apostle sends a message also; and it was a very different message from what some of God's dear children, less wise than the Apostle in their understanding of the divine plan, would have given. Many of God's people of today, instead of being peacemakers are peace-disturbers, because of a failure to see properly the principles which underlie the Gospel, and their proper application in the present time. They exhort servants to "strike," to "stand up for their rights," to see that they are not "tramped upon," to "demand justice," and see that they get it. The Apostle, on the contrary, understanding God's plan, knew not to expect full justice, not to expect human rights or any others to have great consideration in the present time, because we are still in what he designates "this present evil world [dispensation];" because "the prince of this world [dispensation]" is Satan, and because his kingdom of the present time is based upon neither love nor righteousness, but upon selfishness.—Gal. 1:4; John 14:30.

The Apostle knew not to expect the wrongs to be righted and justice to be dispensed under Satan's administration, and hence in all of his teachings he points the believers to the coming time when the Lord, the righteous King, shall take possession of earth's governments, and fulfil that petition of our prayer, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Then justice may be expected, because justice is done in heaven; then all rights will be respected, as all rights are respected in heaven; but before that glorious condition shall obtain Immanuel's kingdom must be established and Satan, the prince of this world, must be bound, that he should deceive the nations no more, and that his rule of unrighteousness and selfishness shall be set aside, supplanted by the laws of him who shall lay justice to the line and righteousness to the plummet.—Rev. 20:1-3; Dan. 2:44; Isa. 28:17.

The Apostle's exhortation to servants is in harmony with this, that they be obedient to their masters, and seek to please them *well*. They were not to be shiftless, careless, indifferent as to the prosperity of their masters' interests and the care of their masters' goods. They were to take as much interest in those things as though they were their own;—as the Apostle elsewhere expresses it, they were to do their work as though they were doing it to the Lord himself, faithfully, well. (1 Cor. 10:31) Such service rendered to an earthly master "as unto the Lord," and because of a desire to please the Lord, and because of the indwelling of his truth, and its spirit, will undoubtedly be accepted of the Lord as though it were some service done directly in the interest of his cause, should the conditions of the servant hinder him from doing any work more particularly in the Lord's service and the service of the truth.

Not only were servants to endeavor to please their masters and to please them well, but this *in all things*—in the little things as well as in the great affairs; and thus Christian servants would be recognized, wherever they might be, as different, distinct from others, too many of whom are "eye-servants," faithful merely under the eye of their employer. Such Christian servants will come to be recognized as jewels even by those who have no sympathy with their religious convictions, and possibly would constitute the most weighty sermons these could deliver. They might obey their masters and yet continually protest and complain; hence the Apostle adds a word on this point, saying, "Not answering again"—not gainsaying nor quarreling with the master over his methods and ways and work; not complaining of sharing the common lot of other servants, whatever that might be; preferably, indeed, letting others complain, and holding their peace, rather than stirring up strife,—and rather than have the cause they love and seek to serve ill thought of.

Not purloining—secretly appropriating to themselves the master's goods, etc., contrary to his known wishes. And it might be not inappropriate here for us to remember that if the master should desire the servant to engage in some work that would be dishonest, morally wrong, this would be a proper ground upon which the servant should object and protest. His conscience must be preserved in every matter that properly belongs to his conscience; but he may not busybody himself with the master's affairs in matters which belong to the master's conscience, and with which the servant has nothing to do. By his own strict integrity even in the smallest things he shall do his preaching and exercise his influence upon his master, "showing all fidelity," faithfulness to his master's interests.

The effect of all knowledge is to render the intelligent restive under restraints, and as Christian knowledge is the highest form of knowledge, it more than any other tends to restlessness. It inculcates the thought that however widely different the conditions between the king and the peasant as respects men and earthly things, they really are on a par as respects morals,—on the same level from the standpoint of divine justice. This thought once received into the humblest mind destroys very much of the veneration which otherwise might be felt toward those in earthly authority. It is an uplifting thought to the poor, that before the great King of all the earth they stand on the same footing with the richest, the most learned and the most powerful of earth;—that whether rich or poor "A man is a man for all that." It causes them to realize that a man has a man's rights, and that these are more than animal rights, that they include liberty of mind and conscience and certain liberties of conduct.

It is this very enlightenment which Christianity has brought to the world which is about to cause it the great convulsion and revolution which shall overthrow all present institutions in anarchy. The Christian servant is to be more than merely an enlightened man: he is a man *consecrated to God* as well; one who has surrendered his *"rights"* to the will of God, and who, having placed himself in the Lord's hands to be taught of God, and to be fitted and prepared for the heavenly kingdom, is full of faith that the Lord is both able and willing to keep the trust, to safeguard his interests, and to permit nothing to come upon him that shall not be overruled for his spiritual development and welfare.

The true Christian servant (and all Christians must be servants if like their Master—Phil. 2:7) thus consecrated, realizes that under divine providence he is not to expect his rights in the present time, nor to strive for them; but that, on the contrary, he sacrifices them to the will of God—to the doing of the Lord's will so far as he may have opportunity, and to the having of the Lord's will done in him according to the Lord's wisdom and providence. If oppressed and dealt with unjustly he will look to the Lord for deliverance, and whatever way it shall come will accept it as of divine arrangement; and whatever God does not provide in the way of deliverance along reasonable and just lines he will accept as the rulings of his providence, and render to the Lord thanks for his watch-care and seek to learn the lessons of patience and experience and long-suffering, which these trials may inculcate; recognizing in such a case that these trials, from whomsoever they come, are permitted of the Lord if not ordered by him, and intended for his welfare and spiritual development.

Such Christian servants, and such Christians in any walk of life, are the only ones who know what contentment really is. Others are striving for the attainment of rights and for the correction of wrongs, and are only cultivating more and more the spirit of selfishness in their own hearts, and generally causing themselves the more trouble and discontent. Only the Christian can say,

> "Content. whatever lot I see,
> Since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me,"

and he can only take this position by the exercise of a living faith, and can only exercise such a living faith in life's affairs after he has made a consecration of himself to the Lord, and can only make such a consecration of himself after he has come to some knowledge of the divine character and plan. Such servants, the Apostle assures us, adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. They show that it is not a doctrine of strife, but of peace and of good-will toward men, not a doctrine merely of personal rights and of selfish strife for their attainment, but a doctrine of love, joy and peace in the holy Spirit.

WHY THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD LIVE SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD

After recounting to us as above the proper course for the various classes in the Church, the Apostle proceeds to give the logical reason for the above advice, saying: "For [because] the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men."—Revised Version.

When did God's grace appear thus? We answer, Not until the Gospel began to be preached after our Redeemer's death and resurrection. For four thousand years the grace of God did not appear, was not manifest in any sense of the word. The Law Covenant was to the Jew only, and it was not of grace but the reverse—of law and of justice. At very most this "grace of God" was prophesied of, that it would appear later, and that blessings would follow upon all the families of the earth. It has not yet appeared to all men, but more properly this would be rendered *"for* all men," since God's grace is intended to apply to every man—as widely as did the curse apply.

In the present time the majority of mankind do not see the grace of God,—it does not *appear* to them. More than four-fifths of the human family are totally blind to this grace, in heathen darkness, today, and of the one-fifth who have seen something of this grace divine, the vast majority have seen it so obscurely, so dimly, as not to be able to discern its beauties or appreciate its value. Blessed are our eyes if they have seen. In the Apostle's day, and still in our day, this grace of God has appeared *"to* all men," in the sense that it is no longer in any sense of the word confined *to* the Jew, but is now open *to* Jew and *to* Gentile alike, the middle wall of partition having been broken down, as the Apostle explains.

In what does this grace of God consist? We answer with Apostle, It is God's *favor* that has been announced and manifested as the basis of reconciliation—not man's righteousness. God tells us through his Word that he himself has provided the great sacrifice for sins, demanded by his own law, that Jesus has met the penalty in full on our behalf; and that as a result we may be reconciled to God now, and he can justly and without violence to his laws receive us whom he had previously condemned to death. And this receiving of us signifies a restoration of his favor; and the restoration of his favor, if rightly received by us, will, under his providence, bring us to such conditions as will effect our salvation, our full delivery from sin and death, and imperfection, into the full life and perfection and liberty of the sons of God.

This applies to the church being elected from the world during this Gospel age, and the same will apply to the world of mankind in general as they shall be blessed of God through the elect church in the Millennial age. God's grace in the present time is manifested in connection with the "high calling" to the divine nature and the life immortal connected therewith. His grace in the Millennial age will be manifested in connection with the "restitution" blessings which will be offered to all mankind, and the earthly life-everlasting which will be granted to all whose who then come into harmony with the terms of that grace.

What has the grace of God to do with us? And why should it lead to such a revolution in our conduct and character as the Apostle has just intimated? Because, says the Apostle, this grace of God, by which we are called to salvation, *teaches* us something: it teaches us that the way of reconciliation back to God's favor is a way of self-denial,—denying everything that is ungodliness, everything that is contrary to our highest conception of the divine character and will; the denying also of every worldly love or desire or ambition—ambition for worldly influence, for the riches of this world; and that instead of aiming and striving for these things, we who desire the salvation which God promises are to live to the contrary of these. "soberly, righteously, godly [God-like], in this present world"—not expecting worldly honors and advantages under the reign of "the prince of this world." who not only had no interest in our Master, but likewise no friendly interest in any who follow in his footsteps.

But if we are thus to live self denyingly in this world (age) that we may attain to the grace of God in the next world (age)—"the world to come"—what are we to have before our minds in the nature of a prospect or hope toward which we are to look with longing and interest and comfort of heart? Ah! the Apostle tells us what. He holds up before us the grand consideration toward which all of our ambitions are to turn, in which all of our hopes are to centre, and in which our hearts are to find their treasure, outweighing and outvaluing every earthly consideration. He thus describes this hope,—

LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE AND THE APPEARING OF THE GLORY OF OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOR

This is to be the centre of our expectations. We are not to hope for blessing this side of the manifestation of God's kingdom. We are to note that this kingdom must come before God's will can be done on earth as it is done in heaven. We are to know that this kingdom must bind Satan and overthrow his institutions, based upon selfishness, before it can supplant these with new institutions of justice and truth based upon the grand principle of love. Whoever, therefore, has been blessed with the grace of God, and has had the eyes of his understanding opened by the Word of truth, and its spirit, finds its teachings to be that these blessings of salvation are to be "brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13), and that our chief object in the present life is to fight a good fight against self and against sin, and in defence of righteousness and in the assistance of the household of faith; and not to fight for earthly rights nor to strive for earthly honors and riches,—the warfare and strife in which the whole world, except ourselves, is almost exclusively engaged. If the Lord's saints possess talents or influence or wealth, these are not their treasures, but merely their servants, and they are not the possessors of these, but merely the stewards, whose privilege it is to use them as best they may know how, in the Master's service, and to the forwarding of the interests of righteousness in the preparation of themselves and others for his appearing and kingdom.

The Apostle speaks of our Lord Jesus as "our great God and Savior," and this is in full accord with the general teachings of the Scriptures. Our Lord Jesus is a mighty one, a great one amongst the mighty ones, and as our Lord himself declares, all should "honor the Son even as they honor the Father."—John 1:1; 5:22.

The Apostle presents in another consideration why we should be exercised by this blessed hope of the Lord's second coming and our gathering together to him as his elect church. It is not merely that we should think of life everlasting and glory in which we might share; but that we should think also that this One coming in glory, and to whom we hope to be joined everlastingly, as members of the bride, to the Bridegroom,—is no other than he who gave himself for us, who sacrificed his own life in our redemption. We are to remember, too, that he not only redeemed us from the penalty of sin, death, but that the redemption which he purposes and provides is more than a redemption from iniquity, from sin. We are to remember also that this purging away of sin and the instruction and cleansing which the Word of truth is to do for us, as the Apostle has foregoing set forth, is to the intent that by these means the Lord may "purify unto himself a peculiar people"—a people different from others, possessed of a special love for that which is just, that which is pure, that which is noble, that which is good; and who, despite the imperfections of their mortal bodies, are striving to cultivate these graces more and more in their hearts, and to keep their bodies in subjection. Moreover, says the Apostle, these peculiar people will be "zealous of good works," earnestly desirous and striving to do good unto all men as they have opportunity, physically, mentally, morally,—and especially to do good to the household of faith.

The Apostle's exhortation, in conclusion, is that Titus shall speak and exhort the church along these lines which he has laid down, reproving them, whenever necessary (in love and gentleness, and yet with full authority, not doubting as to the meaning of the divine instruction). He was to let no man despise him, in the sense that he was to declare these principles of righteousness governing the Lord's people in a plain, positive and authoritative manner. He was to speak with authority and not as with uncertainty and questioning. And so let us speak, each and all, to ourselves and to others, setting forth the principles of this salvation which has appeared to us, with no uncertain sound, that thus we may minister grace to the hearers and glorify our Father in heaven and our Redeemer and Deliverer.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

IS NATURE CRUEL?

This question has already been answered by some eminent authorities in the affirmative, and the belief that such an answer is the correct one is widespread. Sir Samuel Baker declares that nature "is a system of terrorism from the beginning to the end," and John Stuart Mill asserts that if there are marks of design in creation, "one of the things most evidently designed is that a large proportion of all animals should pass their existence in tormenting and devouring other animals." If we assume nature to be the work of a Being of infinite power, he concludes that "the most atrocious enormities of the worst men will be more than justified by the apparent intention of Providence that throughout all animated nature the strong should prey on the weak." These radical assertions are controverted by J. C. Hirst, of Liverpool, England, in a book whose title is the same as the head of this article (London, 1900). After examining the experiences of hunters of big game, he concludes in the first place that Sir Samuel Baker's dictum is untrue. We quote from a review in *Our Animated Friends* (October) the following abstract of his argument:—

"Where there is *terrorism* there must be *terror*, and terror is one of the most horrible of sufferings. Is it true, then, that the animals most exposed to the attacks of the carnivora suffer greatly from terror? We believe that it is almost entirely untrue. Terror in human beings is largely due to the imagination. . . . . Have we any reason to believe that the lower animals have a similar terror of imagination? We have good reason to believe the contrary. Mr. J. D. Inverarity tells the following incident. A poor donkey was 'tied-out'; that is, as a bait for a lion. The lion approached, but the hunter, looking through his peephole, saw the donkey standing unharmed, while the lion went on growling. It was afterward discovered that the lion had actually tried to throw the donkey over with his paw and had failed, altho it had scratched the donkey on the inner side of the leg. But 'within a few minutes of the donkey being attacked, it was calmly eating which showed its nerves were not affected.'

"Mr. Wallace maintains that 'the constant effort to escape enemies, the ever-recurring struggle against the forces of nature,' are 'the very means by which much of the beauty and harmony *and enjoyment* of nature are produced.' To what else is it that the fleetness of the horse and of the many species of deer and antelopes is due? To what else, indeed, but the perpetual stimulus to exert their utmost speed, which is caused by the fear of enemies? But is not this *fear* the very *terror* which Sir Samuel Baker affirms? By no means. Mr. Francis Galton not only agrees with Mr. Wallace, but maintains that the peril in which they live is a source of pleasure. . . . .

"Prince Kropotkin points out the enormous exaggeration of the 'tooth and claw' view of nature. The Prince refers to the families of elephants, rhinoceroses, and the numberless societies of monkeys to be found in the lower latitudes of Asia and Africa; the numberless herds of reindeer in the far North, the herds of musk-oxen and the innumerable bands of polar foxes still farther north; the flocks of seals and morses and sociable cetaceans which inhabit the ocean; the herds of wild horses, donkeys, camels and sheep which range the steppes of Central Asia. He says:

"'How trifling, in comparison with them, are the numbers of carnivora; And how false, therefore, is the view of those who speak of the animal world as if nothing were to be seen in it but lions and hyenas plunging their bleeding teeth into the flesh of the victims! On might as well imagine that the whole of human life is nothing but a succession of Tel-el Kebir and Geok Tepe massacres.'

"Unless, then, death is an inexcusable incident in animal life, it would seem that the *terror* of death to be inflicted by the carnivora is really a figment of the imagination; and one might reasonably adopt the language of Mr. Wallace, that 'the supposed torments and miseries of animals have little real existence, but are the reflection of the imagined sensations of cultivated men and women in similar circumstances, and that *the amount of actual suffering caused by the struggle for existence among animals is altogether insignificant.'*"

Mr. Hirst does not, of course, deny that there is a good deal of eating and being eaten in the animal kingdom. This however, he says, is not cruelty, and he devotes much space to showing that in their attacks wild creatures cause their victims little pain, altho he does not go so far as to say that the mangled ones enjoy it, as Wallace maintained of the fleeing antelope. The familiar case of Dr. Livingstone, on whom a lion's jaw crunching through his shoulder acted as an anesthetic, is of course cited, and supported by much evidence along the same line. The reviewer regards the case as having been made out, and concludes as follows:

"So then, as the result of this most interesting investigation, we may reasonably come to the conclusion that nature is by no means the system of terrorism that Sir Samuel Baker makes it out to be; that it does not justify the pessimistic and almost atheistic conclusions of Mr. J. S. Mill, and that it is not the horrible commingling of devourers and devoured that a superexcited imagination is predisposed to paint it. On the contrary, we may believe that the various carnivorous enemies of the gentler races of animals are much more serviceable in training them to the finest exercise of skill and fleetness than they are destructive of their numbers or oppressively noxious to their happiness of animal life, and that in a world in which death is necessary, death by the assault of carnivorous enemies is no more dreadful but is, in fact, much less painful, than many other methods by which life may be extinguished."—*Literary Digest.*

The above is in full accord with our presentation on the subject in our issue of June 1, page 165; which please note again.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN POLITICS

"At the annual meeting of the Catholic Young Men's National Union in Brooklyn, September 26, a resolution was adopted to form a great federation of all the societies of the Roman Catholic church in the United States for political purposes. Last spring Bishop McFaul of Trenton, N. J., told the Ancient Order of Hibernians that the Roman Catholics of America were fools not to organize into one solid mass and make their power felt in the politics of this country; there were 2,000,000 Roman Catholic voters, and if they were united for political action they could make this country a Roman Catholic nation.

"This federation has now been formed by the following societies: The Knights of Columbus, the Knights of St. John, the Catholic Benevolent Legion, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Irish Catholic Benevolent Union, the Irish-American Societies, the German-American Societies, the Catholic Knights of America, the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America; and, as the Brooklyn *Eagle* of Sept. 26, 1900 (from which we quote), says: 'Besides these organizations there are scores of others of less prominence.'

"The federation is formed, says the *Eagle*, 'for the avowed purpose of influencing legislation and securing what the Catholics claim are their rights.'

"The convention, which met in the Park Theater, Brooklyn, was the largest gathering in the history of the Young Men's National Union, and it was addressed by leading priests and laymen from all parts of the country. Father Lavelle, rector of St. Patrick's Cathedral in this city, Monsignor Doane of Newark, N. J., Sheriff Buttling of Brooklyn, Congressman Fitzgerald, of Boston, and Father Wall of Holy Rosary church, this city, made stirring addresses. The latter was elected president of the union.

" 'The convention,' continues the *Eagle*, which is one of the foremost metropolitan daily journals, 'unanimously approved the plan of federation and appointed committees to carry it into effect. By this means tens of thousands of men of the Catholic faith will be brought under one national head, and this stalwart body of men will have a strong influence on national legislation.' The *New York Herald* and other papers had similar reports. This is the most important step ever taken by the Roman Catholics in the United States. They now have New York City in their possession, and many of the other large cities of our republic are under their control: all, like Tammany Hall, 'worked for all their worth,' in the interests of the Roman Catholic church, and incidentally for the benefit of the workers. 'In politics I work for my own pocket all the time,' said Richard Croker, the 'Boss' of Tammany. He might have added that a large share of the municipal plunder goes to Roman Catholic institutions.

"Having possession of the cities, the Romanists now reach out to gain control in national affairs. 'We must make America Catholic,' said Archbishop Ireland at the hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the United States, which was held in Baltimore, Nov. 10, 1889. 'We must make America Catholic. As we love our church, it suffices to mention the work and our cry shall be, God wills it, and our hearts shall leap towards it with Crusader enthusiasm.' He was wildly applauded by the eighty bishops, one thousand priests and five thousand laymen present.

" 'Why should we fear or hesitate?' he continued, with glowing fervor and proud boasting. 'We number ten millions—a powerful army if the forces be well marshaled and their latent strength be brought into action. Catholics in America are loyal to their church and devoted to her leaders. Their labors and their victories in the first century of their history show what they are capable of in the coming century, when they are conscious of their power and are under complete hierarchical organization.'

"And so, even before the century has begun, they are preparing by a complete organization to conquer this country and turn it over to the pope! What have the Protestants of America to say to this? says *The Converted Catholic* of New York."

SOCIALISM GROWING IN GERMANY

The election of a member of the Reichstag for Brandenburg has caused considerable political excitement throughout Germany, as it has resulted in a signal victory for the Socialist candidate, Herr Peus, by a majority of 648 votes. This constituency has had a varied history, having returned within the past twenty years Conservatives, Radicals and National Liberals; but throughout all its fluctuations one fact was prominent, namely, the growth of Socialism there.

The number of Socialist members now in the Reichstag is fifty-eight; in 1885 there were only twenty-three; in 1890 the number rose to thirty-five. At the general election of 1893 there were forty-four Socialists returned. At the last general election in 1898 the number was fifty-six. Subsequent by-elections have added two members.

If we turn to the number of recorded votes we find that in 1885 over half a million Socialist votes were given; in 1887 three-quarters of a million; in 1890 nearly one million and a half; in 1893 one million and three-quarters; and at the last general elections two and a quarter millions. The calculation which places the strength of the Socialist party at the next election at three million votes, and 100 seats in the Reichstag out of a total of 397 seats, would not appear excessive.—London *Daily Chronicle*, Oct. 29.

MAKE SURE OF WINNING IN GOD'S ELECTION

[Reprinted in issue of July 1, 1905, which please see.]

"SORROWFUL, FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS"

Matt. 19:16-26.—Dec. 2.

"Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God!"—Mark 10.24.

Our lesson relates to what for centuries has been called "The Great Refusal." The rich young ruler, whose name is not given, altho possessed of an abundance of the things of this life longed for an assurance of everlasting life. As a Jew he knew the Law; he understood that God had made with this nation, and with no other, through Moses the mediator, a covenant, under which everlasting life might be attained. He perceived, however, that even the best men of his nation had failed to gain eternal life under this covenant—that all had died. He had heard of Jesus, and that "never man spake like this man," and he knew that in many respects his teachings were of a very positive character, and that his manner and instruction were not like those of the scribes and Pharisees, uncertain and equivocal;—that he taught as one having authority, and knowing what he taught to be true. He hesitated to go to this Teacher, but finally seeing him leaving a house in his own neighborhood, he ran out hastily and point-blank put the question: "Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal [everlasting] life?"

Instead of answering his question directly our Lord inquired why he thus addressed him as "good." Jesus' words do not imply, as some have surmised, a denial of being good. Rather, he would impress upon the young ruler the import of his own language, that when he got his answer he might appreciate it the more. Our Lord's words might be paraphrased thus: Are you addressing me as Good Master from the heart, or only as a complimentary salutation? If you really believe me to be good, you must believe in me as a teacher sent of God—the All-Good. More than this, you must believe my testimony, that I proceeded forth and came from God, that I am the Son of God. If my testimony is untrue in any particular I am not good at all, but a falsifier, a hypocrite, a blasphemer. If, then, you call me Good Master from the heart, and believe that I am the "sent of God," the Messiah, you will be the better prepared to receive my reply as the divine answer to that question.

Without waiting to require that the young man should commit himself definitely on the point involved; but content with merely raising the issue in his mind, our Lord proceeded to answer the question.

We are not to understand our Lord's answer to this young Jew, at a time when the Law Covenant was still in force, to be the same that he would give, or that we should give in his name, today, in reply to a similar inquiry. The young man was living under a covenant of works, of which the Apostle declares, quoting from the Law itself, "He that *doeth* these things shall *live* by them." (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5) The New Covenant had not yet been sealed with our Lord's precious blood, and hence it was not operative toward this young ruler or anybody else at this time. Our Lord could not properly direct the young man's attention to any other procedure than the keeping of the conditions of the Law Covenant which was still in force. Anyway, this was what the young man inquired: "What good thing must I *do* that I may have everlasting life?" It was for this reason that our Lord did not say, as we should say today in answer to such a question: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ—believe that he died for your sins, and arose for your justification, and accepting him as your Saviour, as the Mediator of the New Covenant, present your life in full consecration of all its talents, powers and opportunities to the Lord's service.

Our Lord did point out to the young man the only way to life everlasting then open—the keeping of the Law. He well knew that the young man could not keep this Law perfectly, and hence could not obtain everlasting life through it; but he would bring the matter before his attention in the most favorable form to be comprehended—without preaching the New Covenant or any other feature of the divine plan not yet due to be announced. Hence the form of his reply.

The law was divided into two parts or tables, the first relating to Jehovah and the second to the neighbor. Our Lord ignored the first of these, realizing that the young man, so far from desiring to make or worship idols or another god, was seeking to know and to do the will of the true God. Our Lord would bring the answer down to the simplest possible proposition, and hence referred merely to the commandments respecting duty toward his fellow-creatures, and got the response that so far as the young man had discerned the matter he had kept the law; but altho he kept its outward form he realized that something was still lacking. He had no evidence that he had received any special blessing of eternal life, and wished to know of the Master what hindered, what he lacked of being a perfect man, keeping the law and meriting the reward of that law, life everlasting. No wonder Jesus, looking upon him, loved him; everybody who loves righteousness loves those who are righteous, or who are striving to the best of their ability to come up to the mark of righteousness,—perfection.

THE GRACE OF ALL GRACES

Then Jesus told him plainly, "One thing thou lackest." You have been endeavoring to keep God's law, and have done well, so far as the outward is concerned; but the spirit of the law you have not apprehended at all—the spirit of the law is *love.* "The whole law is comprehended briefly in one word." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13:9, 10) You have been getting the outside, or shell of the divine command, but have entirely overlooked the precious thing in it, the kernel, the essence,—love to God supremely, and love toward your fellowman as toward yourself. Let me prove this to you, by suggesting that you demonstrate your love for your neighbors by disposing of your property for the assistance of poorer ones. Then consecrate your life in loving devotion to God's service, and come with me as my disciple, taking up the cross of self-denial thus involved.

The test was a crucial one, and manifested clearly the distinction between the letter and the spirit of the law. The cross was too heavy for the rich young ruler. He had gotten the answer to his question, but oh! it was so different from what he had anticipated. He had felt comparatively well satisfied with himself, altho realizing that something must still be lacking. He had rather expected Messiah's commendation, and perhaps some further advice, but nothing so radical. It was too much for him; he went away exceedingly sorrowful, says Luke; his countenance fell, says Mark; it was a sore disappointment. For the time being he could not think of accepting the Master's prescription, the dose was too bitter, and he must at least think the matter over well.

Whatever course this young ruler may have subsequently taken we are not informed; but of one thing we may be sure; he had learned a great lesson respecting the scope and significance of the law. He had ascertained the impossibility of his attaining eternal life under the Law Covenant.

It will be seen that we totally disagree with those who claim that the condition of this young man and our Lord's words to him apply to all young men or to those possessing wealth—tho the spirit of the matter is applicable to all, under the different conditions of the New Covenant. The New Covenant says to us, rich and poor, "Christ died for us, according to the Scriptures." He not only met the requirements of the law, and fulfilled that Covenant and annulled it, but additionally he sealed and ratified the *New Covenant under which he, its Mediator, can apply to all who come under its provisions through faith whatever share of his merit is necessary to make good the weaknesses and imperfections of our flesh to which our hearts, our minds, do not assent. Accordingly, even if when some come to Jesus to inquire the way of eternal life, they should be unable to say, as did this young ruler, "All these things have I done from my youth up." —if it should be even necessary for such to confess with shame, "All these commandments have I violated," nevertheless, the provisions of the New Covenant are such that even the vilest sinner who has turned from sin and who at heart desires henceforth to walk in the way of righteousness, and who, repenting of the sins of the past, gladly makes such restitution as is within his power—all such are accepted in the Beloved One, and reckoned as justified freely from all things, from which the Law could not justify them.

Then such are invited, as was the young ruler to come, take up their cross, and follow Jesus—come, prove, demonstrate, their love for righteousness, their devotion to God and every feature of his will; come, crucify self and selfishness, and receive into their hearts instead the Spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of love. Not merely to love their neighbors in word, but in deed and in truth, so that so far from wishing to steal from them, or to kill them, or bear false witness against them, or to do any other evil toward them, their hearts' desire would be the reverse of these, to do them good, to bless them. God is love; the spirit of his law is love; and the spirit of his faithful Son, Jesus, is love. Love is the holy Spirit, of which the Apostle declares, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ [love, in some measure] he is none of his." Under the New Covenant, if the heart be full of love, it is acceptable with God even tho the heart may not be able at all times to control the flesh in respect to every thought and word and act, and to show forth through it this holy spirit of love which rules paramount in the heart.

The New Covenant is God's agreement, under which he accepts, through Christ, the intentions of our hearts as tho the same were actually and fully demonstrated in our lives; and certainly our hearts' desires will find expression through the flesh in large measure, tho not always perfectly. Thus our hearts may to some extent be read by our fellowmen, tho not perfectly, while to our heavenly Father they are an open book. Moreover, the love which enters and fills our hearts expands them and crowds out more and more of the natural and selfish propensities, crossing this natural, or earthly will with the heavenly one, the new mind. Thus gradually making progress in the new way, the Lord's saints are growing in knowledge and in grace, and more and more are having the love of God *shed abroad* in their hearts.

"TRUST NOT IN UNCERTAIN RICHES"

Our Lord took advantage of this episode to impart a lesson to his disciples, showing them the danger of riches—any kind of riches, honor of men, political influence, many and large talents or abilities, social standing, fine education and material wealth—for one may be rich in any of these senses. "It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Revised Version.) Our Lord does not here undertake to explain why there would be greater difficulties for those possessing riches to enter into his kingdom, but from other scriptures we learn the reasons, and why it is that the heirs of the kingdom will be chiefly found amongst the poorer classes. "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the mighty." (1 Cor. 1:26, 27; Jas. 2:5) The rich are "called," in one sense of the word, but not in another; they are equally invited but they are much less likely (than others who are poorer) to accept the Lord's invitation and to present themselves according to the *terms* of the kingdom call. In this sense of the word "called" only those who accept the call are meant; and they then divide themselves into two classes —those who make their calling and election sure, and obtain the kingdom, obtain a part in the first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, obtain a place with Messiah in his throne, to share with him in his Millennial kingdom; and others who do not make their calling and election *sure,* either by becoming reprobates, and subjects of the second death, or by a failure to manifest a sufficiency of zeal in the race for the prize, and on this account being remanded to the class known as the "great company," who must come through great tribulation, washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

It is well that we note carefully what are the hindrances of these "rich," preventing them from having so favorable an opportunity as their (in earthly respects) less favored brethren. (1) The possession of earthly good things, "riches," is less favorable to the development of faith, without which it is impossible to be pleasing to God. (2) These earthly advantages are more likely to develop pride, a serious barrier to every grace and an impossible barrier as respects the kingdom, which can be attained only through humility. (3) Riches of any kind bring with them friends and associates of the earth, whose hearts being generally out of sympathy with the Lord and the kingdom will constitute them adversaries to the new mind, from whose influence it will be the more difficult to break completely away. (4) And summing up all of the foregoing, those possessed of such earthly riches have proportionately more to sacrifice than those who are poorer in these respects; and the greater the things sacrificed the greater the difficulty in performing the sacrifice.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

However, on the other hand, it may be said that whenever one who is rich in this world's goods (talents, etc.) does present himself a living sacrifice to the Lord and his service it witnesses to a deeper heart-loyalty than if he were poorer. It implies a greater sacrifice, and it implies also the exercise of greater opportunities in the Lord's service. The servant who has five talents and who uses them faithfully, and doubles them, accomplishes a greater work than the servant who, having one talent, uses it faithfully and doubles it, and our Lord's understanding of this matter is shown in the fact that according to the parable the one will have granted to him authority over ten cities, and the other authority over two, altho both will be commended—"Well done, good, faithful servant."—Matt. 25:14-30.

If we would look for illustration showing wherein the rich (in talents, etc.) have been faithful, we would find at the head of the list our Lord himself, "who was rich, but for our sakes became poor." As he was richer than all others in every sense of the word, so proportionately his sacrifice was greater than that of all others in every sense of the word, and his honor, glory and power are greater. "He is Lord of all." "Him hath God highly exalted and given a name that is above every name." Similarly the Apostle Paul was rich—if not in money and property, he was at least rich in education, in social advantages and privileges, and in life's opportunities: and we may say that since the Apostle so faithfully sacrificed all these earthly riches for the sake of the privilege of preaching the Gospel of Christ, his must have been a much larger sacrifice than that of the majority of men: and proportionately we anticipate that his reward in the kingdom will be great because he counted these earthly "riches" but "loss and dross that he might win Christ and be found in him [a member of the Anointed One]."Phil. 3:8, 9.

So then while we call attention to the fact that few will be in the kingdom who have had great opportunities, privileges, property or other "riches" of this world, we nevertheless encourage those who possess this world's goods of any kind, to consider that they thus hold within their grasp grand opportunities which rightly used will yield riches of grace, not only in the life that now is but also in the life that is to come; working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, proportionate to their sacrifices and faithfulness in their stewardship.

We cannot wonder that the disciples were astonished to learn that few of the rich would enter the kingdom, for did they not see on every hand that the rich had the more important places in the synagogues and in the offices of the Jewish system? Did they not see that comparatively few of the poor in this world's goods were rated amongst the saints? No wonder they inquired, where would the kingdom class be found, if the rich were excluded? How, then, could the salvation which God had promised should come through his kingdom ever be attained?

The time for explaining these features of the divine plan having not yet come, our Lord contented himself with merely assuring the disciples that they must leave such a question to the Father; that the truth of his statement did not imply that no kingdom could be formed, but that with God the matter was possible, and that his original promise to Abraham would be fulfilled, a kingdom class be selected, and the blessing of salvation be communicated through it. To have told them of the rejection of the Jewish nation, all except the "remnant" of believers, mainly the poor, and to have explained to them that the elect church, the elect seed of Abraham, would be completed from amongst the Gentiles, of a similarly poor class as respects this world's advantages, would have been going beyond what was then due to be explained,—beyond what the disciples would have been able to comprehend at that time; and hence our Lord, using the true wisdom from above, refrained from saying more than would be to their advantage to know—leaving such information, as he explained to them subsequently, for unfoldment to them by the Comforter—the holy spirit which would come upon them at Pentecost.—John 14:26.

ENTREATY ANSWERED,—BLIND EYES OPENED

Mark 10:46-52.—Dec. 9.

"Lord, that I might receive my sight."

While passing along a road in the vicinity of Jericho, possibly going from the old city to the newer one of the same name, a great multitude following him, our Lord passed by two blind men, sitting begging by the wayside. (Mark mentions only one, the chief subject of the lesson, but Matthew mentions a companion.) Bartimeus, one of the two, as he heard the multitude passing and learned from some of them that they accompanied Jesus, the reputed Messiah, of whom he had no doubt heard before, was struck with the fact that his opportunity for a blessing was near at hand and rapidly passing from him. He began to cry out, his voice rising above the din of the multitude, saying, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Our Lord paid no heed at first, but passed on. The multitude rebuked the blind man, so to speak, saying, "You, poor beggar, should not thus cry out and annoy and seek to take the attention of so great a one as this, whom we verily believe to be the Messiah, and whose mission is the establishment of God's kingdom; keep quiet!" But so much the more did he cry out for mercy. He longed for sight, and had faith to believe that the great Messiah might be prevailed upon to rescue him from darkness. Jesus stopped and gave the word to the multitude to bring the blind man to him. He might have gone to the blind man, or he might have lifted up his voice and spoken to the blind man, bidding him to come; but instead he chose to use instrumentalities—to give those about him an opportunity of sharing in the work of blessing. So the word was passed from one to another and the blind man was helped forward and thus greater attention was brought to the whole miracle and to the divine power which it manifested. Those who had but a moment before upbraided the blind man for his temerity in expecting a blessing from the Messiah, now gladly bore the message of hope to him, saying, "Be of good cheer! arise; he calleth thee." And he sprang up, casting away his outer robe that he might go the more quickly to Jesus for the blessing.

Everything connected with the case shows us that Bartimeus possessed a large amount of faith, and that he was very earnestly desirous of the blessing which he received. When he came to Jesus, altho the latter knew well his desire, he inquired respecting it. He would have the blind man express himself respecting his hopes and desires. He answered, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight!" The word "lord" here is "rabboni," the most reverential term of four titles used amongst the Jews at that time (rab, rabbi, rabban, rabboni). Then Jesus touched his eyes (Matt. 20:34), saying, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." Sight came immediately, and Bartimeus became one of the followers of Jesus.

The lesson itself is a very beautiful one in demonstration of the Lord's tender compassion and divine power; and from its incidents we might draw other lessons, parallels, as it were. For instance, sin brought alienation from God, and moral blindness, which prevails today in every land and on every hand. The Apostle thus pictures some of the heathen, desirous of having the light of truth, as blind men groping after things desired. He speaks of such as crying out to the Lord in prayer, and "feeling after God, if haply they might find him;" just as Bartimeus had cried out to the Lord and then went to him. And as Bartimeus cast away his outer robe that he might go to the Lord the more speedily, so the sinner should cast away everything found to be a hindrance—he should make acknowledgment and repentance of sins, and he should make restitution also as far as possible, and thus approach the Lord.

And such, when their eyes are opened to see the blessings of God bestowed upon them, should look, as Bartimeus looked, first into the face of the Saviour with gratitude and appreciation, and look unto the Father through him. Indeed, their eyes being opened by the word of truth, they will gradually come to see everything in a new light, and be able to say, "Old things [of darkness and sin] are passed away; all things are become new"—lighted by the knowledge of God; for we have been "translated out of darkness into marvelous light." It is unnecessary to add that such transformed sinners should thenceforth follow Jesus as his disciples, seeking to walk in his steps.

Another lesson might profitably be drawn from this narrative. Bartimeus was not a sinner, in the sense of being an alien, stranger, foreigner and outcast from the divine favor. He was a member of the household of faith, an Israelite, to whom belonged the promises and the covenants, etc. (Rom. 9:4); yet he was blind. And so there are today in spiritual Israel many who are not sinners, strangers, aliens from God, but members of the household of faith and heirs of the promises, who are mentally, spiritually, blind. They are blind to the goodness of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord: they do not appreciate the love of God, having been blinded thereto by false theories and traditions of men. Because of their blindness they are unable to "*comprehend* with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths and to know the love of Christ," as they should do. Perhaps some of them are accountable to some extent for their own blindness, and quite possibly others are in no measure responsible.

We notice that in the case of Bartimeus Jesus did not inquire respecting his responsibility for his condition. It was sufficient that he realized that he was blind, and that he earnestly desired from the heart to receive his sight, and that he demonstrated this by his prayers and his efforts to obtain sight. So today, to those spiritual Israelites who are blind to the beauties and harmonies of the divine character and plan, if they are willing to admit their blindness, and so anxious for the light that they will cry aloud and not be dissuaded from their good desires, they will undoubtedly get the blessing they crave, the opening of their eyes of understanding, that they may be able to understand "the deep things of God."

We see many blind people of this latter sort today. Nearly all of the nominal churches are full of them. But alas! the vast majority are unlike Bartimeus—they do not realize their condition nor hunger and thirst for the light, nor come to the Master in the humble attitude necessary to receive it. Their pitiable condition is described by the Lord himself (Rev. 3:17) under the name Laodicea. He tells why they do not receive their sight—why they cannot comprehend the lengths and breadths and depths of divine love: "Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked."

As it was not within the power of the multitude to give Bartimeus his sight, neither is it within our power to give sight to the spiritually blind. All we can do is to let the blind ones know that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by—that the great Physician is able and willing to grant them the opening of the eyes of their understanding. Those who long for sight, who love the truth, who hate darkness and error, and none others, will be attracted by the information, and lift up their voices in supplication for assistance. But, alas! when they do cry aloud for help there are sure to be some, even amongst the Lord's friends, to rebuke them for their earnestness, instead of encouraging it. However, such oppositions only serve to demonstrate the amount of faith and the measure of love for the light, and the Lord evidently intends that only those who seek for truth "as men search for silver" shall find the knowledge of God.—Prov. 2:4.

When the faith and earnestness of the seeker for light have been sufficiently demonstrated the Master will grant him the opportunities he desires. Nevertheless he will require that even in their blindness all shall manifest and exercise faith, and come to him through evil report as well as through good report, to receive the enlightenment sought. And when they obey thus they surely receive a good reward in their appreciation of the Lord's character and plan. From this new standpoint they can sing with the spirit and with the understanding also,—

How happy and blessed the hours,
  Since Jesus I always can see;
Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
  Have all gained new sweetness for me."

They will surely acknowledge that whatever their joys in the Lord previously they are multiplied by the opening of the eyes of their understandings. And is it surprising that such will follow the Lord? Nay, verily! How could we do otherwise than "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light?"—1 Pet. 2:9.

ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH RESTORED

LUKE 19:1-10.—DEC. 16.

"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Zacchaeus was a Jew and a chief publican, which signifies that he was in the employ of the Roman government as a tax-gatherer, a very lucrative office, but one greatly despised amongst the Jews, because (1) their views of patriotism led them to resent the service of their conquerors; (2) their tax-gatherers collected for a percentage of the tax, and were at the same time assessors of the amount of the tax, and charged (probably generally with good reason), with gross violations of justice—taking advantage of their position and of the necessities of their neighbors to reap large usury by advancing them money for the tax and requiring superabundant security for both tax and usury. Publicans, then, it will be seen, were a disreputable class amongst their own people, esteemed as financially immoral, and unworthy the confidence and honor of faithful Jews. Zacchaeus as a "chief" probably employed under-collectors to assist him in his contract, and for this reason was designated chief publican.

He had heard of Jesus evidently, and curiosity and possibly other nobler sentiments operated in his heart and led him to desire to see the great Teacher. Possibly indeed he had qualms of conscience respecting his business and business methods, and a longing for peace with God, which his riches could not take the place of. These nobler and better thoughts and aspirations were quickened as he found himself in the presence of the celebrated Nazarene, of whose holiness and exalted teachings he had heard. Quite probably, too, he had heard that, unlike the Pharisees, this great Teacher did not spurn publicans and sinners, but on the contrary, treated them kindly. Zacchæus sought a glimpse of the Master's face, but there being a throng in the way, and he being of small stature, could not discern him. There was a throng anyway at this season, going up to the Passover, and so notable a person as Jesus would always be an attraction.

Zacchaeus soon resolved what to do, for he was a resourceful man; he would run ahead and climb into a tree, and thus get a good view of the Master. We cannot help admiring the courage of this little rich man, ordinarily probably dignified enough in his bearing, but now his heart swelling with feelings of interest in righteousness and a desire for reconciliation with God, and ran along like a boy and climbed the tree. When Jesus and the multitude came to the place the Lord addressed Zacchæus by name, possibly by that power of knowledge which is beyond our comprehension; or possibly by reason of hearing the crowd jeer and laugh at the little rich publican in his lugubrious position.

How astonished he must have been when the Master said, "Zacchaeus, come down, for I must lodge at thy house!" So great an honor as this Zacchaeus had not dreamed of, and the multitude of Jews were likewise surprised. The latter murmured against Jesus because he, as a holy man, should have nothing whatever to do with this publican. Perhaps it was in part to give the Pharisees a lesson, as well as to provide for his own entertainment or to put himself in the way of Zacchaeus, that our Lord proposed this visit to the publican's house. In any event, nothing could have pleased the serious thinking little man more. He came down from the tree immediately, and joyfully took Jesus (and the desciples also we may presume) to his home for entertainment. Thus does the Lord look for and care for and assist those who are of a contrite heart—those who are feeling after God, and longing, as prodigals, to return to the Father's house. Had Zacchæus been of other condition of heart we may reasonably presume that our Lord would have paid no attention to him whatever.

What a surging of sentiment took place in the heart of little Zacchæus! His name in the Hebrew comes from a root signifying *pure*, and the inference is not unreasonable that his ancestors had been noble and holy people, and that back of his love for money and dishonest practices lay good principles, which now, under favorable conditions, were asserting themselves and clamoring for a change of life,—worrying his conscience and embittering all his pleasures and causing him to long for righteousness in his own heart and life. In no other way can we account for his sudden determination to reform. Nor was he content merely to determine upon reform in his heart; he would seal the matter by a public confession. As we read, he stood forth in the presence of his own family, in the presence of Jesus and his disciples, and probably numerous friends and neighbors who had gone along, and publicly acknowledged that he had gained part of his wealth by unjust exactions, and pledged himself to restore all such wrongfully obtained money, to the extent of his ability, fourfold. More than this, realizing that there were probably many cases of small injustices which it would be impossible for him to ever correct in detail, he publicly pledged one-half of all his possessions to the poor in off-set of these.

Noble Zacchaeus! Well did his conduct show that the Master knew what he was doing when he went to lodge with this little man, so much despised by some of the Pharisees. Jesus knew that notwithstanding his wrong course of life he was much nearer to the right attitude of heart than some of the self-righteous who denounced him—altho outwardly they were living a cleaner life and a more moral one—making clean the outside of the cup while inwardly it was full of vile affections and selfishness, abominations in God's sight.

Our Lord's reply is striking: "This day is salvation come to this house; forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." While it is true that "salvation is to be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"—at his second advent—it is nevertheless true also that this salvation begins in the present life to all who are of the spiritual house of Israel, who, repenting of their sins, come into harmony with the Lord, and seek to walk according to his ways. It is a salvation of the heart, reclaiming it from sin and selfishness and meanness—filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit.—2 Cor. 7:1.

This salvation means reformation and transformation; and while the Lord can read the heart and see there more than men can see respecting the change, yet, as Brother D. L. Moody suggests, the change, the conversion, the transformation of life, must have been appreciable even by the most unsympathetic of Zacchæus' neighbors when, the next morning after this event, Zacchæus' servant presented himself to the neighbor with a purse of money, and when asked what it was for replied, "My master says that he extorted from you a sum of money years ago, and now returns it fourfold." The conversion that includes recompense—and that not merely in a skimped manner but abundantly—four-fold—undoubtedly signifies a true conversion, one that is not likely soon to be forgotten or ignored.

We might find parallels to this incident, which belonged to the end of the Jewish age and to fleshly Israel, in the end of this age and to spiritual Israel. We find today some backsliders from the Lord's Covenant of Grace, as Zacchæus was a backslider from the Lord's Covenant of the Law. We may perhaps find them living in a measure of sin, in business which they admit is unjust and in violation of their consciences. We are not, therefore, to pass by them with the Gospel message, the good tidings of great joy; but if any such manifest an interest in the present truth we are to seek to assist them as our Lord and Head assisted Zacchaeus. And there is an encouragement to this class in Zacchaeus' case, for tho they may feel themselves sadly short of the stature of a man in Christ, if they have in their hearts a longing desire for righteousness and to behold the Lord's face, they will find opportunity to do so, if they will but humble themselves to take the necessary steps. And sincere reformation today must be like that of Zacchæus; it must make some outward manifestation expressive of contrition and of a desire to make reparation to the extent of ability. Some one has said, and quite truly, we think:—

"No religious profession amounts to anything if it does not include a readiness to put one's property at the service of the Lord. It has been well said that 'a personal consecration' should be spelled 'a purse-and-all consecration.' And the full restitution of all that had been taken wrongfully must be made by a Christian disciple—even to the stripping of himself of all his earthly goods."

"PILGRIM" ARRANGEMENTS STILL MISUNDERSTOOD

We find that quite a number of our readers did not respond to our queries respecting "Pilgrim" visits because they thought themselves too far from Allegheny to ask or expect a visit. Others who did respond have wondered that a "Pilgrim" was not started to them at once. For these reasons we explain again, as follows:—

The Society sends forth a number of these Pilgrims—according as the Society's funds will *permit* and the interests of the flock seem to *demand*. These are sent out on long tours—three to twelve months, according to circumstances;—and sometimes reach very out-of-the-way places where we know that the interest and arrangements will justify the expense and time. We rarely give more than two days to any place unless more is specially *requested* and good reasons *given*.

We will be making up new routes for 1901 and therefore requested replies to our questions from all who desire to be remembered and visited. See TOWER Aug. 1, 1900.

CHRISTIAN HOME EMBELLISHMENTS

We have a choice assortment of Scripture and Motto Text Cards of our own importation from London. Some are of dark red and dark green color, assorted shapes and sizes, embossed with silver lettering and with hanging cords; others on light tinted cards with flowers or other illumination, etc. The mottoes are too numerous to specify but all good. The prices range from five cents to twenty cents each and these prices are considerably less than the usual.

Another drawback has been the difficulty in preparing small quantities for mail, so as to prevent their getting damaged. We believe we can best surmount all these difficulties by putting them up in $1.00 packages as follows:—

2 mottoes dark, 5c each	.10
2 " light, 5c "	.10
2 " dark, 10c "	.20
3 " " 20c "	.60
2 "To Us the Scriptures Teach"	.10
2 Text Easels, 2c each	.04
4 Text Cards	.08
Total	1.22

Postage and packing free.

We will put these up in four different
——*A, B, C, D,*——
assortments, so that persons ordering more than one package need not get duplicates except the fifth item. If you order more than one package and want variety, say so.

Importing these ourselves and saving jobbers' profits and saving time, etc., by packing them in this way, we can afford to supply these bundles for the price named, one dollar. We would not offer them were we not sure that our readers will appreciate them and thank us for bringing them to their attention. The card marked above, "To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach," is our own get up, of rose pink color printed in maroon ink, size 11x14 inches, with silk cord hanger. On one side is the statement which appears at top of page 2 of each WATCH TOWER in good sized type. It is a statement of Bible faith which none need feel ashamed of; and which should be seen in the homes of all WATCH TOWER readers. We have gotten out a large quantity and can therefore supply them very cheaply,—at five cents each (plus five cents for tube and postage). In lots of 20 for $1.00 postage free.

I will tell the wondrous story,
How, my lost estate to save,
In his boundless love and mercy,
He the ransom freely gave.

I will praise my dear Redeemer,
His triumphant power to save,
How the victory he giveth
Over sin and death and grave.

I will sing of my Redeemer,
And my call to glory too;
He from death to life hath brought me,
Heavenly glory brought to view.

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WHAT HOPE FOR THE INNUMERABLE NON-ELECT?

[Continued from our last issue, "Make Sure of Winning in God's Election."]

In our last issue we found abundant Scripture evidence that God is selecting a little flock from amongst mankind to be joint heirs with our Lord Jesus in the Millennial kingdom. That fact being proven, it cannot be questioned that all the remainder of mankind are *non-elect*. The question now is, What provision has the great Creator made for this class —numbering at least fifty thousands of millions of all the families of the earth? Is this condition hopeless or not?

According to orthodoxy it is hopeless—the theory being that all the non-elect of mankind were predestinated by God to be sufferers of eternal torment; but we find no Scripture whatever in support of such a theory. So surely as God did elect or predestinate an elect class he must equally have predestinated and foreordained that there would be a non-elect class. And to suppose that he foreordained that this non-elect class should suffer eternal torment would be to suppose God a monster, devoid of every sentiment of justice, not to mention love. And if God did not foreordain the non-elect to eternal torment, neither could he have authorized any to use eternal torment as a threat against the non-elect—neither to intimidate them nor for any other purpose. Indeed, what object could there be on God's part in endeavoring to scare the world of mankind into striving to be of the elect little flock, when he had already predestinated that only a small number comparatively could be of this elect flock? The whole matter, viewed from any such standpoint, is unreasonable.

Let us notice, on the contrary, that this eternal torment theory may properly be charged with nearly every deflection from the doctrine of the necessity for holiness of life on the part of God's people. Everyone who has read with care the Scriptures already cited which refer to the elect class must realize that the standard which God has set "for the very elect" is a very high standard; and that comparatively few—saints only—ever attain to that high standard. All will acknowledge that very few of their friends and neighbors, parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, who have died, could have any hope of being in the "elect class," according to the high standard for that class set in the Scriptures: and yet the awfulness of the theory they hold respecting the non-elect has driven them to so modify the standard of Christian living that would be acceptable to God as to include these dear friends. Thus day by day, and century by century, as deaths occur in every family connection, the tendency, under the influence of the popular error of eternal torment, is to lower in the minds of all Christian people the standard of true holiness,—"What manner of persons ought we to be." The funeral discourses in nearly every case help forward this work of undermining the Christian standard, and dropping it to a worldly level of *morality*—and scarcely even that; because even persons who are notoriously immoral, unjust, extortionists, etc., and who have very little indeed to commend them, are felt to be not sufficiently bad to be eternally tormented; and under the theory that they must go either to a heaven of eternal bliss or to a hell of eternal torment, they are, in their neighbors' minds, admitted generously to the former rather than consigned to the latter.

What incalculable harm has been introduced into the faith and hopes of Christendom through this God dishonoring doctrine of eternal torment, which implicates the great Jehovah as the chiefest coadjutor of Satan,—the planner, the designer of all his accredited devilishness, the one without whose coöperation Satan could not have done all that he, as ordinarily pictured, has done and is doing,—dominating a host of fireproof and pain-proof devils, pitchforks in hand, tormenting millions of humanity, delivered into their power by the Almighty, and by some inscrutable power rendered fire-proof but not pain-proof.

THE GENEROSITY COMMENDABLE BUT THE THEORY WRONG

We cannot but sympathize with the greater generosity of our day which is gradually coming to disown such a theory, and we must also sympathize with that sentiment which has sought to rescue from such an awful future the loved ones of the present life, however evil and injurious they may have been. But while this increase of benevolence is commendable it is bringing the remedy from the wrong quarter. It is bringing a remedy which, while it is to some extent consoling to the heart momentarily, nevertheless leaves a terrible *fear*, lest peradventure the high standards of the Scripture may be required, and that all not coming up to them will suffer excrutiatingly. In others it leads to *doubts*, not only respecting the eternal torment, but also respecting the eternal bliss: and additionally it casts serious doubt upon the Book of divine revelation which is the only foundation for heavenly hopes, because they believe it to be also the authority for their "hellish fears."

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES RESPECTING THE NON-ELECT?

In the Scriptures the non-elect are of two classes: First: Those who in the present life were (1) enlightened, (2) justified through faith, (3) called, and accepting the call were sanctified and begotten of the holy spirit, and started on the course with a view to making their calling and election sure —but who have not made it sure, but on the contrary have failed, by not coming fully up to the requirements.

This class in turn is Scripturally divided into two parties:—

(*a*) Those who sin *wilfully* after that they have received a knowledge of the truth, and been made partakers of the holy spirit, etc. For those there remaineth no more a share in the sacrifice of Christ—no further mercy, opportunity or hope. To them the result is the second death—nonentity. Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26, 27.

(*b*) The other class consists of those who, while at heart preferring righteousness and truth, and loving the Lord, have not become copies of God's dear Son, in that they fail to attain to his Spirit of full devotion of heart to the doing of the Father's will—rather they permit themselves to become overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches, and thus fail to complete that sacrifice according to their covenant, and hence fail to make their calling and their election sure. For these the Lord has a gracious provision. as suggested in Rev. 7:13-15. They will not be utterly confounded, because they have trusted in him (Psa. 22:5), and he will surely carry them through. Yet the Lord's intervention on their behalf must be strictly along the lines of his covenant and general plan—he cannot interfere with their free moral agency; he will not coerce their wills, but he can and will bring them to such a place of experience as will test them and compel them either to renounce their loyalty to him or to seal that loyalty with their lives. Those who renounce the Lord will, of course, in so doing bring upon themselves the penalty of the second death, but those who, under such *compulsory* circumstances, are faithful, cannot be counted as of the same likeness with God's dear Son, who, without compulsion, voluntarily gave up his life in the Father's service. The little flock of the elect church will contain all of this class, and to them will be granted the kingdom, and to sit with Christ in his throne, and to be the temple of God and to have the crowns. (Rev. 3:21; 1 Pet. 5:4) But the others, who will "come up out of great tribulation," having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, altho they will have suffered equally as much as the elect (more indeed, if the mental conditions are taken into consideration) will not get a crown of victory, but a palm of victory; will not get a seat in the throne with their Lord, as his bride, but nevertheless an honorable place before the throne as servants. They will not become pillars and stones in the living temple of God, but they will have the honorable privilege of serving God in his temple, the church.

This class is not prominently referred to in the Scriptures, nor in the types and symbols even; because none were called to this position, but, as the Apostle declares, "Ye were all called in *one* hope of your calling"—to the highest place of joint heirship. (Eph. 4:4) The position attained by these is an unpromised one, of the Lord's abundant mercy.

Second: The second class of non-elect from the Scriptural viewpoint is the world of mankind, including three classes:—

(*a*) It includes those who have never had any knowledge of God's provision of grace in Christ, and who consequently could not have gone on further to be of the called elect class of this age.

(*b*) It includes those who have heard of the grace of God, but in that indistinct, indefinite manner which does not bring conviction—those who have seen in Jesus something wonderful and great and admirable, but who have never *seen* him from the Lord's standpoint of Redeemer and Saviour—their eyes being blinded to the manifold evil influences of "the god of this world," business or pleasure or love of money or distracting religious dogmas. These, not having seen and not having accepted Christ as the Redeemer, could go no further and by no possibility could they have been amongst those called to the election of this Gospel age.

(c) It includes those who have heard of Christ as the Redeemer, and have appreciated him as such, and have accepted him as their Saviour; but who like the nine of the ten lepers cleansed by our Lord at his first advent, thought not to return to give glory to God—thought not to present their bodies living sacrifices in his service. These having reached the point of justification were, undoubtedly, amongst the ones called; but they failed to make their calling and election sure, not caring to respond to the call. Of this class, apparently, are the thousands, the masses of church members of the various sects. They are glad for what they see, but not anxious to see any more, as, intuitively, they realize that further knowledge would bring greater responsibilities, which they desire to avoid and not even to think much about.

These last mentioned "receive the grace of God [the privilege of justification] in vain." (2 Cor. 6:1) The intention of this reckoned or faith justification of the present time is to enable the justified ones to present their "bodies living sacrifices, holy, and acceptable to God," their reasonable service; because they could not be acceptable to God as sacrifices, nor in any sense of the word come to his altar, while still they were sinners. Since to permit this sanctification and sacrifice is the only object of the giving of this grace in the present time, they have received it in vain, in that they have not used it as God designed it to be used by those who are appreciative.

Amongst this second class of non-elect, we may say that the vilest are too good to be turned over to devils for an eternity of torment, either mental or physical, and God their Creator was too wise to have ever made them in such a condition as to necessitate such an abominable result, so inharmonious with his character and with every sense of right and justice, and necessitating the everlasting perpetuation of evil, upheld, and therefore sanctioned, by divine power. And God's Word, rightly understood, teaches no such thing. It is only where the false theory has corrupted and perverted the judgment that it is able and willing to construe such a theory from the parables, symbols and "dark sayings" of our Saviour, instead of understanding and construing them much more reasonably and in full accord with the divine character of justice, wisdom and love.*

NO CONDEMNATION POSSIBLE UNTIL AFTER TRIAL

If the worst class of non-elect do not deserve eternal torment, the less degraded certainly would not deserve it; and indeed we are to remember that none of them can deserve any punishment until first of all they have had their *trial.* True, the whole race had a trial in father Adam, in Eden, and when he lost in that trial the whole race lost life and came under the sentence of death. But in harmony with the divine plan, our Lord Jesus redeemed Adam and all his race by giving himself as the ransom-price for Adam and thus incidentally for all. We are to remember that Jesus was not only the Redeemer of the church, but also the Redeemer of the world, as it is written: "He is a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours [the church's] only, but also for the *sins of the whole world.*"—1 John 2:2.

If then all these non-elect have been *redeemed* from the first trial and its sentence with the same precious blood which redeemed the elect church; and if the church, by the grace of God, has had her trial in advance of the world in general, and if the church's trial was the result of the redemption, and without that redemption she could have no further trial for eternal life, is it not manifest that the same redemption has provided a trial for the whole world of mankind, as well as for the church of this Gospel age? And what matters it that the trial of the world did not take place at the *same time* as the trial of the church? Has not the great God, our Saviour, the full right to arrange this matter of salvation according to his own wisdom? Who amongst fallen men is competent to direct him?

And yet this is what Christian people have been doing; they have been attempting to arange the divine plan, instead of hearkening to God's own revelation respecting the same. They have said, but he has not said, that the present life is the only opportunity for trial, and that this trial-time will end with the end of the Gospel age. He, on the contrary, has foreseen their misrepresentations of his plan, and has caused it to be written aforetime through the prophet: "My thoughts [plans] are not your thoughts [plans], neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts [plans] than your thoughts [plans]."—Isa. 55:8, 9.

The Scriptures tell us specifically respecting the Lord's plan for these non-elect. We will give it first in our own phraseology, and then we will give the Scriptural language. They tell us that the church is being selected from the world in advance, in order that this little flock, thoroughly trained in the school of experience, thoroughly polished and in full conformity to the Head, Christ Jesus, is, with their Head and Lord, to constitute the Royal Priesthood, whose work will only begin after its election has been completed and it has been received into glory; and that its work will be the *judging* of the world of mankind, not in the sense of pronouncing condemnation upon them, but in the sense of granting to each member of the non-elect a *trial* (judgment) for eternal life. That trial of the non-elect is guaranteed, based upon the great ransom-sacrifice wherewith all mankind were purchased from the death-sentence that came upon all through Adam. And that this trial-time, or day of the world's judgment, will be the Millennial day (a thousand years long), in the which full opportunity shall come to all, full knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep, and a full blessing of eternal life may be attained by whoever *wills* and obeys, of those then on trial; and that the remainder (the unwilling and disobedient) will be destroyed in the second death.

Among the many Scriptures supporting this presentation we cite two which are very pointed and should be fully satisfactory if there were no others. "God hath appointed a day in the which he will *judge the world* [future] in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained"—the Christ, Head and body.—Acts 17:31.

"Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?"—1 Cor. 6:2.

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* See *What Say the Scriptures About Hell?*—Sample sent free on postal card request.

THE ULTIMATE END OF THE COMMANDMENT IS LOVE FROM A PURE HEART AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE

"Now the end [ultimate object] of the commandment is love from a pure heart and a good conscience, and an undissembled faith —which some, having failed [to discern] have turned aside to foolish talking."—1 Tim. 1:5.

Not only in the Apostle's day did many fail to get the true idea of religion—the Lord's commandments to his people, etc. —but many, probably an increasing number, have since similarly failed. We may suppose that the method of the great adversary is to confuse the minds of those who are feeling after God and righteousness. It is thus, as the Scriptures declare, that he deceives the whole world—putting forms, ceremonies, theories and confessions instead of heart religion.

Those who teach the monstrous false doctrine that the present life decides the fate of every human being, either for eternal misery or for eternal joy, consider this doctrine the very bulwark of pure Christianity and of holiness, consequently many who really do not believe it tacitly give it their consent and approval, believing that in so doing they are forwarding the cause of holiness. But this is a great mistake; this is one of the great adversary's delusions, by which he would make the piety of God's people serve his cause, (1) because this doctrine dims the divine glory as respects love and justice, and (2) because the doctrine, instead of cultivating or promoting holiness cultivates and promotes the reverse of this, as we shall show.

The theory that the present life is merely to decide who are worthy of eternal joy, and who are worthy of eternal torments, resolves itself finally in the general thought as signifying that all fiendish characters may perhaps be worthy of some kind of ill-treatment to all eternity, provided they shall not breathe a prayer of penitence at some time before they expire; but that all half-way decent people are too respectable or too good to justly merit an eternity of torture, and hence must be of the kind who will receive an eternity of bliss. Thus this hell-fire doctrine, instead of promoting holiness, purity of heart, promotes the reverse,—carelessness as respects anything except out and out murder and general devilishness.

On the contrary, the Scriptural doctrine makes no threat of eternal torment, and promises a full opportunity for every human creature to come to a knowledge of the truth, either in the present life or in the next life, and thus, under the terms of the New Covenant, to avail themselves of the opportunity for eternal life through the great atonement sacrifice finished at Calvary. This Scriptural doctrine is replete with the highest incentives to holiness, purity of heart and of life; because, instead of holding forth a general penalty of torture, it holds forth "a *just* recompense of reward," a reward of blessing or of stripes which will be proportionate to the individual efforts of each to come into harmony with God and his holiness.

First we have the call of the Gospel church to become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, in the Millennial kingdom, upon *the condition of holiness of heart*, and subsequently will come the offer of restitution and everlasting life in human perfection, to those of the world who similarly return to heart-harmony with the Lord. The Scriptures hold out no suggestion anywhere that eternal life will ever be given to any creature on any plane of existence, except upon this condition of full, complete heart-harmony with the Lord. Anything contrary to, or even short of, this perfect harmony with the Lord, will, from the Scriptural standpoint mean the second death. Here then in the divine offer we have the highest inducement to strive for our closest possible attainment to perfection; and we are assured that such striving will ultimately, according to divine favor, be rewarded with perfect conditions (in which absolute perfection will be possible)—in the resurrection.

Many there are who have very erroneous views of what is signified by the expression 'pure in heart;" one class considers this impossible of attainment in the present life; another class, no less mistakenly, considers this to mean absolute perfection in every thought, word and deed; and in believing that they fulfil these conditions, and in teaching others similarly, they are making a grave mistake.

Answering the last error first, we remark that it is possible for one to deceive himself respecting his own heart and his own condition, as for instance, apparently, the Pharisees of our Lord's day: claiming that they were perfect, and that they kept the whole law, they were merely deceiving themselves, but not the Lord; by their self-deception, a form of hypocrisy, which blinding them to their own need of the robe of Christ's righteousness, left them in the filthy rags of their own righteousness, unfit for the kingdom. And so with some today, who claim perfection of thought, word and deed. They have blinded themselves to their own weaknesses, imperfections and errors, and are in a far worse condition than he who, tho outwardly less moral, is at heart better in the Lord's sight, because honest in confessing his unworthiness, because for such the Lord has provided forgiveness of sins,—covering with the robe of Christ's righteousness.

Nevertheless, those who think that purity of heart is an impossibility in the present life are likewise mistaken. Their mistake arises from not seeing a wide distinction between a purity of heart and a perfection or righteousness of all the words and deeds of life. The heart, as used in this text, refers to the mind, the will, the actuating intentions or motives of the man. With this thought before the mind, it is easy to see that one might be pure of heart, that is of pure intentions, and yet confess himself unable to do and to be all that his good intentions desire and endeavor. He whose heart is pure toward the Lord in Christ is the same one whose eye is single, the same one who is not double-minded but single-minded, whose mind, will, heart, seeks first, last and always the will of God. Hence the exhortation of the Apostle, "Purify your hearts, ye double-minded."—Jas. 4:8.

But how can this condition of purity of heart be attained? Is this to be our message to sinners—"purify your hearts"? No the Gospel does not call sinners to purify their hearts: on the contrary it declares it to be an impossible thing for the sinner to purify his heart; a fuller's soap, which the sinner does not possess, is needed to cleanse the heart and bring it into that attitude of relationship with God and his will which will be pure and acceptable in his sight. On the contrary, sinners are called to repentance—called upon to confess that not only their outward lives are imperfect, short of the glory of God, but that their hearts also are rebellious, impure and in sympathy with impurity. After the sinner is repentant for sin, desiring to come into harmony with the Lord and his righteousness, he is pointed to the great atonement for sin, and is drawn to the great Redeemer, through a desire to be made free from sin and to come into harmony with God. When this step has been taken—when the sinner having repented of his sins, and having made restitution so far as possible, accepts Christ and the pardon he offers, and seeks to walk in the way of righteousness, then he is *justified*,—justified freely from all things, from which the law could not justify him—"justified by faith through the blood of Christ"—brought nigh to God, into relationship with him, and caused to know the joy and peace of his forgiving love.

When this is accomplished, when justification by faith has been established, when the sinner is reckoned and treated as no longer a sinner, but as reconciled to the Father, then his heart may be said to be pure, cleansed from "the sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." But now arises a new question with the reformed one: while past sins are graciously covered, weaknesses of the flesh are present, and temptations of the adversary are on every hand. He starts to walk forward, but finds himself beset by the world, the flesh and the devil; what shall he do? A heart searching probably begins there: finding himself incapable of guiding himself, or of keeping himself, his proper course is to accept another offer of divine grace, namely, the second step in our great salvation. He hears the voice of the Lord, through the Apostle, saying, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God [manifested in the covering of your sins], that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

The reformed one, if rightly instructed, realizes his inability to stand in his own strength, realizes that his *only hope of maintaining justification* granted to him lies in getting the Lord to take charge of him. At first he may think to go into partnership with the Lord, and to say, "Some of self and some of thee," some of my own will and some of the Lord's will; but rightly instructed he finds that this will not be satisfactory to the Lord; that the Lord will accept him, and become responsible for him, and guarantee him glorious victory and eternal reward, only upon this one condition, namely, a full self-surrender, a full consecration of heart.

It is after the sinner has come through all this process and has made a full consecration of his heart to the Lord, that he is of the class described in our text, one of the pure in heart, under the law of love, the law of the New Covenant. But notwithstanding the purity of his heart, his motives, his intentions, his will, to fulfil the Lord's great commandment, which is briefly comprehended in one word, love,—he will find that he has a battle to wage, that the law of his members, depraved through heredity in sin, is a strong law of selfishness, in opposition to the new law, to which he has pledged himself, the law of his pure heart or new heart or will,—the law of love.

Hence, as the Apostle suggests in our text, we must learn that the ultimate end or object of the divine commandment or law, means LOVE,—even tho we do not find ourselves thoroughly able to live up to every minute particular and requirement of that law. Yet our inability to live up to the requirements of that law must be through no lack of the will, or intentions of the loyal and pure heart toward the law, and toward the Lord whose law it is: whatever failure we make, however short we may come of the grand ultimate object before us, it must be solely because of weaknesses of the flesh, and besetments of the adversary which our pure hearts, or wills failed to resist.

And here the Lord's promises are helpful, assuring us that he knows our weaknesses and frailties, and the wiles of our great adversary, the devil, and the influence of the spirit of the world, which is contrary to the spirit of love: he tells us that we may go freely to the throne of the heavenly grace, and obtain mercy in respect to our failures to live up to the grand standards which our hearts acknowledge, and seek to conform to; and that we may also find grace to help us in every time of need. And, availing ourselves of these mercies and privileges provided through our great High Priest, we are enabled to fight a good fight against sin, to repulse its attacks upon our hearts and to drive it off if it shall succeed in invading our flesh. Thus, and thus only, may the Christian *keep himself pure* in heart, preserving his stand as one of the fighters of the good fight, one of the overcomers of the world and its spirit.

There will be a tendency on the part of the flesh, and the mind of the flesh, to deceive us in respect to this commandment of love. The mind of the flesh will seek to go into partnership with the new mind, and will be very ready to recognize love as the rule and law of life, *under certain conditions.* The mind of the flesh would recognize love in words, in profession, in manners—a form of godliness, without its power. Gentle manners, such as love would demand, may be exercised by a selfish heart deceiving itself, and seeking to deceive others; on the lip may be the smile, the word of praise, of kindness, of gentleness, while in the heart may be feelings of selfishness, of grudge, of bitterness, of animosity, which, under favorable conditions, may manifest themselves in more or less carefully worded slander, or backbiting, or reproaches. Or these, continuing in the heart and rankling, may, under favorable conditions, bring forth anger, hatred, malice, strife and other wicked works of the flesh and of the devil, wholly contrary to the proper course of a pure heart, and an utter variance with the commandment of the law of the New Covenant —love.

We are, therefore, to have clearly before our minds the fact that the *ultimate object* of all the divine dealings for us and with us, and the ultimate significance of all the divine promises made to us, is the development of love, which is godlikeness, for God is love. And to have this love developed in us, in the sense and to the degree intended by the Lord, it is necessary that it shall come from a *pure* heart, in full accord with the Lord, and his law of love, and wholly antagonistic to the adversary and his law of selfishness. To have this kind of love in its proper development requires also a good conscience: for be it remembered that there are bad consciences, —our consciences require regulating, as do all the other features of our fallen nature. If our consciences are to be regulated we must have some standard by which to set and regulate them. The conscience is like a watch whose dial is properly marked with the hours, but whose correctness as a timekeeper depends upon the proper regulating of its mainspring, so that it may point out the hours truthfully: so our consciences are ready to indicate right and wrong to us, but they can only be relied upon to tell us truly what is right and what is wrong after being regulated in connection with the new mainspring, the new heart, the pure will, brought into full harmony with the law of love, as presented to us in the Word of God.

Our text also points out the necessity for an undissembled faith. And here, we believe, is one of the important difficulties besetting many who are in the nominal churches: they are not honest; they are not conscientious in respect to their faith. If they believe differently from the denomination they have been connected with, they are willing to dissemble their faith, to misrepresent it, because they fear a disturbance in the church; they fear to be thought peculiar; they fear to lose the esteem of fellow-Christians ("wheat") who might understand them, and of fellow-associates ("tares") who would be sure to misunderstand them, and speak evil of them. They love the praise of men more than they love the praise of God, else they would not risk the disfavor of God through a violation of conscience, and a dissembling of their faith, in order to maintain the friendship of the world and of the nominal church.

We urge that all our readers consider carefully, studiously, the words of our text, remembering it is those who miss this true thought who are not only missing the opportunity of the present time to be overcomers of the world, and the opportunity of the future, to be "joint-heirs with Christ" in his kingdom, but who, additionally, are lending influence now in the wrong direction, and are likely to be turned aside to foolish talking, preaching and teaching and discussing matters which are illogical, irrational, nonsensical; because their hearts have become darkened through neglect of the *principles* which the Lord has set forth for the government of those who are new creatures in Christ Jesus. And sometimes the matter goes beyond foolish talking, and the heart becomes embittered and corrupted: love is cast out of the heart, and selfishness takes its place, and from it flows words of bitterness, anger and evil, instead of words of love, kindness, gentleness, mercy and goodness.

"Keep thy *heart* with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life"—life or death. "Blessed are the *pure* in heart, for they shall see God."

CLAIMING, RECEIVING AND ADMINISTERING A KINGDOM

Luke 19:11-27.—Dec. 23.

"Every one of us shall give account of himself to God."—Rom. 14:12.

Naturally enough the fact that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, the city of the great King, and that he had definitely acknowledged himself as the Messiah, and that he was exercising a great influence amongst the people, and that under this influence the rich Zacchæus had been soundly converted, led the disciples to believe that when they reached Jesusalem, then only fifteen or twenty miles distant, they would immediately see tangible evidences of the establishment of God's kindgom—that they would see Jesus assume regal robes, power and authority, and that they themselves would be associated with him in the throne of power, and that speedily Israel would arise from the dust to be the dominant nation of the world, and through its laws, at the mouth of Messiah, supported by his divine powers, would bring blessing to every nation, people, kindred and tongue.

It was in view of this erroneous expectation that our Lord gave the parable of this lesson—to point out to the disciples, and vaguely to others, that kingdom glories were yet a considerable distance in the future, and that before they could be expected he must leave them and go to the central seat of government and deceive his commission from Jehovah, the Father, and return; and that meantime he would give to some of his servants a work to do in his name which would prove their loyalty, their love, by their faithfulness.

The figure used as the basis of the parable was one with which the people of Jericho were quite familiar. They had in their city the palace of Herod, and knew that when his father, Herod the Great, died, Herod Archelaus, then king, set out on a mission to Rome, to the court of the Cæsars, the rulers of the world;—the object of the mission being to obtain Cæsar's authority an investiture of government as the king of Judea instead of his deceased father. They knew that Herod returned, fully equipped with authority, and was in consequence the ruler. They knew also that when he went to Rome a deputation of citizens of Judea was sent after him to make complaint against him, and to urge that he be not appointed;—and to inform Cæsar that the government of the Herods was no longer desired by the people of Judea. Josephus says that this deputation of opponents who went to Rome numbered 500. The people probably also remembered that when Herod Archelaus returned with kingly power he first of all rewarded his faithful retainers with various offices throughout the kingdom, and subsequently dealt harshly with those who had manifested their opposition. Thus we see that those who heard this parable were much more likely to be appreciative of its significance than the majority of the people of today would be, because customs of the present time are so different

It was understood by those who heard the parable that the Lord referred to himself as the nobleman, that heaven was the far country, that Jehovah himself was the great King, whose commission was essential to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom, and that Jesus' disciples were the servants to be entrusted with the "Pounds," and that those who would not have him rule over them were more or less in love and in league with the darkness of sin. Everyone who opposes righteousness, or who loves and serves unrighteousness, is thereby declaring *his opposition* to the reign of righteousness, which the Lord proposes to establish in the earth in due time,—when his kingdom shall come and his will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

There is in this lesson a severe rebuke (which alas! is not often recognized) to those who claim that the kingdom of God was set up at Pentecost. They must see, unless they with more or less wilfulness close the eyes of their understanding, that this parable is against their theory, and teaches that the kingdom is not to be expected to be set up until the return of Messiah at his second advent. It is also a rebuke to those who claim that in some manner, incomprehensible to themselves or anybody else, the second advent took place 1800 years ago, at the time of Israel's overthrow, about A. D. 70. They must see, unless with a certain amount of wilfulness they close their eyes of understanding against it, that nothing at all corresponding to a second advent of Christ took place at that time—nothing corresponding to the setting up of his kingdom occurred there; nothing corresponding to the calling of those of his servants and reckoning with them and rewarding them with places in the kingdom took place there; nothing corresponding to the calling of his enemies who would not have him rule over them, and the punishment of them, took place there—in A. D. 70.

Indeed, the parable is opposed to every theory respecting the kingdom except for right theory, and it is in full accord with it; because the right theory is not a human wish or whim or conjecture to help substantiate some human program of events, but is the sum and substance of all the teachings of the divine Word brought into harmonious unison and interpreted thus, Scripture throwing light upon Scripture, by the holy spirit.

Those who heard the parable might have conjectured that it required months, or possibly years for its fulfilment; but probably none of them expected that it would require more than eighteen centuries—because, as natural men, they would be disposed to look at matters from the natural standpoint, from the standpoint of seventy to a hundred years as being the limit of human life. Nor did the disciples even know how to view matters from the divine standpoint until after they had received the holy spirit. Under its enlightenment, however, the Apostle tells us plainly that "A day with the Lord is as a thousand years."—2 Pet. 3:8

As the Revised Version points out, the ten servants to whom the pounds were given, were only a part of all the nobleman's servants; they would seem to represent the *consecrated* class who have professed full devotion to the Lord, and to each of whom is given a special gift or blessing, not given to others of the servants of the household of faith. This special gift or blessing seems to be referred to by the Apostle, when he says, "A measure of the spirit is given to every man [in the true, consecrated church] to profit withal." (1 Cor. 12:7) It is the same gift to all, the same spirit amongst all, working in all of this class, and the duty of each one is to use this gift of the Lord for its increase; and the more his devotion and the more his faithfulness the larger may be the results.

We are to notice a difference between this parable of the "Pounds" and a somewhat similar one of the "Talents." The latter represented the natural abilities of the individual—"to every man according to his several ability," some one, some two, some five talents or opportunities. But this parable of the pounds ignores the individual abilities of the servants, and shows them each as receiving the same thing and for the same purpose. Possibly the differences of opportunities are to be understood as implied, because the Lord expressed as hearty approval of the one who gained four pounds as he did the one who gained nine. Both did well, both were good, both were faithful. The one with greater talents, in order to be equally faithful with the one of fewer talents, *should be able to* and should show larger results: and the rewards given would seem to imply the same thing—that greater sacrifices in the present time "work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And this emphasizes the instructions of a previous lesson, showing that those who are *rich* in talents, opportunities and privileges, if faithful, achieve a larger victory and a still grander reward than those who are poorer and who therefore sacrifice less, tho the sacrificing be done in both cases with the same spirit, which in both is thoroughly acceptable to God, pronounced well done, and the servant faithful and good.

The servant who hid his talent and returned it, and whose loss of all opportunity to share in the kingdom is shown, would seem to represent a class not merely justified but sanctified—consecrated fully to the Lord, and made the recipients of the holy Spirit, even as the other members of the body. He is called a "*wicked*" servant; not because he had committed murder or robbery of any kind, but because, having assumed an obligation by which he was entrusted with certain of the Master's goods not given to others, he failed of his covenant and obligation. Such a servant could not be trusted, and properly was considered unfit for any share in the kingdom; and the blessings which had been entrusted to him were given to the one who had already most, but whose faithfulness had been so abundantly attested by zeal. So to every-one who uses present blessings and opportunities well, zealously, further blessings, privileges and opportunities shall be granted, and from those who do not so use them they will be taken away.

To our understanding we are now living in the very time represented by this feature of the parable—the time when our Lord, invested with the authority of the Father, is about to take to himself his great power and reign; and when, preparatory to that reign, he is reckoning with his servants now living, with a view to their appointment to places in the kingdom he is about to inaugurate. It is from this standpoint that we interpret the testings and siftings now in progress amongst the consecrated ones in and out of all the sects of Christendom. "The Lord your God proveth you, whether ye do love the Lord your God or no." Present truth and present conditions are testing and *showing* to what extent those who have received the Lord's favor are faithful. This does not imply that others of this class who have died in the past of this age are ignored; on the contrary the Scriptures assure us that they would be dealt with first, and that those accounted worthy have a share in the first resurrection preceding those who are alive and remain at the present time.

But the living ones pass through an experience of testing (the ending of their trial) before they die; they must give an account; judgment must pass respecting them; they must either be gathered, as "wheat" into the barn or be left in the field where the "tares" are shortly to be burned. Fortunately for us, the reckoning is not one of an instant, but time is granted to us to make up our account: and blessed is he who, finding that he has not been as faithful as he might have been in the past, is now putting forth redoubled energies—"redeeming the time" (grasping opportunities—Eph. 5:16), in order to make as favorable an account as possible while our King is waiting to receive them and willing to show us all the favor that could be desired.

Ten servants were chosen as a *general number* to represent all of the consecrated, but only three of these are mentioned as illustrations of faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Thus the Lord avoids even intimating how many of the whole number of consecrated will prove faithful to their consecration and enter into the joys of the Lord—into the kingdom, and to share with him in the throne; and how many of them will fail to be accounted worthy of these honors and blessings; and how many of the latter may be counted worthy of the second death; and how many of them will come, through faithfulness in tribulation, to be honored servants in the kingdom.—Rev. 7:9-15.

The enemies of the King are all to be slain, after he takes to himself his great power and begins his reign; "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Some would suggest that this slaying will be with the sword of the spirit, and imply a universal salvation; but to our understanding such an interpretation would be utterly at variance with the spirit of the parable, and hence sophistical, and unworthy of any one claiming either honesty or ability as a teacher in Israel. There ought to be a reasonable relationship between the figure of the parable and the reality, as it will be fulfilled. To our understanding the slaying of the enemies represents clearly and distinctly the punishment which the Lord prescribes for the enemies of righteousness, *viz.*, the second death. However, this by no means signifies that all the people (aside from the specially trusted servants) are enemies. It was not so in the parable, which rather implies four classes: (1) The king's servants; (2) those specially granted the pounds for use in his service; (3) the citizens; (4) the class of the latter opposed to the king, his laws, etc.

After the kingdom has been established under the King, and his then exalted servants, we may be sure that all in harmony with him will have cause to rejoice in his favor and the blessings of the kingdom; and if some of the citizens had misunderstood the King's character, having heard him traduced and slandered, they will soon perceive, under the blessed conditions of the Millennial day, how grossly the "Prince of this World" had misrepresented the character of the Prince of Peace, telling them that he (the latter) had a place of eternal torment prepared for them, into which he would surely cast nine-tenths of their number, etc., etc. When these begin to have the eyes of their understanding opened, so that "the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God," shining in the face of the new King, will bring them enlightenment and joyful privileges hitherto undreamed of, many of them, unquestionably, instead of longer being enemies and hating the King and hating his rule, will become staunch friends and supporters, and will rejoice greatly that they are freed from the yoke of the former prince, Satan, and will rejoice in his binding, which makes possible their liberation from the bondage of ignorance, superstition, fear and calumny.

It will require all of the thousand years to demonstrate who are the friends of truth and righteousness and who their *enemies*. The "*enemies*" of righteousness, are enemies of God and of Christ, and of all who are in harmony with righteousness; and this separation from the King's friends is Scripturally represented as the separating of the "goats" from the "sheep," which will progress throughout that Millennial period, and eventuate in the gathering of all the "sheep" to the right-hand of the King's favor, and the gathering of all the "goats," of contrary dispositions, to the left-hand of his disfavor,—where, because of their wilful and intelligent rejection of the principles of righteousness (the laws of his kingdom), they will be counted not his servants or messengers, but the servants or messengers of Satan, and as such they will meet their destruction in the symbolical lake of fire, "which is the second death."—Rev. 20:14; Matt. 25:31-46.*

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* See our issue of March 15 and April 1, 1900, page 101.

"THOU CROWNEST THE YEAR WITH THY GOODNESS"

PSALM 65:11.—DEC. 30.

What more appropriate lesson could have been chosen for the close of the year! It is fitting that the Lord's people should continually keep trace of the mercies and blessings they enjoy—otherwise the pressure of the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches would so crowd in upon our minds and hearts as to cover from our observations and ultimately choke up completely the springs of divine grace, which, kept open, minister continually to our joy and refreshment in the holy Spirit.

To this end it is appropriate that we have a daily review of the blessings we enjoy—that every evening we call to mind the privileges enjoyed, the providences which have guided our way, and the blessings, both temporal and spiritual, which have come to us; some of them in common with the world in general and others of a special kind, known to and appreciated by those only who know the Shepherd and are known of him;—who hear his voice and to whom the rod and staff, his chastenings and guidance, are continually a comfort and a joy.

It is appropriate, too, that we take weekly reviews, looking at the same mercies and blessings from a still broader standpoint of observation, reminding us of the rest into which we have entered through faith in the precious blood, and also of the rest that remains for the people of God, whereof God has given us assurance in that on the first day of the week he raised up Jesus from the dead.—Heb. 4:3, 9.

But it is with special appropriateness that at the close of the still larger cycle of a year we should take a still broader and more comprehensive view of our experiences, looking circumspectly at the way we have traveled and considering well which have been the steps which hindered progress, and which have been proper steps in the footprints of Jesus, bringing us nearer to the goal—the "mark" which we must surely attain if we would be accounted worthy of a share in the promised kingdom.

A year may seem a longer or a shorter period, according to the circumstances. To the mind of childhood it is a very long period, while to more developed minds, filled with the activities of life, it seems much shorter—speeding all too rapidly to permit the accomplishment of all the things desired to be achieved. Then again, the year will seem proportionately long as it has contained draughts of bitter experience or sufferings, mental or physical;—proportionately short, as it has contained joys and pleasures which seem to slip away all too quickly. To a certain extent such experiences are common to all mankind; yet the Christian, especially if he have been for some time in the school of Christ and is somewhat developed both in knowledge and in grace, has a larger capacity than others for grasping and appreciating life; because, no matter how unsound his natural mind may have been, he has now "the mind of Christ," "the spirit of a sound mind," which is far better able than the natural mind to estimate matters at their true worth.

Such an advanced Christian looks back through the year and recalls life's storms as well as its sunshine, its sorrows as well as its joys, is tears as well as its smiles, and sorrows not as others who have no hope (but who, instead, have more or less of vague fear and dread of the future, both of present life and that which is to come). His troubles have been divested of their hobgoblin features, and minimized by the spirit of a sound mind, and the instructions of God's Word, which assures all such that the trials, difficulties and adversities of life, rightly accepted as lessons, are blessings in disguise,—which will work out "a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory" in the life to come.—2 Cor. 4:16, 17.

He will perceive too, that his joys have been of a purer and a more solid kind than any he ever knew before he was begotten of the holy Spirit. They have not had commingled with them the bitterness of envy, malice and hatred, but have been unalloyed; because they have not been rejoicings in iniquity, but rejoicings in the truth. Moreover, they have been much more numerous than ever before; because he not only is able to joy in the Lord, joy in his Word, joy in the holy spirit, joy in fellowship with brethren of like precious faith, but by the grace of God he has been enabled additionally to joy in tribulation also;—not because he loved tribulation, but because he loved the patience, the experience, the character, which God assures us are a fruitage which all tribulations must yield us under his providence, if we are rightly exercised thereby.—James 1:3, 4; Rom. 5:3.

Of whom are all these things true? Not of every man, surely, for alas! we know many who have no such experience—the world that lieth in darkness knows not God. Nor are these experiences true of all people of intelligence,—nominally Christians. Surely but comparatively few of those who profess the name of Christ enjoy these precious experiences, or will be able to look back upon the year with satisfaction of this kind, realizing that God has crowned the year with his goodness! Many who cannot rejoice in the goodness which we have enumerated foregoing, will nevertheless return thanks for temporal good things and mercies, and strive to peer into the darkness with which an insufficient knowledge and an insufficient faith enshrouds the trials and difficulties of life, which to them are incomprehensible and sources of no joy, and generally of little advantage; because they have not taken the necessary step of full consecration to the Lord, to bring them under his protecting care and under the enlightening influence of his Word through his spirit: or, having taken the step of consecration, they have not been performing their vows, but seeking to serve both God and Mammon, without pleasing either, and without receiving satisfactory blessing from either.

The class which can and does look back through the year from the standpoint that we have described—the class which looking back can see that God's goodness has crowned every feature of life throughout the year, is the "little flock," the true Church, whose names are written in heaven,—the body of Christ, the bride class. They are described by the Prophet in preceding verses of this Psalm. They are the true Zion, which shall shortly be set up, filled with divine glory, the joy of the whole earth, and the divine channel of blessing to all the families of mankind; "For out of Zion shall go the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."—Hear the Prophet:—

> "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion:
> And unto thee shall the vow be performed.
> O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come!
> Iniquities prevail against me: as for my transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.
> Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee,
> That he may dwell in thy courts.
> We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house,
> The holy place of thy temple."

Here we have a description of the elect church, of which Christ is the Head, and all the faithful royal priests who, now fulfilling their vows of sacrifice, are companions in the sufferings of Christ, as by and by they shall be his companions also in the glory that shall be revealed. (Rom. 8:17, 18) They are God's choice, or his "elect," for, as the Apostle informs us, God has predestinated that this class whom he will choose shall all be copies of his Son. (Rom. 8:29) They shall dwell in his house—they will be members of the great temple which the Lord God is building of spiritual stones, in and through which he will bless the world with a knowledge of himself and his grace.—1 Pet. 2:4-8.

Is it any wonder that these can rejoice in spirit, saying, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits"? "He hath put a new song into my mouth, even the lovingkindness of our God." Is it any wonder that these looking back can see in the year that is past that which has blessed and rejoiced them in every sense of the word has been of divine goodness, and that thus God has crowned the whole year with his favor toward them? These can say with faithful Joshua, "Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake."—Joshua 23:14.

These are assured by their Lord that in the Father's house are many mansions, many conditions, suitable to the many kinds of his intelligent creatures; nevertheless there was no mansion for them, because they were to be a new nature, "partakers of the divine nature," and hence it would be necessary for him to go away and "*prepare a place for them*"—a heavenly condition. These, know that they must be prepared for the place, as well as the place be prepared for them, are enabled to rejoice under every blow of the hammer of discipline, because they realize that it is a part of the Master's work in their preparation to fill the place to which they have been called in the Father's house—which will be the place of God's temple, in which they are to be living stones.—Eph. 2:10.

And if the experiences and sentiments of this "little flock" are beyond the ken of the natural man, his neighbors and friends, is it any wonder? Despised and rejected of men, they are nevertheless God's royal priesthood; "as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold they live"—a life more abundant. In all these things they have cause to rejoice, realizing that the path in which they tread has in it the footprints of him who redeemed them and became the leader and forerunner of this priesthood. The world knows us not, even as it knew him not.

As we thus review the leadings of divine providence during the year that is past, let God's goodness and mercy stimulate our faith and confidence in him as respects the New Year coming in. A proper retrospect on the part of a proper child of God will enable him not only to render thanks for the past, but to look up an lift up his head, realizing that our deliverance is nearer than when we first believed; and that he that began a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it, if we will but continue to submit our wills, our lives, our all, to his wisdom and loving care.—Rom. 13:11; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 5:5, 6.

"NO WEAPON FORMED AGAINST THEE SHALL PROSPER"

Isaiah 54:17.

Our publications have many able enemies, yet one and all they are powerless in their opposition. As in the *harvest* of the Jewish age the Scribes, Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, when they could not resist the truths then due, "gnashed upon him with their teeth," but "could not answer him," so it is now in the *harvest* of the Gospel age. Their rage is impotent except as it resorts to misrepresentation and sophistical trickery which the Lord assures us cannot "deceive the very elect."

About ten years ago a certain Professor Morehead (himself tabooed by many as a "heretic" because of his advocacy of pre-millennarian views) wrote an article for the *United Presbyterian* in which he did his *worst* to defame Millennial Dawn. The article was reprinted as a tract in various quarters by persons laboring under similar misconceptions of divine and human justice. These are published by some three or four parties—none of whom, probably, ever read the books he seeks to defame.

We did not consider Prof. Morehead's *tirade* worthy an answer, believing as we still do, that honest people (of whom alone we need expect to find the "saints" whom we seek) would be quite able to discern the professor's sophistry. The below correspondence will be interesting to our readers as showing the correctness of our supposition that honest children of God are not misled by the Adversary and his agents.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN TWO MINISTERS RE MILLENNIAL DAWN AND THE MOREHEAD "SMOKE"

(Brother Seddon, as we understand it, was at the time Recording Secretary of the Southern Chautauqua Assembly of Atlanta, Ga., and Bro. Worrell a visiting speaker at its Evangelical Alliance prayer service. The matter has been held over for some time now in order to permit Bro. Worrell to find time for a reply justifying his position, but all in vain.)

Atlanta, Ga., Aug. 11, 1899.

Dear Brother Russell:—You will probably be interested in the enclosed, which will explain itself. Kindly return to me the letter to Bro. Worrell re the Morehead tract. Keep the latter, however, if you can use it in any way. [The letters follow in their order.] Yours fraternally,

A. E. Seddon.

Atlanta, Ga., Aug. 2, 1899.

Rev. A. S. Worrell,

Dear Brother:—I was in the Alliance prayer-meeting this afternoon when, in the close of your address, you denounced as unscriptural the teachings of C. T. Russell of Allegheny City, Pa. I regret that the necessity of your having immediately to catch a train deprived me of an opportunity I greatly desired to ask you in what particulars in your opinion the teachings of the Millennial Dawn series of books are unscriptural. I have read four volumes of that series, and other writings of Bro. Russell's, and am not only interested but also impressed by his presentation of God's Word. If there are some points in which he is at variance with God's Word, I should esteem it a great kindness and an act of extreme brotherly service to have them pointd out. Hoping you will kindly reply, I am,

Yours fraternally, A. E. Seddon.

Louisville, Ky., Aug. 12, 1899.

Mr. A. E. Seddon,

Dear Sir:—Yours of the 2nd inst. has been received and noted, in reply to which I enclose a tract touching on some of the evils of the Millennial Dawn. Much more could be said, but my time is taken up in other work that falls to my lot in my regular business.

It amazes me that anyone who really knows the Christ of the Bible should have ever been ensnared by the writings of Mr. Russell. The Christ of Mr. Russell is altogether a different character from the Christ of the Bible. See Isa. 9:6; John 1:1, 2, etc., etc.

I trust that his writings do not truly represent him. May you, my dear sir, not be ruined by the errors of Mr. Russell. Respectfully,

A. S. Worrell.

Atlanta, Ga., Aug. 14, 1899.

Rev. A. S. Worrell,

Dear Sir:—On receiving today yours of the 12th inst., in reply to my request of an earlier date, that you should specify charges that you make against the writings of Bro. Chas. T. Russell (in justification of your denunciation of those writings at the Evangelical Alliance prayer meeting), I regret I cannot accept it as a satisfactory reply.

I cannot resist the impression either that you ranked my intelligence very low in supposing I could accept such a reply as having any weight at all, or that, giving me credit for average intelligence, you trifled with my sincere and even anxious inquiries by sending an answer which would not have satisfied you, had our positions been reversed.

The only charge you made against the Millennial Dawn doctrines in your address was that you had known cases where Christian character had 'wilted' under their influence. But you surely cannot use that as a *proof* that the doctrines are unscriptural, since such 'wilting' is possible and frequently happened under Apostolic teaching. See Heb. 6:4-6; 10:28-31; 1 John 5:16. I wrote you in all sincerity asking for a specification of charges. I understood from your own statement that you were wholly given up to the Lord's work. It was as a sincerely inquiring disciple who supposed it possible that you could clearly see some aspect of truth that had escaped my notice that I felt such an inquiry was rightly made of the Lord's servant, and that in the Lord's name I had a right to expect a candid statement of specific charges.

What do you send me? A statement that your time is taken up in other work that falls to your lot in the course of your regular business; but you find time to express amazement that any one who really knows the Christ of the Bible should ever have been ensnared by the writings of Mr. Russell. You make the assertion, "The Christ of Mr. Russell is altogether a different character from the Christ of the Bible;" but you do not specify one single item of the alleged difference. You express a hope that his writings do not truly represent him and that I may not be ruined by his errors, but you do not pen one sentence calculated to avert that ruin, nor do you suggest any explanation of your extraordinary hope that Mr. Russell may think one way and write another. Is that something to be hoped for? If a man teach errors, it surely were better for him that he believe that he is teaching the truth, than that, knowing the truth, he nevertheless teaches error with seeming sincerity in writings that do not truly represent him. It seems to me that could your "hope" for Bro. Russell be realized, it would place him in a very low plane of moral obliquity.

In addition to this you enclose two tracts, one an excellent homily on Luke 2:10, 11, in which, after carefully reading it twice, I cannot discern the remotest connection with my inquiries. Personally I would say "Amen" to every sentence of that tract—and I believe that Brother Russell would do the same. You also enclose a tract which is a direct attack upon the Millennial Dawn books. To this I will now refer.

You express a hope that Bro. Russell's writings do not truly represent him. I think it will be the kindest thing I can say to you that I trust this attack on the Millennial Dawn books by Prof W. G. Morehead does not truly represent what you as a Christian brother, would say about those books if your "regular business" allowed you sufficient leisure to read them—and you certainly ought to read them before you attack them again. Your first attack may be excused on the ground of misinformation, but that excuse should never avail you again.

Can you as a fair minded man approve an attack which cites the *price* of a book as an argument against it, that cites the missionary zeal displayed in advocating its teachings as argument against it; that calls names—"nocturnal hallucinations," "hydrophobic," "packed full of fundamental error," "product of insanity," compared with "the infidel Renan"? This is not honest Christian controversy! I think too well of you to suppose that you really endorse this kind of attack; yet by charitable estimate of you is sorely tried when I reflect that you evidently thought this kind of argument good enough for me.

As regards the teachings of the Millennial Dawn books on the human and divine in the nature of Christ, can you state a presentation of Scripture teaching on that important subject that more satisfactorily answers to *all* the Scriptural statements than Bro. Russell's? If you can, then for Christ's sake I earnestly and reverently ask you to do it; and I am convinced that Bro. Russell will receive it no less gratefully than I.

I was recommended to write to you as a scholar. I would now ask you candidly as a Greek scholar and a Scriptural exegete: Can you find fault with Bro. Russell's exegesis of *kelusma* ["shout"]? If you can, what is the error? If you cannot, why do you make use of the Morehead attack? If Prof. Morehead himself could assail the Millennial Dawn teachings on the two points above referred to, why did he not do it? If he cannot assail them, is he not guilty of shameful insincerity in making believe that he can?

With regard to Bro. Russell's opinions respecting the dates 1874 and 1914, time, of course, will alone prove how far he is right. But surely you do not endorse Prof. Morehead in suggesting these opinions are in the nature of deadly heresy. I have read a vast quantity of Millennial literature, "pre" and "post," have listened to a great deal of platform and pulpit talk on the same subject, and am utterly unable to conjecture what, out of all the bewildering mass, has a right to the name of "orthodox premillenarianism" by the side of which all other opinions are to be denounced as "nocturnal hallucination." Your own recent exposition of 2 Tim. 3 led me to infer that you regard these as the closing days of this present dispensation. Has your study of prophecy led you to detect deadly heresy in Brother Russell's conclusions? If so, what is it?

I understand the Morehead attack to assert that Bro. Russell teaches that the resurrection will be simultaneous for all the dead. My simple answer is that in Millennial Dawn, Vol. IV., pp. 640, 641, Prof. Morehead can find conclusive proof that he is incorrect. If the bracketed words ("simultaneous for all the dead") are not intended to indicate the writer's understanding of Brother Russell's teachings, but his own conception of Scripture teaching, he had better consult his New Testament before he attacks a Christian brother again. The emphasis placed on a "first resurrection" of necessity implies subsequent resurrection. "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth"; but not all of these will have part in the first resurrection.

Prof. Morehead, in section 7 of his attack, ignores, possibly does not know enough Greek to distinguish between, the *parousia* and the *epiphania*. I was referred to you as a Greek scholar. As such I cannot imagine that you can endorse the Morehead attack or *apparent attack*. Are you, as a student of the Greek New Testament, prepared to deny and disprove from Scripture that the Lord's second coming will at first be discerned by only a comparatively few faithful watchers? Do you regard the word "coming" in our English version as adequate to embrace the ideas embodied by both *parousia* and *epiphania?*

I have detained you so long in criticism of the Morehead attack because I am inclined to believe that you made use of it hastily. I want you to read it carefully, to discern its dishonesty, its innuendo, its crafty appeal to the *odium theoligicum*, its essential weakness, its unchristian vituperation. Lay it aside, Bro. Worrell. Don't fight for the Lord with the devil's weapons. If Bro. Russell errs there is Scripture to show it. If Scripture is on his side then I am convinced that after you have shaken off the theological prejudice with which you are apparently possessed, you will have grace enough to admit that Bro. Russell has a right to speak and to be judged by the Word; and that denunciation about "ensnaring souls," "ruin," expressions of amazement, etc., have really more of bluff about them than of the spirit of Christ.

Your statement about "wilting" of character under the influence of Bro. Russell's teaching proves that your opportunities of observation have not been wide enough to qualify you to form an accurate estimate; certainly not wide enough to justify you in assuming the office of public censor as you did on the 2nd inst. The humble and persistent zeal of the "Pilgrims," engaged in teaching the views advocated by Bro. Russell, comes nearer to apostolic zeal and self-abnegation than most Christian work now-a-days. I have known many who, like you, seem to be afraid of Bro. Russell's teachings, yet who pay well deserved tribute of admiration to the devotion and consecration of those who accept it.

As for Bro. Russell himself, I do not know him personally, have never met him, never seen his portrait even; yet I cannot help admiring the absence of the "ego" in his ministry. I have several times written to him concerning difficulties I have encountered in reading his works. He always replies personally; he presents reasons lucidly and never indulges in denunciation or exclamations of amazement. He never uses the trickery practiced by Prof. Morehead, nor resorts to innuendo. I am, dear Brother Worrell,

Yours in the love and pursuit of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, Alfred E. Seddon.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

THE BEGINNING AND ENDING OF THE MILLENNIUM

Question.—I understand from Rev. 20:4-6, that Christ will reign one thousand years, and from verses 2 and 7 that Satan will be bound during that period. If Christ began to reign in 1878, and Satan will not be bound until 1915, the two periods do not seem to synchronize; and furthermore, both extend beyond the seventh-thousand year period which, according to our Bible chronology, began in the Autumn of 1872. How is this? Can you assist me?

Answer.—The Lord has evidently arranged for the gradual closing of the Gospel age and opening of the Millennial age, in such a manner that the one laps upon the other, with some particular purpose in view; but just what his purposes are he has not been pleased to inform us; and since this extends into the future we may reasonably suppose that it is not now "meat in due season for the household of faith." When the end has been reached and accomplished, we have no doubt whatever that it will be manifested to all of the Lord's people that his Word has been accurately fulfilled. Until then a certain amount of faith is required and expected from those who have so many evidences of the Lord's wisdom and exactness in the features of his plan already accomplished "We can trust him where we cannot trace him." Apparently this matter of when the thousand-year period should be reckoned as fully beginning and fully ending will be an open question until the close of the Millennial age. It is our expectation, from Rev. 20:8, 9, that the obscurity of this question will have something to do with the final test of loyalty and obedience to God, which will come upon the whole world of mankind who will have enjoyed the blessings of restitution throughout the Millennial age, and have attained perfection at its close. The indefiniteness of the end of the period would appear to be an important feature of their testing. Apparently they will think the period of Christ's mediatorial reign ended before the Lord's time; and some of them, impatient of delay, will make a demonstration, and demand of the earthly representatives of the kingdom that full dominion be at once restored to perfect man, according to their understanding of the divine plan and its times and seasons.

In so doing these will be demonstrating their own unworthiness to enter the age of perfection which will follow the Millennium and will be destroyed in the second death. For, while such an attitude of mind may be forgivable in imperfect men of today, those perfect beings who shall have had a full restitution and large experience will be required to exercise a full faith, an unwavering confidence in the wisdom, love and promises of the Creator. And their failure to manifest implicit faith and obedience to the divine program after all their experience will be proof sufficient that they are unworthy of the eternal state. If permitted to go beyond into the full liberties of sons of God they would always be liable to sin and its consequences; and God's promise is that there shall be no more sighing, no more dying, no more crying, no more pain *there*, the equivalent of a promise that there shall be no more sin. Hence all who shall not have developed characters in full accord with, and fully submitted to the divine will, will be esteemed as having enjoyed all the blessings and privileges divine mercy has to offer. The fire, the judgment from heaven, will destroy such from among the people, in the second death, as unworthy of life-eternal.

The Scripture declaration respecting the saints, the "overcomers" is, "They lived and reigned a thousand years." The reign of the saints cannot be properly said to begin before all the "jewels" have been gathered, nor before "the times of the Gentiles" end, in 1914. Nor is it said that their reign will be no longer than a thousand years. After the thousand years' reign Satan shall be loosed and the above trial shall ensue; but the reign of Christ and the church will evidently continue long enough after the thousand years to destroy all found unworthy in that final test, and to thus complete the work for which this reign is instituted;—for, as expressed by the Apostle, "He must reign *till* he hath put *all enemies* under his feet. . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto him [some by conversion and some by destruction], *then* shall the Son also himself be subject unto him [the Father]."

WHO CONSTITUTE "THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH"?

Question.—Our Lord commands us to do good, "especially to the household of faith." Who constitute this household—only the consecrated saints? Or does it include also the justified class, some of whom have not yet reached the position of sanctification or entire consecration?

Answer.—We understand that the *church of Christ*, as viewed from the divine standpoint, and as addressed in the Scriptures, includes only "the sanctified in Christ Jesus;"—those who have taken the step of justification through faith and, additionally, the second step of consecration to the Lord.

But "the household of faith" takes in a much larger number,—all who have faith in the Lord as their Redeemer from sin and its penalty,—all who are trusting in the precious blood of Christ, and seeking in any degree to be in harmony with the Lord and his rules of righteousness. The loving interest and care of all the "saints" (the consecrated) is to be exercised, not only toward each other, but also especially toward these members of the household of faith who are supposed to be under "instruction in righteousness," helping them forward to take the position of full consecration and become reckonedly dead to the world, and new creatures in Christ Jesus, risen with him, to walk in newness of life and to become his joint-heirs in the promised kingdom.

VOL. XXI ALLEGHENY, PA., DECEMBER 15, 1900 No. 24

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY'S YEARLY REPORT

DECEMBER 1, 1899, TO DECEMBER 1, 1900

Many of the Lord's dear people, deeply interested in present truth, are quite isolated, and have comparatively little opportunity for learning of the general progress of the cause, except as they may infer it from occasional remarks in these columns. These, and we trust all of the WATCH TOWER readers, will be looking with expectancy for this report, that they may thus have accurate information respecting the work which interests us more than all else in the world besides—the work in which each, according to his love, zeal and ability, has contributed either financially or through the circulation of literature, or otherwise.

We are glad to think of you as looking for and interested in this report, and give thanks to our Lord that by his grace so favorable a showing can be made; indeed, the grand totals for the year astonish us, for altho we have been aware that greater efforts than ever were put forth, we were not aware, until the calculations were footed up, to what extent the year past had transcended every previous year of this harvest-time in our mutual service of the truth and in the evidences of good results attained. We are sure that our friends will be astonished, as they read the reports we have to offer: astonished, first of all, that a company of the Lord's people so poor in this world's goods, as those who embrace present truth generally are, should contribute to the extent our Report shows; and that without being "dunned," urged, or even requested to give;—merely upon the information that an opportunity for thus engaging in the Lord's service is open to such as are able and willing to serve in this manner. The astonishment will be doubled when it is seen how great a work, under the Lord's blessing, has been accomplished with this comparatively small sum of money, which, amongst the nominal churches, would be considered only sufficient to pay the salaries of a few officers, and practically accomplish nothing in the way of propaganda.

And our astonishment still increases as we reflect that the circulation of this amount of literature, accompanied by this amount of "Pilgrim" preaching, etc., supporting the most glorious message that could possibly be heralded to mankind, shows so meagre results; that so few have ears to hear and eyes to see these things which enrapture our hearts. Let us, however, reflect that our Lord informs us that his "elect" will be but a "little flock"—and in it not many great, mighty or wise; but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. The comparatively small results of our efforts to reach the ripe "wheat" in Babylon convince us, all the more, that the "wheat" is very scarce in comparison with the "tares;" that we are living in the time of which the Apostle declares that the church nominal will have itching ears, and be turned away from the truth, turned to fables, and respecting which our Lord said, "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find *the* faith on the earth?" implying that it would be difficult to find.—2 Tim. 4:3; Luke 18:8.

True, the results may be more than we can at present discern; for we can estimate the widening influences of the truth chiefly by the growth of the WATCH TOWER subscription lists. These show considerable growth for the year,—but not nearly so much as we had hoped for: and our offer of credit, and of special terms to the poor, should bring to our lists the names of all who have "tasted that the Lord is gracious" and are hungering and thirsting for his righteousness. We can only hope that an under-current of influence is moving, of which we have little outward manifestation; and that in the Lord's own time and way during this "harvest" all of the true "wheat" will be reached and ripened and garnered.

THE COLPORTEUR BRANCH OF THE SERVICE

We give this department of the work the first place in the Report, considering that those who are engaged in it are doing the work of evangelists, and remembering that the Lord has specially blessed this service to the reaching of many who are now rejoicing in the light now shining upon the Word. We can think of no branch of the work in this harvest that more nearly corresponds to the style of service instituted by our Lord in the Jewish harvest, than does the colporteur work. The colporteurs usually go in couples, as the twelve apostles, and afterward the seventy, went forth,—from town to town and city to city. Like them, also, they go from house to house, and likewise their message is, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand! The time is fulfilled; repent, and believe the good tidings!" Going in this manner into all the homes of the civilized world, these colporteur brethren and sisters have opportunities for finding the truth-hungry as well, perhaps better, than if the pulpits of the land were open to them, and they all are competent to give able discourses upon the divine plan. Because in such a case they would be able either to preach but few discourses, or else to reach comparatively few hearers: whereas each colporteur can reach more than an average church audience every week; and with those whom he can interest he leaves reading matter representing many discourses, upon which the reader may feed for months. Where enough interest may not be awakened to lead to a purchase of the books, a tract is left, which sometimes bears good fruitage; and even tho some who purchase may neglect and fail to read at the time, experience shows us that the books thus scattered are often blessed of the Lord to the reaching of others, and sometimes years after, under more favorable conditions, the purchaser may also be blessed through conditions, the purchaser may also be blessed through them.

You will be pleased to learn that the sale of the DAWNS and booklets during the year (chiefly through the colporteurs) was as follows:—

In the English language	84,251
In the German language	9,137
In the Scandinavian tongues	6,712
In the French language (estimated)	543
Total	100,643
BOOKLETS:	
English	39,047
Foreign languages	1,323
Total	40,370

It should be remembered that altho we endeavor to keep this branch of the work on a self-supporting basis, it nevertheless comes short of this, by reason of the fact that our wholesale prices are very low: in the case of the foreign translations considerably less than cost.

We feel sure that this showing will greatly encourage the dear brethren and sisters who are giving their lives in this department of the Harvest work; and we trust that it will act as an incentive to others who have been contemplating engaging in this work—to lead such of them as are of good address and without family and financial encumbrances, to give themselves freely to this evangelistic work. It is a department which the Lord has greatly owned and blessed; it is a preaching of the Word in a most practical manner,, likely to leave a lasting impress; one which will undoubtedly, we believe, bring forth much fruitage during the great time of trouble, as well as serving to find and to perfect those of the Lord's saints who shall be accounted worthy to escape those things coming upon the world. We will be glad to hear from, and to co-operate with all who desire to enter this branch of the service. Write to us freely of your wishes, hopes, difficulties, etc., in respect to this, and we will do what we can to open the way before you. There is still plenty of room for the work in this land as well as in Great Britain. The fields are white for the harvest, and the laborers are few; and if we are praying for laborers let us see that we are doing what we can to fulfil our own petitions.

Some who cannot give their entire time to colporteuring are doing valiantly in their spare moments and hours; for instance, one dear brother, an architect, not slothful in his business, is nevertheless so fervent in spirit and in serving the Lord that during the past six months he has disposed of 650 copies of the DAWN to mechanics and tradesmen with whom his business brings him in contact. Others have less opportunities, but the same zeal, and are doing what they can;—some by giving, some by loaning, some by selling the literature. We rejoice that in any and all of these ways there is *an opportunity for all* of the Lord's dear flock to show their love for the truth, and their zeal in laying down their lives for the brethren still in Babylon and darkness.

THE "VOLUNTEER" WORK

All who labor for the truth do so of their free will and without compensation, and hence might properly be termed volunteers: under this head we might include in a general way all the efforts that have been put forth during the year in the way of free circulation of WATCH TOWER literature, bearing on the harvest themes—but the special use of the word with us has been confined to a particular feature of this free distribution; viz., that done systematically at or near churches at the time of their dismission on Sundays.

This Sunday church-distribution by those who volunteered for the service was begun in 1899, and reached good proportions and accomplished good results that year, and was continued during the past year with excellent effect. When we speak of results we have chiefly in mind that which is within our power, and not the ultimate results, of which no man can now know, and which time alone will show. The results, so far as the distribution of the Volunteer WATCH TOWER was concerned, were a success, large numbers being circulated in all parts of this country and in Great Britain. In handing literature to church attendants we had no thought whatever that they were all going into the hands of saints; but we do hope that some of them reached the hands of the Lord's consecrated people; and we still believe that it would be difficult to find a more effective way of reaching this class than by reaching the church-goers. In proportion to the circulation we cannot say that we have had large returns; on the contrary, they have been small, so far as letters, WATCH TOWER subscriptions, etc., are concerned. But in various ways we learn that they are making an impression upon the minds and hearts of many of those who have received them and who, while not ready to accept and endorse, nevertheless have been influenced by what they have read, and to some extent brought nearer to the truth and are better prepared for further instruction in the right way, when the Lord in due time may again send it to them.

We incline to think that the greatest blessing of all in connection with this part of the work has come to those who engaged in it as "volunteers," and who, all over the country, numbered hundreds. These have repeatedly testified that no part of their Christian experience had ever been more helpful to them in the development of true character, in committing them fully to the Lord and to his truth and to his service; making them strong in him,—"not ashamed to own his name, nor to defend his cause." Those who have had the opportunity to engage in this work, and who have allowed the "fear of man which bringeth a snare" to hinder from engaging in it, and thus being ministers of the true Gospel, and co-workers with the great Chief Reaper in this harvest-time, have missed a great deal—how much they may never know in the present life, unless some further opportunity for the Volunteer work should occur and they should then engage in it and ascertain how great the blessing and character-development they have already missed.

The friends in various quarters who have engaged in this work during the past two years, are writing us hoping that the Lord may open the opportunity for further volunteer service during the coming year, beginning early in the spring. The evidence is that where the entire company of the Lord's people at any point have entered into the work a great spiritual blessing has resulted. We will bear their requests in mind, and see what can be done as respects a future service for the soldiers of the Cross.

The total number of Volunteer issue of the WATCH TOWER circulated during the year was 948,459.

ORAL PREACHING—"PILGRIM" DEPARTMENT

It is not long since this department was inaugurated, and yet, as this Report shows, it has already reached considerable proportions. While we are in direct contact with the Lord's people through correspondence by mail, it became evident to us about four years ago that if competent brethren could visit amongst the little groups of those who have come into present truth through the ministry of the printed page, they could be of great service and encouragement to them; and at the same time might through public meetings be able to reach and further interest many who were already partially interested through the printed page and through private conversation, etc. These traveling oral preachers we designate "pilgrims," because they are nearly always on the go, their stops with the various little groups or churches being very brief (two or three days, as may seem to be warranted by conditions.) We make out the routes for these, and send notification ahead of them, so that no time need be lost. An evening meeting is always in order for the day of their arrival, and afternoon and evening meetings for the succeeding days.

We endeavor, as far as possible, to select for this service brethren who give evidence, first, of character, and of faith in the Lord, in his Word and in his plan; second, such as seem to give evidence of ability in presenting the truth to the minds of others—as the Apostle expresses it, "apt to teach"—and, so far as possible, those who are "mighty in the Scriptures" (1 Tim. 3:2; Acts 18:24); and of ability in "rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15) These, so far as worldly judgment would be concerned, would all be classed as plain men; and we trust also would be classed as true Christian men, humble-minded and modest, both in language and deportment—men who do not have the false idea that they are great ones, or lords of God's heritage, of superior caste or order above the household of faith, but who simply and humbly acknowledge that they are "brethren," "servants" of the Lord and of the household of faith,—men who are very thankful for the privilege granted them of being engaged in such a service, and who look for their reward, not in luxuries of the present life, but in the Father's house, beyond the veil—in the kingdom. These "pilgrims" are not paid salaries; and tho ample provision is made for their comfortable maintenance, everything connected with this is expected to be done on the reasonable and economical lines which we believe the Lord and apostles followed, and respecting which we regard them as "ensamples." No collections are taken up by these "pilgrims," nor do they in any manner, directly or indirectly, request aid privately. Nor need we request their entertainment, knowing full well that any we thus send to you in the Master's name will be welcomed by you and granted a share of such things as you have;—according to the Scriptural injunction.—Heb. 13:2.

In following the plan here indicated we have been enabled to reach some of the Lord's scattered ones in various parts of this broad land, who never expected to hear preaching along these lines; for it will be readily seen that the expense connected with this traveling ministry is proportionately much less than it would be by any other method which would reach the same number of the Lord's people. Beside, this method assists, rather than discourages, the development of talent amongst the brethren of the various little groups. It is our thought that, generally speaking, the Lord is pleased to use some in each little company for the instruction and assistance of the others in the same; indeed, we encourage the thought advised by the Apostle, that each member of the Lord's consecrated church should strive to "build *one another* up in the most holy faith."

We believe that an immense amount of good has been done through this pilgrim service during this past year, and that quite a number of the Lord's dear people, as they read this part of the report, will offer prayer on behalf of this feature of the Lord's service asking for us wisdom and grace in respect to the matter for the coming year. The figures in this line also, we believe, will astound many of our readers. They are as follows:

Number of persons who gave more or less of their time to the Pilgrims work during the year	14
Number of miles traveled in connection with the service	48,845
Visits to churches	649
Public meetings held	1,287
Private or parlor meetings held	875
Cost of this branch of the work	$3,357.59

One point alone in this report seems unsatisfactory to us, and that is the number of private or parlor meetings. These, we think should have been much more numerous in proportion to the public meetings. It is our thought that the chief good in these pilgrim visits is for the household of faith: while, therefore, we urge the holding of some public services to which all classes of Christian and earnest people may be invited by advertisement ond otherwise, we urge that during the year beginning the parlor meetings be given the chief attention. At these, subjects can be discussed which would not be so fully appreciated by the public, nor by any except those who had been *studying* along the lines of the WATCH TOWER literature. We take this opportunity, then, to offer this suggestion to the dear friends,—that when notified that a Pilgrim will be with them they may make proportionately larger arrangements for their parlor meetings and proportionately less arrangements for public discourses in halls, churches, etc.

CONVENTIONS OF THE YEAR

The Conventions are a part of the "Pilgrim" work, but deserve a word of special notice. Three general conventions were held during the year—at Philadelphia, Chicago and Dallas; these were interesting and profitable, but were reported on at the time. Besides these the President of the Society (the Editor) attended several *local, one-day conventions,* at different points—Toronto, Canada; Saratoga, N. Y.; Houston, Tex.; San Antonio, Tex.; Columbus, O.; Cleveland, O.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Washington, D. C.; New York City; Wilmington, N. C.; Roseboro, N. C.; Hayne, N. C.; and the Florida Chautauqua Assembly.

We have good reasons for believing that these gatherings were all profitable to the Lord's flock, seasons of refreshing and joyous fellowship in spiritual things; nevertheless we feel that in the coming year we must be more economical of our time. May the Lord direct; we will be glad to follow his leadings in the matter.

THE GENERAL TRACT DISTRIBUTION

The circulation of tracts during the year has been highly satisfactory to us. They have not been sown in a broadcast manner, but rather handed out with a measure of discretion, so far as we are able to judge; and this is the plan which we commend. Of course, in a majority of instances we merely know that tracts have been ordered and have been sent; but many give us an intimation of how they use what they receive: some visit hotels, where they hand them to the patrons; others seek opportunity for handing tracts to intelligent looking people at railway stations; others mail the tracts with their letters, perhaps with a little comment, and a request that some report be given after the reading; others keep a variety on hand, and make a selection for those with whom they come in contact. Thus there are various methods in vogue in this department, the colporteurs using a considerable number, leaving one at every house where they fail to take an order,—the tract sometimes having an influence where the words of the colporteur failed.

The total number of tracts sent out during the year was 1,468,990.

Of these a large number went direct from the WATCH TOWER office through the mails, to lists of addresses which we procured in various ways—many of them those of persons known to be religiously inclined, holy people, lovers of righteousness; and some of the best of these lists are sent to us, written upon proper-sized wrappers, by WATCH TOWER readers. You are all welcome to avail yourselves of this opportunity for service. Besides the tracts, we sent out *as tracts* large numbers of WATCH TOWERS to good addresses. We request that no addressed wrappers be sent us for either tracts or WATCH TOWERS except such as are known to you in some way to represent intelligent and religiously inclined people. It is only a waste of money and labor to cast the pearls of truth before those who are swinish; whose god is their belly or their apparel or their pocket book.

THE CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT

What blessed opportunities God has provided for his people at the present time! What an opportunity it affords for all of his dear children to have fellowship and communion! In this manner, as well as through the printed page, those afar as well as those nearby may have the privilege of complying with the Apostle's words, to forget not the "assembling" of ourselves together, and so much the more as we see the day drawing on. (Heb. 10:25) Many letters assure us of the blessings which the wonderful mail service of our day has brought to them; and on our part we can testify that great blessings and encouragement have come to us through this same channel. While some of the letters received are cold and business-like, and others bitterly antagonistic, others, and the majority, are laden with rich perfume of Christian love, sympathy and deep appreciation of present truth. Through these we are kept in touch with the spirit of the Lord's dear flock in all parts of the world; and we can assure you that the touch is profitable to us, as we trust that our responses are profitable to you, and comforting and helpful.

As the work in general has grown, so this feature of it has expanded, so that the figures below are far in advance of those in any previous year in our history:

Letters and postal cards received during the year	37,357
Letters and postal cards sent out	38,609

CONDENSED STATEMENT

Copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN circulated at cost	100,643
Copies of booklets circulated at cost	40,370
Circulated at Expense to Tract Fund	
Copies of ZION'S WATCH TOWER	1,247,960
Copies of *Old Theology Tracts*	1,468,990
These amounts expressed in the usual form represent in tract pages	131,891,340.

Whenever figures get into the millions they are quite beyond the average mind to comprehend. We have therefore estimated the matter in pounds,—206,710 pounds, or over one hundred and three and a half tons, weight.

THE FINANCIAL SIDE—TREASURER'S REPORT

Tract Fund Expenditure

Cost of the above 103½ tons matter, including freight, postage, gas, help, etc.	$18,350.21
Pilgrim Expenses, etc	3,357.59
Total	$21,707.80

Tract Fund Receipts

Balance on hand Dec. 1, 1899	$ 871.54	
From "Good Hopes" Donations	13,337.72	
From Other Sources	4,472.63	$18,681.89
Shortage		$ 3,025.91

THE BLESSED PRIVILEGE OF THIS SERVICE

The Editor (who is President of the Society), in closing this last report of the century, congratulates all the dear friends of the cause upon the above showing, and trust that it will more than meet the expectations of all who contributed to the funds thus scattered as leaves of spiritual healing all over the civilized world. Especially do we trust that the God of all grace, the Father of mercies, may accept and approve our stewardship—the merit of our Redeemer making good whatever unintentional errors the all-seeing eye may discern.

Do we urge the dear co-laborers to make still greater sacrifices for the work in the year just beginning? Not at all. We have never solicited in the past, and we do not expect to do so in the future. Even of the Lord we make no requests for money. His will, not ours, be done in this and in all matters. If he through his people or otherwise sees fit to entrust to us financial means, we will endeavor to use the same to his praise, and seek for this the wisdom which cometh from above. We esteem it a *privilege* to have any share in any department of this "harvest" work, and its accompanying blowing of the Jubilee Trumpets proclaiming restitution times at hand. And this joy in the Lord's service is fully appreciated also by the twelve dear "brethren" who, as office assistants, have so ably and so patiently lent their best endeavors to make the work a success; and their efforts under God have contributed largely to the securing of the above results. The Lord will reward them as we can not. "Brethren, pray for us," as your representatives and the Lord's, in this "defense of the truth."

Below we give some interesting figures from two of the Society's foreign branches (the reports from the other two are not yet at hand.) Both of these reports are *included* in the totals given above.

REPORT OF MANAGER OF BRITISH BRANCH
From May 7 to Nov. 15, 1900

LONDON, Nov. 16, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I have the honor to submit the following report of the Tract Fund receipts and expenditures for the British Branch of the Society, May 7-November 15, 1900:—

EXPENDITURES:	£	s	d
Paper and printing	340	14	10
Carriage	55	2	3
Share of expense for labor, etc.	24	10	4
Expenses in Pilgrim work	45	5	9
Total	465	13	2
Receipts from Great Britain	40	11	10
Deficit supplied from Home Office	425	1	4

Report of Literature Circulated

Copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN circulated	3,224
Copies of booklets	667
Tracts sent out free	77,835
Sample WATCH TOWERS sent out free	171,850
Total sent free	249,685
These represent in tract pages	19,189,684
Letters and cards received	1,184
Letters and cards sent out	9,294

The volunteer work has been quite zealously pursued here this year; how much so you may judge by comparison of the amounts distributed in America and here, and reckoning that there are about twenty times as many TOWER readers in America as we have in Great Britain. Volunteer work has been done in 39 cities and towns in Great Britain, and with some encouraging results. More than 50,000 copies were distributed in London.

Tract distribution has also had considerable attention from the friends here, and with such results as to warrant its continuance. To be sure, we must often put tracts in many houses before reaching one which contains persons ready for the truth; but sometimes the one tract in the right place has a very far-reaching influence, as has been indicated in this city, where one tract under a door has thus far reached four persons, on the principle of John 1:41, 45, and is still working.

The colporteur work has not fared so well, not having had so many workers as have been able to participate in the work in other ways; but the few who have had this privilege have been industrious, and have also been permitted to see some fruit of their labors which has caused their and our hearts to rejoice. We are praying and hoping for more laborers in every branch of service, but particularly in the colporteur department, which experience has demonstrated to be by far the most efficient means of reaching "hearing ears" with the truth, as it is also the most practical, being self-sustaining. The experience of those who have engaged in the service of the truth by the colporteur method in Great Britain in the last six months shows that the worker can sustain himself in this service. It is a most attractive opportunity for those who have time to spend in the harvest work, and we shall be glad to hear from many on the subject.

The financial aspect of the work here is presented in the figures foregoing, which plainly tell their own story. It would have been impossible for the British Branch to do as it has done, except for the financial coöperation of the head office to the large amount of $2,000.

We pray daily for ourselves, and for all of God's saints, that we may be plentifully supplied with heavenly wisdom, with strength and grace, for the discharge of each day's duties in such a manner as will redound to the glory of God and the upbuilding of his people. "Brethren, pray for us." Respectfully submitted, Yours faithfully in Christ,

E. C. HENNINGES.

REPORT OF OUR GERMAN WORK

Sister Giesecke reports 448 letters received and 494 letters sent out; 2,899 copies of the German WATCH TOWER circulated as samples, and 10,108 tracts distributed, representing 232,460 pages.

A PERFUME OF SWEET ODOR

MATT. 26:6-16.—JAN. 6.

"She hath done what she could."

Preceding lessons showed us incidents in our Lord's journey toward Jerusalem, via Jericho—the healing of the blind men by the wayside, the conversion of Zacchæus, and the parable of the young nobleman, given because they were nigh unto Jerusalem, and because the disciples and many of the multitude expected that the kingdom of God would immediately be manifested,—set up in earthly grandeur, etc. The distance from Jericho to Jerusalem was only about twenty miles, and Bethany, the home-city of Lazarus (whom our Lord raised from the dead) and his two sisters, Martha and Mary, was quite near to Jerusalem, and with them Jesus decided to spend his last Sabbath-day in the flesh. We may presume that the day was happily spent according to the observance of the Sabbath required by the Jewish law; but the narrative, passing over the events of the day unnoticed, draws special attention to the feast or supper made for our Lord in the evening, after sundown, when the Sabbath was considered ended, and the first day of the week beginning.

This feast was at the house of Simon the leper, yet Simon is not mentioned in connection with the narrative, and it is quite probable that he was then dead. It is conjectured that Simon was either the father of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, or else that Martha was the widow of Simon, and that Lazarus and Mary were younger than she. These items, however, are merely tradition, nothing in the Scriptures throwing any light upon the matter. We remember that on the occasion of a previous visit to this home, our Lord was entertained; and Mary became so absorbed in listening to the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth that for the time she neglected the ordinary affairs of life, until her more practical, but possibly less spiritually-inclined, sister commented upon the fact, which brought forth our Lord's declaration to the effect that while service is quite acceptable and appreciated, veneration and fellowship are still more appreciated—"Mary hath chosen the better part."

The two sisters had the enviable privilege of serving the Lord and ministering to his comfort in the feast of our lesson, just before the agonies which closed his earthly life. As before, so now, the service of the two sisters took somewhat different form, but probably this time by mutual agreement and preärrangement; Martha herself served the table with others assisting, and Mary was left free to render her peculiar service, of which this lesson is a memorial. From some source she had procured a valuable alabaster vase of choice perfume. She had either purchased the vase, and manufactured the perfume herself, at great expense of time, etc., or had spent for its purchase a considerable sum of money. She had anticipated our Lord's coming, and had fully arranged matters so that at this feast she might treat him in a manner in which very few except the worldly great were ever treated;—kings, emperors, etc., were thus anointed with perfume, but very rarely indeed could others afford such a luxury, for the facilities for manufacturing perfume then were quite inferior to what they are now, and even if the perfume were of home manufacture and of fine quality the cost in time, etc., would be great, and the perfume would be so valuable that it was usual to sell it to the very wealthy.

The feast had begun, and Jesus, with the disciples and other guests, were at the table, which, according to eastern custom, was long and narrow, the guests not sitting upon chairs, but reclining full length upon couches or divans, with the head extending over the table, and the feet extending back to the rear, the weight of the shoulders poised upon the left elbow, while the right hand was used in partaking of the food.

While Martha and her associates were serving, Mary came forward and, breaking the seal upon her alabaster vase, she began to pour the precious perfume upon our Lord's head, and subsequently, as John's record of the matters informs us, going to our Lord's feet she poured some of it upon them, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Mary's affection for our Lord was so deep and so strong that it could not be satisfied with any of the ordinary methods of expression. If the kings of earth were perfumed and anointed, much more did she esteem it fitting that her friend, her Lord, the Messiah, should be anointed with the best that she could procure for him. Her love was so intense that it knew no economy—nothing could be too good for her Beloved. She would give expression to the rich sentiments of her heart by giving him the finest and most costly of sweet natural odors. Our Lord appreciated the matter fully—the sweet odor of the heart which prompted the act, still more than the sweet odors which filled the entire house.

But the disciples, more selfish and less able to appreciate Mary's true sentiments, and the propriety of their expression in this form, found fault with her, and the records show that their leader and mouthpiece, who incited the fault-finding spirit amongst the others, was Judas, the treasurer of the little company, whose disappointment was great that the value of this ointment did not find its way into his money-bag, and thus a part of it, at least, to his own private uses; for we are told, "He was a thief, and carried the bag." His objection seems to favor the thought that Mary may have prepared the perfume herself, for he does not object to its having been *purchased* for a large sum, but that it might have been *sold* for three hundred pence. (Mark 14:5) Estimating the value at 300 Roman pence, or *denarii*, worth about 16 cents each, the value of the ointment would be about forty-eight dollars, but much more than this amount would be represented in today's values; for we are to remember that a *denarius* represented a workman's wages for a day, and hence that 300 *denarii* would practically represent a workman's wages for a year. It was indeed an extravagant action, but it represented an extravagant love, and was expended upon one whom God and the angels delighted to honor, and whom Mary seems to have appreciated much more nearly at his true value than did his other associates of the hour.

Beloved Mary! We can, perhaps, imagine to some extent the emotions which filled her heart as she prepared this costly expression of her devotion, the sentiment of which she hoped others would appreciate. But now, on the contrary, she beholds the "indignation" of her friends and guests, the Master's nearest companions; and her heart sinks within her as she fears that the Lord himself will view the matter in a similar light, and reject and disapprove her libation. What a load is lifted from her heart, when she hears our Lord pronouncing her work a noble deed, and reproving his disciples for lack of sympathy in her sentiment, telling them that this perfuming of his body was in preparation for his burial. It was probably in the midst of this discussion of the matter between Jesus and the apostles that Mary, having anointed his head with the perfume, went to his feet, and began anointing them also, wiping them with her hair, as an evidence that the most precious thing of her personal adornment was gladly at the service of her Lord.

Probably Mary had no thought of perfuming our Lord's body for burial, and his words to this effect would be as astonishing to her as to the others who heard them. It was customary with the ancients, to spend considerable care and money upon the persons of their dead in preparing them for burial; sweet spices and perfumes, etc., were lavishly bestowed, just as today it is the custom to provide handsome caskets and many and expensive flowers and fine monuments, as expressive of the love and appreciation in which the dead are held by their friends. In Mary's conduct in the pouring of the precious perfume upon the Saviour while he was yet living, we have a most excellent suggestion in respect to the proper course to be pursued toward those we love. It is far far better that we should unstop our alabaster vases of perfume, and pour them upon the heads and upon the weary feet of our friends, while still they live, than that we should wait until they have expired, and then give our attention to the cold, inanimate and unappreciative corpse. Our alabaster boxes are our hearts, which should be full of the richest and sweetest perfumes of good wishes, kindness and love toward all, but especially toward the Christ—toward the Head of Christ, our Lord Jesus, and toward all the members of his body, the church; and especially on our part toward the feet members who are now with us, and on whom we now have the privilege of pouring out the sweet odors of love and devotion in the name of the Lord, and because we are his. The poet writes:

"How oft we, careless, wait till life's sweet activities are past,
And break our 'alabaster box of ointment' at the very last!
O, let us heed the living friend, who walks with us life's common ways,
Watching our eyes for looks of love, and hungering for a word of praise!"

The heart of each truly consecrated child of God is like the alabaster vase,—a receptacle for the holy Spirit, the spirit of love, the choicest perfume and most precious to the Lord and to men. It is expensive, because it cannot be gathered rapidly, but requires patient perseverance in well-doing to be "filled with all the fulness of God." Again, it is like Mary's vase in that it gives forth its odor not before, but after the seal is broken and the contents poured forth. It differs from hers, however, in the fact that it may be continually poured out and yet its fulness all the while increase.

Our hearts and their holy love are like Mary's vase again, in that they should be poured upon the Lord himself—upon the Head first, but subsequently upon the members of his body, even the humblest, the lowliest, the feet. And this should be our service, even tho it be unappreciated by others, who instead would think that we should pour our love and devotion upon sinners, or upon the poor heathen world. They realize not what abundant opportunities there will be for blessing the heathen world in the future, in the Millennial age, which God has set apart for their blessing, and in which his disciples will have abundant opportunity for co-working with him in the general uplifting of the world of mankind. Those who upbraid us for pouring out our heart-treasures upon the members of Christ, the church, do so through ignorance, and if at times it has caused some discouragement to us, let us hearken to the words of the Master, declaring that such is a noble course that has his approval, and that it is proper as a prelude to the burial of the entire church, the body;—that it will be appropriate that this shall be done to the church rather than for the poor world, up to the time when the church shall have finished the earthly pilgrimage;—up to the time when the sufferings of Christ having been fulfilled there shall be no longer opportunity to bless and refresh and comfort the body of Christ, respecting whom our Lord declares that what is done to them is done to him.—Matt. 25:40.

So then, let the Marthas serve the Lord in one way, and the Marys pour out their most precious spikenard perfume, assured that neither service will be forgotten; for both are told and have been told for eighteen centuries, as memorials to their praise, testimonies of their love, which the Lord appreciated and accepted, however they were viewed by others.

OPPOSITION FROM SELFISH HEARTS

In this connection it is well to notice sharply that the one who made the greatest ado on behalf of the poor, and who objected most to Mary's expression of her devotion, was the thief and murderer, Judas. And the principle, to a considerable extent, seems to hold good all down throughout this Gospel age: that those who make the greatest outcry on behalf of mission work and in opposition to the expenditure of costly time in the anointing and blessing of the consecrated members of the body of Christ, are not always those who have the interests of the heathen exclusively at heart, but are frequently those who have an "axe to grind," a selfish interest in some way to serve. And not infrequently these hypocrites mislead others of the Lord's dear people, who are thoroughly conscientious, even as Judas, by his sophistry, for a time mislead the other apostles into indignation against Mary for the doing of the very thing which was pleasing to the Lord, and on account of which he decreed that wherever this Gospel should be preached her conduct should be mentioned as a memorial.

And so it is today: this Gospel is preached in more than 350 languages—to every important nation in the world. But we presume that it was not merely Mary that our Lord wished to memoralize, but especially her deed: he wished that all who should know the good tidings should know also of his appreciation of such devotion to him, to his body, and that the more it costs us the more he appreciates it. In view of this, let each one who would be pleasing in the Lord's sight seek continually to pour the perfume from his heart and life upon other members of the body of Christ, and let him realize that in so doing he will not only be pleasing to the Lord, but will be receiving also a blessing himself; for as no alabaster vase could pour forth perfume upon others without itself being thoroughly involved in the perfume, so our hearts, as they pour forth upon others of the members of the body the sweet perfume of love and devotion to the Lord and his cause, will be sure to bring a blessing to ourselves, even in the present life—our Lord's approval and benediction now and everlastingly.

Some of the methods employed in connection with present endeavor to anoint the members of the Lord's "body" for burial,—with the perfume of his truth and grace—call down the condemnation of fellow-disciples. As for instance, the expenditure of time, energy, and large sums of money this present year in the "volunteer" work has been, and will be misunderstood by many of the Lord's dear children,—and be *bitterly* reproved by those who are of the Judas stripe. Yet realizing the Lord's approval we have quite sufficient to make our cup of joy overflow. Fellow-disciples tell us that we should not be handing the meat in due season to the household of faith, but to sinners; that we should not be seeking to anoint the saints with the sweet perfume of present truth, but should, on the contrary, be going to the outcasts of society, engaging in slum-work or in foreign-mission work. The real difficulty with the Judas class, however, is that they fear that the circulation of the truth amongst the Lord's people would cut off the revenue which otherwise might flow into their coffers: they fear the loss of numbers and influence in sectarianism. But their fears are largely imaginary; for the perfume of the truth is only designed to fall upon "the members of the body of Christ," and our expectations are that the Lord will guide it to these, and that to others it will be of no effect. And since the members of the body of Christ, the consecrated ones, are so few, their anointing and their separation from Babylon, and their burial, will be comparatively unnoticed so far as numbers are concerned,—tho their taking away as the "salt" and the "light" of those systems, will indeed be a serious loss, conspiring to their downfall in the great time of trouble approaching.—Matt. 5:13, 14.

Let us not forget to note clearly and distinctly the wide difference between love and selfishness, as exemplified in the opposite courses of Mary and Judas. Mary, full of burning devotion, was willing to sacrifice much to honor, comfort and please her Lord. Judas not only was unwilling to sacrifice on his behalf, but on the contrary was willing to sell him to his enemies for thirty shekels—the price of a slave. Not only so, but the devotion of the one seemed not to impress the other favorably, but rather the reverse; the devotion of Mary, and our Lord's approval of it, seem to have aroused the opposite spirit in Judas, for he went straightway to negotiate with the chief priests for our Lord's betrayal into their hands.

It would appear from the Greek text, and the rendering of the same in the Revised Version, that Judas received the money for his work in advance: "They weighed unto him thirty pieces of silver." He completed the contract; he sold himself to work evil, and that against his benefactor, his Lord, of whose power he was fully conversant, and of which, indeed, he had received so abundantly that he himself had been enabled to heal the sick and cast out devils. How strange that any could be so perverse! No doubt he had a way of reasoning the matter to himself which made his crime appear to him less heinous than it does to us. No doubt, also, others who today are willing less directly to sell the Lord for earthly advantages or influence or money find ways of excusing their perfidy; but in proportion as our hearts are loyal and devoted, as was Mary's, in that same proportion will the Judas course appear heinous and impossible to us.

Yet these climaxes of character are not reached suddenly. Mary's love had been growing from the first; it was greatly strengthened by her course in sitting at the Master's feet and receiving from him spiritual nourishment, which our Lord declared to be a still better part or course than that pursued by her sister, tho the latter was not disapproved. Mary's faith and love had been still further increased as she witnessed the Lord's power in various ways, and especially at her brother's awakening from the tomb. She had cultivated this love and appreciation for the Lord until it filled her entire heart, and found its expression in the costly libation which she had just poured upon his head and his feet. Judas, on the other hand, had long been permitting the spirit of selfishness to more and more intrude upon his heart; he had permitted himself to think of what money would do, and had given his thought largely toward its accumulation. It had fettered his soul, so that he was unable to appreciate the Lord's character, even tho he knew him intimately from daily association, so that he was unable to measure anything except from a monetary standpoint. And these bands of selfishness gradually grew so hard and tight about his heart that they squeezed out everything of character, of love, devotion and friendship, and thus gradually he came to be the representative of, and his name the synonym for, the grossest of ingratitude and meanness, selfishness and treachery. One lesson for us here is, to *cultivate* love and the appreciation of whatsoever things are just, good, lovely and pure; and to fight down and eradicate so far as possible (especially from our own hearts and lives) everything selfish, mean, ignoble, dishonorable.

HOSANNA! BLESSED IS HE THAT COMETH!

Matt. 21:1-17.—Jan. 13.

"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

After the feast of our last lesson, the next morning, the first day of the week (our Sunday), our Lord early began his preparations for his triumphal entry into Jerusalem as a King. Altho he well knew that "his own" people would not receive him, but, as he had already testified to his disciples, that he would be put to death by the rulers, and intimated the night before that Mary's anointing was for his burial, it was nevertheless necessary as a part of the divine plan that he should formally offer himself as King to the Jews, and thus fulfill to that people God's promise that his favor should be "to the Jew first."

Our Lord had previously resisted the disposition of some of the people to take him by force and make him King, withdrawing from their midst, etc. (John 6:15); but now the time, the due time, having come, and that to the very hour, he deliberately planned his triumphal procession, instead of, as previously, hindering it. He sent some of his disciples for the ass and colt, manifesting his superhuman power by designating where and how the animals would be found. An ass was used rather than a horse, and tradition tells us that so all the kings of Israel were accustomed to ride to their coronation.

When the animal arrived the disciples and the whole multitude seemed to enter into the spirit of the arrangement; for it would appear that quite a number of those who came up from Jericho, and who had witnessed our Lord's power and teachings *en route* to the Holy City and the Passover, lodged at Bethany over the Sabbath, as he did. These, with the disciples, constituted quite a little band, who began to hail Jesus as the King, and to do him homage, as was customary with notables at that time, by spreading their outer garments in the way for his beast to tread upon; and by plucking grass and flowers, and branches of palm trees and strewing these also in the way.

Jesus, in the honored position, riding at the head, was followed by this multitude on the road toward Jerusalem. Then another multitude from the city, having heard that the great Prophet and Teacher was at Bethany, came forth to see both him and Lazarus, and these, meeting the Lord and the shouting company behind him, turned about and became a vanguard, shouting like the rest, "Hosanna to the Son of David," which meant the King, one of the royal line. They probably were deterred from using the word "king" lest they should bring upon themselves charges of treason against King Herod, and against the Roman empire, which sustained him in power.

It was a grand or a ludicrous triumphal entry into the city of the Great King, according to the standpoint from which it was viewed. From the standpoint of the disciples and the multitude, full of Messianic enthusiasm and hopes that the longed-for blessings upon Israel were about to be realized, and full of faith that this great Prophet, who had the power to raise the dead and heal the sick, could in his own time and way make himself and them invincible against all enemies, and amply fulfill all the glorious things foretold by the prophets—for these it was a grand occasion, a real triumph. For, notwithstanding the fact that Jesus had previously told them repeatedly of his death, and had even reproved Peter for speaking to the contrary, nevertheless his disciples and others seem to have been unable to receive his words in their true meaning, and to have interpreted them merely a part of his "dark sayings" which would undoubtedly later become luminous in some grand significance. This is attested by their language, even after his death and resurrection—"We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel."—Luke 24:21.

From the standpoint of Herod, Pilate, the chief priests and scribes, this triumphal procession was merely the parade of a fanatical leader and his ignorant and fanatical dupes. They saw in it evidently no more than this. King Herod and Pilate evidently had no fear that this despised Nazarene and his company would ever be able to organize and equip an army which would be of any force as against the order of things of which they were the heads. The religious leaders feared merely that the fanaticism might spread in some manner, and bring down upon them the wrath and further oppression of the secular powers, who might make them an excuse for further interference with the liberties of the Jews. Quite evidently none of these chief rulers believed in Jesus as the Messiah sent of God for the fulfilment of the gracious promises of their Scriptures. To this the apostles testify, saying, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers;" "If they had known they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."—Acts 3:17; 1 Cor. 2:8.

That procession was viewed from still another standpoint by our Lord himself and by the invisible multitude of angels, ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation. These joined in the enthusiasm of the multitude, but from a totally different standpoint—realizing this triumph as merely a part of the divine plan, and merely a prelude to a greater triumph on our Lord's part through the completion of the sacrifice of himself and the attainment thus of "all power in heaven and in earth;" and as a foreshadowing, too, of his coming glory and his triumphal entry upon the kingdom on his return from the far country (heaven) armed with a plenitude of power and authority, to put down sin and to bring all things into subjection to God; and to lift up out of the horrible pit of sin and disease and death all desirous of coming back into full harmony with the Father and the laws of his empire. This, the most glorious standpoint of view of that triumphal march, it is our privilege, by the grace of God, to enjoy; and we may well say in our Lord's words, "Blessed are our eyes, for they see; and our ears, for they hear."

RESPONSIBILITY OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Luke's account of this matter informs us that certain of the Pharisees who were with the multitude at the beginning, altho they could not object to anything which our Lord said or did, complained that he should permit his disciples and others of the multitude to hail him as a King, shouting Hosanna! (Salvation, Blessing, Praise!) Then it was that Jesus, knowing of the prophecy bearing upon this subject (Zech. 9:9), not only refused to rebuke the disciples and hinder their acclaims, but informed the Pharisees that since God himself, through the Prophet, had said, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem," therefore there must be some shoutings; and that if the people had not arisen to that amount of enthusiasm to give such shoutings, the very stones would have cried out, so that the prophecy should not be unfulfilled.

Tho the distance is quite short to Jerusalem from Bethphage, where the Lord mounted the ass, nevertheless the city was hidden from view by the Mount of Olives, and it was when the Lord had reached the top of Olivet, and the city of Jerusalem came suddenly into view, that he halted the procession and wept over the city, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this, thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes . . . because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." (Luke 19:41-44) From this language it is evident that our Lord did not consider the multitudes who were with him, as in any sense of the word, representing the city and nation; for altho these who were with him were shouting the very words, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah!" our Lord's language indicates that a time is yet to come when the heads of Israel, the chief ones representing the people, shall gladly acknowledge him as King of kings and Lord of lords, at his second advent; but in the meantime their failure to recognize the time of their visitation meant to them a great loss of privilege; meant to them that their house must be left desolate, abandoned of the Lord during this Gospel age, during which he would gather from amongst the Gentiles a sufficient number to complete the elect number, in conjunction with the faithful ones of Israel, the remnant who had or would receive him.—See Matt. 23:39.

The objective point of this triumphal march was the Holy City, the capital city, the City of the Great King. But our Lord did not go to Herod's palace, to demand possession of it; nor to Pilate's palace, to demand recognition of him; but as the representative of Jehovah, as the Messiah, sent of God to be the Saviour of Israel and the world, he went appropriately to the Father's house or palace—to the Temple.

JESUS EXERCISING KINGLY AUTHORITY

The scene in the Temple must have been a peculiar one. It was undoubtedly crowded with pilgrims from all parts of the civilized world, who at this season of the year came, to the number of hundreds of thousands, to worship the Lord and to observe the Passover, according to the Law. Probably many of them had heard something about Jesus of Nazareth, "mighty in word and deed." Many of them had been healed by him, or had friends who were thus blessed; and we can well imagine the commotion created by the multitudes coming with Jesus and crying, "Hosanna in the highest," etc. The Pharisees, scribes and chief priests, who were used to dominate the people in religious matters, and especially in the Temple, altho filled with anger against Jesus, recognized themselves powerless to do him injury under the circumstances, for he was doing nothing contrary in any sense of the word to the Law, and this would be manifest to all. On the contrary, as tho to show that he was only doing what was in his power, our Lord began to exercise it as would be befitting a spiritual King—by reproving those who were violating the holy Temple and its precincts, driving out of it those who sold doves for offerings, and the money changers, who were reaping a profitable harvest from the necessities of the worshipers from a distance, whose money, not being Jewish, could not be accepted at the Temple, and which they must therefore have exchanged at a loss—the profit of the money changers. We are not to understand that our Lord was interfering with the proper laws of the land nor of the Temple—he was in every sense law-abiding. On the contrary, he was thoroughly authorized, as was any Jew, under the directions of the law, to use so much force as was necessary in the maintenance of the sanctity of the Temple.

DIVINE FAVOR DEPARTED FROM ISRAEL

Blind and lame people came to our Lord in the Temple and were relieved of their infirmities, and then he taught the people—continuing the healing and the teaching for several days, returning at nights to Bethany and coming the next morning to the Temple, but without any further demonstration, as a King, for that one demonstration had served the purpose intended. It had given to the officials of the city and nation the opportunity to formally accept him as king, but their contrary spirit is shown by their coming to him while the children in the Temple courts were crying "Hosanna!" requesting that he should put a stop to the matter; but our Lord answered them, quoting from the Scriptures that this was in harmony with the divine plan: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." The worldly-wise did not appreciate this, and were blinded by self-interest; but little children, and especially those who in simplicity of heart and meekness became like little children, should be the instruments the Lord would use in shouting his praises.

Many of our Lord's parables and special teachings were uttered during those days in the Temple, between his triumphal entry and presentation on the tenth day of the month Nisan and his crucifixion on the fourteenth, as the Passover Lamb. (See Exod. 12:3, 6) These parables, etc., are recorded in Matthew, chapters 23-25; in Mark, chapters 11-13, and in John, chapters 12-16. Among other things he declared that the favor of God was, there and then, taken from fleshly Israel, saying:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!"—Matt. 23:37-39.

TYPICAL NATURE OF OUR LORD'S ACTS

In considering the best lessons we at the present time can draw from these incidents, we suggest that their typical feature be not forgotten—that all shall remember that the events in the close of our Lord's ministry, and everything pertaining to the rejection and dissolution of the fleshly house of Israel, is typical and illustrative of the things which are to be expected to transpire in the present time, in the end of the Gospel age—in the rejection and dissolution of nominal Israel of today, "Babylon." As already shown in MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. II., page 235, the time which corresponded to the Lord's formal offering of himself to fleshly Israel and his rejection was the year 1878. There nominal spiritual Israel was rejected, as previously the first or fleshly house had been rejected; yet in both cases all Israelites indeed receive him and receive corresponding blessings at his hand.

It is since this date (1878) we understand that our Lord has been in his spiritual temple, the true church, teaching in an *especial manner* all those who have an ear to hear, opening the blinded eyes and helping those who are spiritually lame to walk in his ways. It is since that time that all who belong to the temple class of true worshipers are permitted to hear and see wonderful things out of the divine Word; and it is during this time also that the Lord is casting out of his temple all those who make merchandise of the truth, and who are not true worshipers—the money-changers and dove-sellers, etc.; and it is during this time that out of the mouth of babes and sucklings the truth is being proclaimed so often to the offense of the scribes and Pharisees of today.

Shortly, the last members of the body of Christ, the feet, already being anointed for burial with the sweet odors of the truth, will complete their sacrifice; shortly, the first resurrection will be complete and all the members of the body of Christ be glorified together with him; and then, the sufferings of Christ being ended, the glory will speedily follow. But meantime, before the glory is revealed, there will come a great time of trouble, symbolically a time of fire (trouble) and smoke (confusion) upon the world, and especially upon rejected "Babylon," and all who do not escape from her before the great tribulation comes, even as similar fiery vengeance came upon Israel after the flesh, and all who had not escaped from her.—Luke 3:16, 17; Matt. 13:38-43.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

DUTY TO THE HEAVENLY AND TO THE EARTHLY HUSBAND

Question.—I am the wife of a minister in one of the denominations. I have been studying the truth for now several years, and feel convinced that the WATCH TOWER publications represent the true Gospel. I desire to be faithful to my Lord, no matter what the consequences; but I am in a measure of perplexity to know just what my duty is. As the minister's wife I am, of course, a member of the church; I am the organist for the congregation, and a teacher in the Sunday School. My question is, Should I, or should I not, come out of Babylon—withdraw from worship and coöperation in that which I believe is in many important respects a misrepresentation of the Gospel—of God's truth and character?

I do not wish to weigh earthly interests so far as I am myself concerned, being quite willing to suffer whatever the Lord's providence may permit. My hesitation is more on account of others who would necessarily suffer with me. My husband, who would undoubtedly lose his position and its small salary, is not in sympathy with the truth; my best efforts to awaken his interest in it having proved unavailing. He would suffer, and our two children would suffer, as well as myself; and my query is—To what extent is it right for me to involve others? And what would be the proper course for me to take that would be pleasing to our Lord?

Answer.—Yours is a peculiar case, dear sister. We will suggest what we would consider to be the Lord's will in the matter, and give the reasons, and then leave it for your own conscience to decide upon. It is your duty to do what *you understand* to be the Lord's will, according to the best light which *you* possess or can obtain.

First then, we advise that you explain the whole situation fully and frankly to your husband, and tender to him, as the minister and representative of the congregation, a letter requesting that your name be stricken from the list, etc.,—one of the printed letters which we supply free would answer this purpose. Your husband, as the representative of the congregation, can, if he choose, erase your name from the roll. You may request him to make the matter public, but he will not be bound to follow your request, and under your peculiar circumstances we advise (differently from usual) that you do not send the Withdrawal Letters to all the members of the congregation unless your husband is willing. Leave the responsibility with him.

As for the teaching of a class in the Sunday School, we advise that you continue it, especially if it be a class of adult scholars—teaching, however, not any sectarian theory, but the true theology of the Bible. Let your husband, as the pastor of the church, know that it is the only condition upon which it would be possible for you to retain your class. As for the playing of the organ, we recommend that you continue it also, explaining, however, to your husband your objection to certain false hymn-book theology, that you believe to be contrary to the Scriptures, and requesting that if he desire you to continue to be the organist he will give you some little liberty and consideration in the matter of the selection of the hymns. But we advise that you be not too particular, not hypercritical, in this matter. We reason that God's people are justified in praising God with any words from which it would be *possible to take* a proper thought—even tho others might from the same words take an improper thought.

Our reasons for advising in this case differently from what we would ordinarily are two-fold: (1) Your husband is nominally, and perhaps really, a Christian, and hence it would be proper for you to render some deference to his judgment in any matter not compromising your own conscience—as, for instance, along the lines above suggested.

(2) There is a little difference between the position of a husband and of a wife in such a matter: the wife may throw some responsibility upon the husband, but the husband could throw no responsibility upon the wife. We are not under the law, but nevertheless the law in a shadowy way gives to us some conception of the Lord's view of matters; as for instance, see Leviticus 30. Your husband was aware of your vow unto the Lord whereby you consecrated your all to him, and made no dissent thereto. It would appear, therefore, that he could not in any way interfere with the proper liberty of your conscience without doing violence to his own.

"WHO ONLY HATH IMMORTALITY"—WHO?

Question.—How should we understand 1 Tim. 6:14-16? Is it the Father or the Son who is referred to as the "King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto," etc.?

Answer.—We understand that the Apostle here refers to our Lord Jesus. Our reasons for so concluding are as follows:

(1) While immortality belongs exclusively to the divine nature, we are to remember that the Apostle Paul declares that the entire church is called to "glory, honor and immortality," and the Apostle Peter says that God has given us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these "we might become partakers of the divine nature." This implies, therefore, that the church of God is to possess this divine attribute of immortality or deathlessness. But only our Lord Jesus had yet been made partaker of this quality at the time of the Apostle's writing. The church, his body, would not be thus honored and glorified until their due time, in the first resurrection, when they shall be like him, sharing his divine nature, glory, honor and immortality, etc.

(2) That our Lord Jesus already possessed this *divine nature*, and therefore possessed immortality at the time of the Apostle's writing, is fully attested by the Scriptures, which assure us that "as the Father hath *life in himself*, so hath he given to the Son to have *life in himself*." This describes immortality, for no other conditon of life is inherent life; all other conditions are derived or imparted life. The statement here that our Lord will give this same inherent life to his followers, is in agreement with the Apostle's assurance that all who have part in the first resurrection are raised in incorruption, in immortality (1 Cor. 15:52, 53); and remember that our Lord's resurrection was the beginning of this first resurrection, and that it could have meant no less to him, the Head, than it is by and by to signify to the members of his body. We are to remember the same Apostle's declaration that our Lord Jesus' resurrection was as a "first-fruits;" that thus he became the "first-born among many brethren." We are to remember also that the Apostle, in harmony with the above, expressed the desire that he might have a share in "*his* resurrection," "*the* resurrection," "the *first* resurrection," in which all the overcomers are to share.—Phil. 3:10, 11; 1 Cor. 15:20; James 1:18.

(3) If, therefore, sharing in "*his* resurrection" is to bring his faithful members to immortality, our Lord's own resurrection can have been to no inferior condition. Hence, to apply the text in question to the heavenly Father would not be consistent with the testimony of Scripture, that the heavenly Son possessed immortality at the time as well as the heavenly Father.

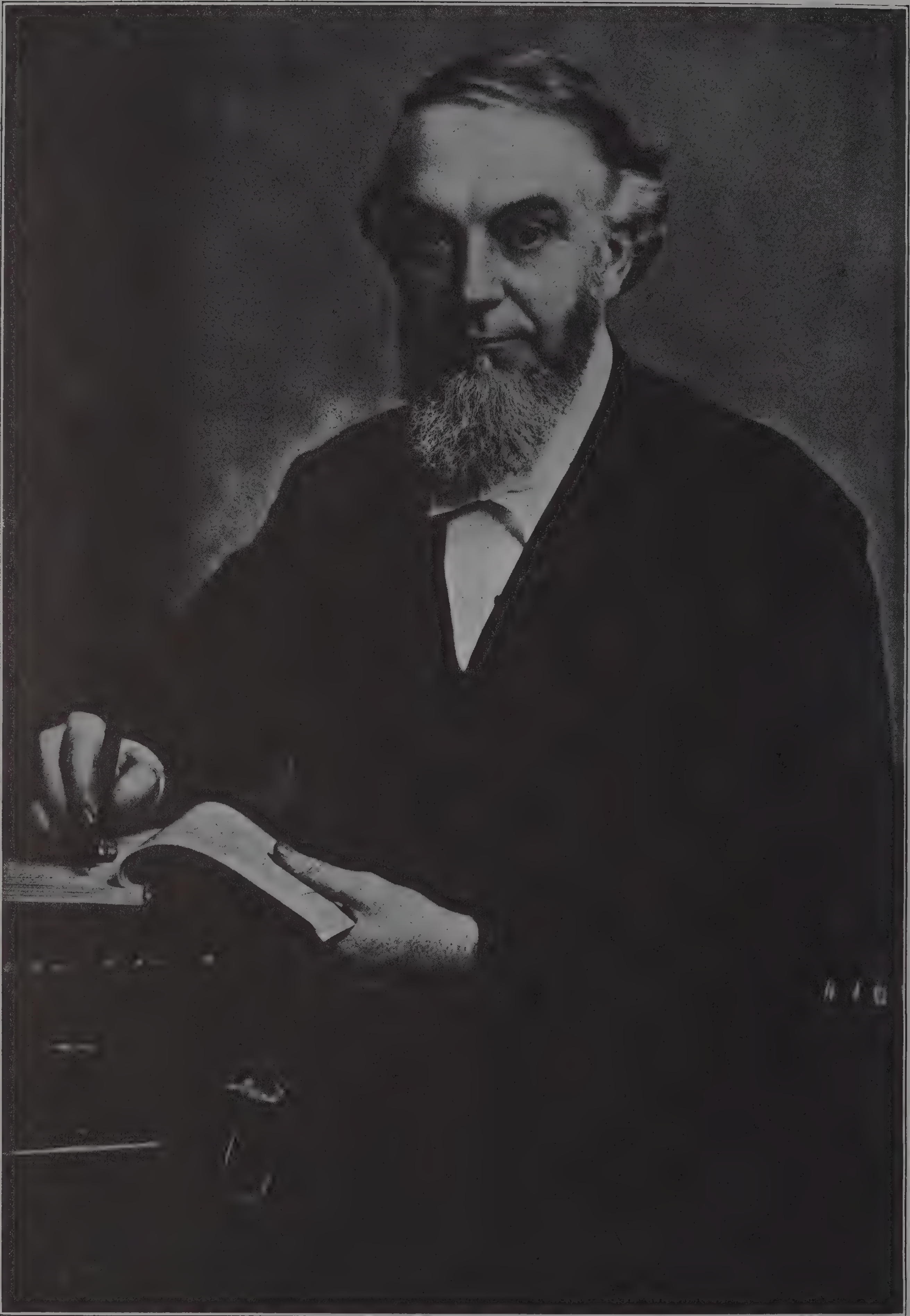
(4) That the passage in question relates to our Lord Jesus and designates him the only Potentate, King and Lord, does not imply any disregard or disrespect of the heavenly Father and his attributes, kingship, etc., as the same writer (St. Paul) elsewhere points out. When speaking in similar strain about Christ's kingdom and the subjugation of all things under him, he says, "It is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him." In other words, comparisons which show dignity and honor pertaining to Christ, Head or body, are never understood to be comparisons with Jehovah, who is beyond all comparison.—See 1 Cor. 15:27, 28.

(5) The correctness of this application is further attested by our Lord's own application to himself of the same titles. —See Rev. 17:14 and 19:16.

(6) The Apostle's entire discourse is along the line of showing the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus, his humility and high exaltation, and how servants and all of us should be likewise humble and lowly and faithful to the truth as servants of God, and in due time be exalted—manifested to the world —in glory, honor and immortality in the kingdom.

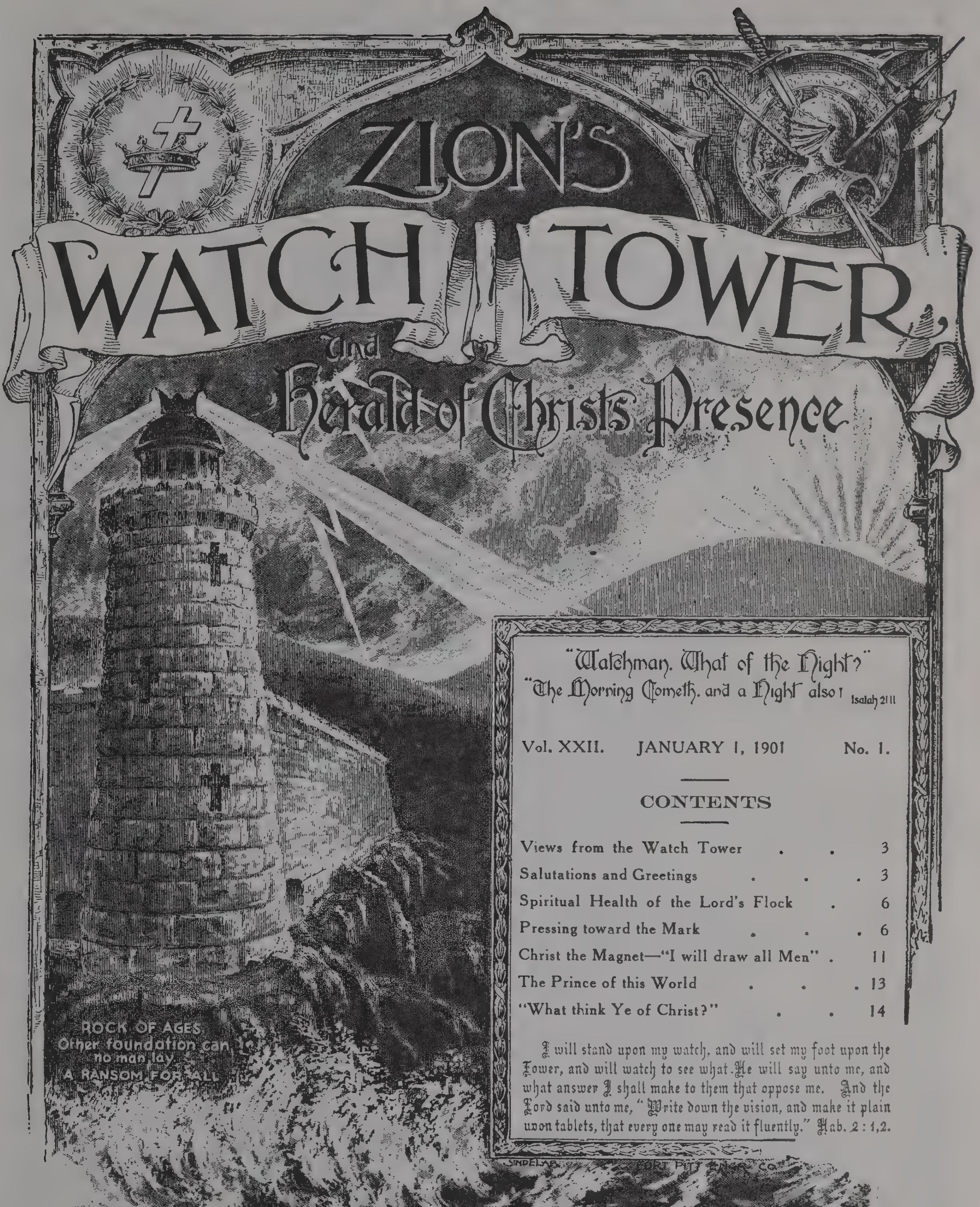
HOME EMBELLISHMENTS

The mention, in our Nov. 15 issue, of the motto and text cards for home decoration brought us a flood of orders, for which we were only partially prepared. More mottoes are on their way to us from London, and all orders will be filled as quickly as possible. We are glad to think that these good words, meeting the eyes of your families, will continually exercise a silent yet potent influence for good. All orders will be filled soon as possible.



PASTOR RUSSELL AT 50 AS HE APPEARED IN 1902

ZION'S WATCH TOWER and Herald of Christ's Presence



"Watchman, What of the Night?"
"The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!" Isaiah 21:11

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I will stand upon my watch, and will set my foot upon the Tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them that oppose me. And the Lord said unto me, "Write down the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that every one may read it fluently." Hab. 2:1,2.

Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking forward to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken. . . . When ye see these things come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Luke 21:25–28–31.

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS MISSION

THIS journal is set for the defence of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated,—Redemption through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a *ransom* [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all." (1 Pet. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:6). Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to—"Make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which . . . has been hid in God, . . . to the intent that now might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God"—"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed."—Eph. 3:5-9, 10.

It stands free from all parties, sects and creeds of men, while it seeks more and more to bring its every utterance into fullest subjection to the will of God in Christ, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures. It is thus free to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken;—according to the divine wisdom granted unto us, to understand. Its attitude is not dogmatical, but confident; for we know whereof we affirm, treading with implicit faith upon the sure promises of God. It is held as a trust, to be used only in his service; hence our decisions relative to what may and what may not appear in its columns must be according to our judgment of his good pleasure, the teaching of his Word, for the upbuilding of his people in grace and knowledge. And we not only invite but urge our readers to prove all its utterances by the infallible Word to which reference is constantly made, to facilitate such testing.

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His Workmanship;" that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping and polishing, of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones," "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8.

That the Basis of Hope, for the Church and the World, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for *every* man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth *every man that cometh into the world*," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

That the Hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests of the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope for the World lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to *all* by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be *destroyed*.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35.

CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Editor.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS
——ADDRESS TO——
WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY
"BIBLE HOUSE," 610, 612, 614 ARCH ST., ALLEGHENY, PA., U. S. A.
SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, $1.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE
MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, N. Y. DRAFT, MONEY ORDER, OR REGISTERED FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:—

Those of the *interested* who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity or adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER will be supplied FREE, if they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list continually.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER AT ALLEGHENY, PA., POST OFFICE

BRITISH BRANCH NO. 131 GIPSY LANE, FOREST GATE
LONDON EAST, ENGLAND

PLEASE ACCEPT OUR THANKS FOR YOUR KIND LETTERS

It rejoices us greatly to hear from so many of you. We received 1856 letters and cards during the last week of 1900. Please accept WATCH TOWER articles as our replies. We send postal card or letter receipts for all *Money Orders*, etc., received: so if you do not receive such acknowledgement within two weeks apply for a duplicate Money Order and repeat letter-order.

A WORD ABOUT CREDITS

We are quite willing to give reasonable credits on our own publications, but cannot do this on other books—Bibles, etc. Please therefore do not order the latter until you can send the money. We supply Bibles at cost, merely for your accommodation, and we must pay cash to secure them at low rates.

NO DATE TAGS ON TOWER WRAPPERS

Last year we adopted a new method of addressing the WATCH TOWERS which does not show date when subscription expires. Instead we now send a *postal card receipt* at once on receipt of the money.

ABOUT RENEWING YOUR Z. W. T. SUBSCRIPTION

We want all *interested* in "present truth" on our lists, that thus they may share with us the spiritual food now being dispensed by our present Lord. We do not *urge* you to renew, tho we will be glad to have you continue with us: all we feel it proper to do is to make our *terms so reasonable* as to leave no valid excuse for any to go without this spiritual food if he has an appetite for it. If you cannot conveniently send the cash you may have it on credit, and should you never be able to pay you can have the debt canceled upon request.

ABOUT "PILGRIM" CALLS

We find to our joy that the Pilgrim visits are greatly enjoyed by the friends of the truth:—the limited responses to our previous notice being the result of misunderstandings. Some presumed that our inquiry was for places where a "Pilgrim" had never yet stopped and who desired one. Others thought we meant to send the "Pilgrim" at once and direct from Allegheny, and thought the distance and expense too great to ask. Now they understand that our method is to make out *routes* in advance and that we wanted to know where the "Pilgrim" visits are most appreciated in order to specially include such places in those routes. We have many responses. Some are from very remote places not likely ever to be reached: and yet some have already been reached of which at first we had the same thought. We will do our best to serve all.

ALLEGHENY CHURCH MEETINGS

Preaching and divine worship every Sunday afternoon in Bible House chapel, No. 610 Arch street, at 3 P. M.

Cottage meetings for prayer and testimony on Wednesday evenings; and Dawn Circles for Bible Study on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings—various localities, Pittsburg and vicinity—inquire at WATCH TOWER office.

DO YOU INVITE A CONTINUANCE OF THE WATCH TOWER VISITS?

Samples of the WATCH TOWER are sometimes sent unintentionally to those who do not welcome them; but we certainly do not wish to intrude it regularly upon anyone. Hence we desire some expression from every one on our lists once each year: either the subscription price, or a request for its continuance with a suggestion as to when it will be more convenient to send the money, or a request to have it as one of the Lord's *poor*. Or, if you please, say that you dislike it and don't want to see it again.

We think it not unreasonable to ask at least a post-card expression yearly, from each one on our list. And if you will send this sometime in December it will convenience us greatly.

Do not misunderstand us: we have no desire to drop a single name—the poor who cannot pay, but who relish the spiritual food dispensed through these columns, are just as welcome to it as those who pay. Indeed they do pay: for we have a fund provided for this very purpose. Make known to all the *interested* that we *desire* their names on our lists. But they must ask for themselves—unless the person writing for them is a Tract Fund contributor, and at same time requests that these be charged to his donation—which we will be very pleased to do.

ZION'S
WATCH TOWER
and
Herald of Christ's Presence

VOL. XXII ALLEGHENY, PA., JANUARY 1, 1901 No. 1

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

As those living at the close of the first century, on January 1, 101, looked back upon a full hundred years called the first century, and looked forward to a full hundred years called the second century, into which they had just entered, and which would continue until Dec. 31, A. D. 200, so we, on Jan. 1, 1901, look back upon nineteen completed centuries, and look forward into the twentieth, upon which we have just entered.

Few, if any, who read these words ever saw a new century born, and it occurs to us that as the Lord's people, daily and weekly and yearly, turn over new leaves of experience and repeatedly start afresh in their endeavors to copy the great character-pattern set before us by our heavenly Father in Jesus, so, too, we may specially profit by the thought that a new century has dawned, to encourage ourselves in fresh resolves to be and to do more than ever as would be pleasing and acceptable in the sight of our Lord. What more appropriate sentiments could we have than these! How could we hope better to please him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, him who has lifted our feet out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, and set them upon the rock Christ Jesus, and established our goings, and shown unto us the path of life, and made us full of joy with the light of his countenance! The Lord's own expression on the subject is, "If ye love me keep my commandments;" and the Apostle, in the same strain, assures us that we are acceptable children of God if we do those things which please him, and do not find them grievous —if we do them gladly and of a willing heart—rejoicing both to know and to do the good pleasure of our God.

SALUTATIONS, GREETINGS AND GOOD WISHES

We salute with Christian love and recognition all who trust in the precious blood of Jesus, justified by faith in his blood, and reckoned as members of the household of faith the world over—known to us and unknown to us. And even beyond these, we salute with loving sympathy those who yet in darkness are feeling after God, if haply they might find him (Acts 17:27)—who are seeking peace and righteousness, the ways of the Lord. Our best wish for these is that they may find the Lord, and obtain through his grace the peace of God which passeth all understanding, to rule in their hearts and to shed abroad in them the light of the knowledge of his goodness as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.—1 Cor. 4:4.

But especially we salute and greet the brethren in Christ, members of the royal priesthood, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord prospectively;—all those who, having believed in the Redeemer to the remission of their sins and their justification before God, have taken the next step of presenting their bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and their reasonable service. We know and are in communication with a goodly number of these dear "brethren" (Heb. 2:11); yet we doubt not there are many others to whom we are as yet strangers; whom not having known we nevertheless love, knowing well that all who have this spirit of the Head of the church must be indeed members of his Body, and therefore fellow members with ourselves. We wish all such great blessing during the year beginning, and as it is now the harvest-time, in which the great Chief Reaper is gathering together into one barn of safety all the true wheat—as it is now the time when the messengers are gathering together the elect from the four quarters of the heavens (the nominal church) it is our hope that many of these dear brethren may be gathered during this year.—Matt. 24:31; 13:30.

Not gathered into another denomination, with merely a change of name or change of creed or change of form of worship, but gathered to Christ, into oneness with him, in fellowship of spirit through the knowledge of his Word. And we are to expect this gathering to progress more and more, because two influences are at work, both calculated to effect the separation of these brethren from Babylon. (1) The increasing deflection of the nominal church people from the true standard of religion which God has provided, the Bible, into various subversive unbeliefs; *viz.*, into Higher Criticism infidelity, Evolution infidelity, Christian Science infidelity, etc., etc. The further and the more rapidly these leave the Word of God, the greater will be the influence upon the Israelites indeed, who are in heart-union with the Lord, and full of faith in his Word; for they will perceive more and more clearly what they have endeavored heretofore to ignore; *viz.*, that we are in the great day of trial of which the Apostle wrote: "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."—1 Cor. 3:13.

We are in this day of trial, have been in it for over twenty years, and each day brings us nearer to the culmination of testing, and tends to separate more and more widely between those who are really God's people begotten of the holy Spirit, and those who are merely nominal and outwardly his, naming the name of Christ, and drawing nigh with their lips, but in heart are out of sympathy with him and his Word of righteousness.

(2) As this true class is being thus forced out of sympathy with Babylon and the masses of all denominations, they are hungering and thirsting after righteousness—desiring the spiritual food, which the Lord has been meantime preparing for them, and which now, by his grace, is indeed "meat in due season" to all who belong to the true household of faith. Such, having been considerably weaned from the spirit of Babylon, will frequently be found in just that attitude of heart and mind in which the truth will appeal to them quickly and thoroughly, and sometimes accomplish as much in one year as was accomplished with others at an earlier period in several years of study and development.

For these reasons we are expecting great things in the way of progress of the truth in the near future. We believe it the duty, as well as the pleasure, of all who have been enlightened of God through the harvest message, to spread the good tidings abroad,—to hand out to famishing brethren the meat in due season which has so strengthened our own hearts. And this seems to be more and more the Spirit of the Lord's brethren, as they receive of the Lord's grace and truth and become more and more copies of God's dear Son, and have more and more of his spirit of willingness to serve the brethren and as the Apostle suggests are willing to lay down their lives for the brethren (1 John 3:16)—not literally, but day by day and opportunity by opportunity—willing to sacrifice the comforts and advantages which, to the natural man, go to make up the sum of earthly life and happiness. They take pleasure in renouncing earthly privileges and luxuries, and even some of life's comforts, that they may spend the more of their substance and be the more spent themselves in doing good unto all men, especially to the household of faith, and especially in the higher spiritual good things which they have the inestimable privilege of dispensing as servants of our present Lord.—Matt. 24:45.

And since this commendable spirit seems to be growing amongst the dear friends of the truth, everywhere, we may reasonably expect that the coming year will be one of still greater activities and still greater successes in the dispensing of the truth and the bringing of brethren out of darkness into the marvelous light, now shining for all who are the Lord's people. Just how this will be accomplished we do not yet see clearly, but we are encouraged by fresh proposals for the colporteur work and an increasing interest in the volunteer work both at home and abroad. If all of the deeply interested will join us in praying the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers into the harvest work, we may expect, as one result, that all who thus pray will themsleves be granted fresh and larger opportunities of service.

As we consider it not to be the Lord's will that we should beg for money, but merely that we should use as wisely as possible whatever he shall supply, so we feel that it would not be the Lord's will that we should press or urge upon any the matter of service to his cause. We merely call attention to the opportunities for service and the privileges connected with these, and to the advantages and blessings which accrue to those who embrace them. We can, however, speak confidently of a fact that experience has demonstrated, and to which many of our readers could testify, *viz.*, that the Lord specially blesses those who, having received the light of truth, do not put it under a bushel, but let it shine, fearlessly and wisely, to all the household of faith. Many letters indicate that great blessing was received and spiritual progress made during the past year; and these came chiefly from those who have engaged in the volunteer work—preaching the present truth Sunday after Sunday, to those professing to be children of God, by distributing to them literature as they returned home from their churches. So great has been the blessing upon many of these volunteers that they have written to us urging that some kind of literature may be prepared so that they may engage in similar service during the year 1901. One dear sister, who was at first deterred by criticism (from one who should have helped instead of hindered her), declares that nothing she ever did in the Lord's service was so heavy a "cross" at first; but that having taken it up as a service to the Lord and his "brethren" she had received from it more blessing than from any other service ever performed. She and associates have thoroughly distributed the "volunteer" TOWER to the Protestant church attendants of their city and even surrounding towns, and like true soldiers of the cross are waiting and calling for more of the love-and-truth ammunition which, under God's blessing, routing the powers of darkness, from some hearts at least, will deliver "brethren" and bring them into the clear sunlight of grace and truth.

In compliance with these requests and suggestions, and with the belief that this is one of the best ways of reaching the *professed* "household of faith" with the meat in due season, we are preparing for another campaign in this holy war against the enslaving errors which hold so many of our dear brethren captive,—human traditions which both dishonor God and stultify those who in any degree give them allegiance.

We are not seeking to have any engage in this work who do not love the truth, and desire at heart to serve it; for we believe that such service would not be very acceptable to our Lord, the Chief Reaper. But we do seek to encourage all those who have a heart's desire to serve our King, and who know of no better way of engaging in his service, and who have thus far been deterred, and have missed the blessing which goes with it, through fear of man, which bringeth a snare—through shame for the cross and the true Gospel, which are not popular now. We want to assure such that this will be a part of their "overcoming" which will probably help them more than anything else they have ever done to become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might as overcomers of their own weaknesses. It will assist them in making their calling and their election sure, by assisting them in the development of the character of overcomers, to whom the Lord has promised the crown of glory and the heavenly blessings.—Rev. 2:26-29.

All who volunteer in this service during the coming year will be supplied with a booklet, entitled, "Food for Thinking Christians; Our Lord's Return, etc.," a neat, attractive little pamphlet, which, we trust, will feed many hungry brethren and sisters in Babylon, and thus give them strength to follow the Lamb withersoever he goeth. But whether we shall find many hungry ones, and learn of their refreshment with the truth or not, we are sure that those who dispense this food will have the Master's blessing, and that they themselves will become strong by the exercise of their wills, and the bringing of their bodies into subjection in service and sacrifice to the Lord and his cause. And loving you all, and realizing that such a service will be the greatest blessing to you all, we are desirous for this reason alone that so many as wish this service may have the opportunity, and may be encouraged to engage in it; but we are confident that good will be accomplished also for some yet bound in Babylon;—that God will use this means for calling them out.—Rev. 18:4.

We are not urging this as instead of other means of work, as for instance, the colporteur work, and the endeavor to interest friends through special tracts suited to their conditions, etc., etc. What we are suggesting is in addition to the other things. It is a method of preaching the Gospel—the true Gospel, of which no reasonable person need be ashamed. It appeals to all who know of no other way of preaching more likely to be effective in finding and assisting the brethren. While, therefore, we pray the Lord of the harvest for laborers in the vineyard in the colporteur branch of the service, still, we remember that not all of the royal priesthood are so circumstanced in life as to be able to offer their sacrifices in this form. We thank the Lord, therefore, for the opportunity for their engagement in this preaching of the true Gospel through the printed page to church people; and we rejoice especially that in this service almost all of the royal priesthood can find opportunities for self-sacrifice, following closely in the footsteps of Jesus, and rejoicing proportionately as they follow; and proportionately growing stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might, and being made "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

Samples of the new literature mentioned will be sent to each one on our lists, as No. 52 of the OLD THEOLOGY series. We trust it will please you both in contents and in appearance; and we believe that it will be attractive to others who may through its perusal be led to "choose the better part," and to be taught of God, and refreshed in heart by the glorious things he is now dispensing to his faithful. We offer the suggestion therefore, that in every little group of the Lord's people meeting for the study of his Word, this volunteer service be taken up and discussed; and that those who have not yet entered the work shall seek to do so (that they may have a part of the blessing), "while it is called day, for the night cometh wherein no man can work." Appoint one of your number as the captain, and let him bring to his assistance as many lieutenants as he may please to counsel and assist in the division of the work, the appointment of distributors, etc., that the work may be done systematically and thoroughly.

Those who are without companionship and assistance in this work may engage in it, and we will be pleased to hear from them also; but let each little circle, so far as possible, act in harmony in the matter, not all attempting to be directors, but each willing to submit to the will of the majority and to act through whomsoever the majority may appoint the captain of the group. The responsibility falling upon one will be much more likely to be well discharged than if divided amongst many. Those who engaged in the work last year and the year before no doubt have memoranda which will be valuable to them in judging of the quantities of pamphlets needful for this work the coming year. We will be pleased to supply printed blanks useful in the guiding of the various distributors to the places of service to which their captains may appoint them week after week. We are pleased to hear from these captains at the close of each campaign, respecting the number of churches served, the average attendance, etc., and especially respecting any evidences of blessing, either amongst the distributors or on the part of those who receive the literature.

THE SPIRITUAL HEALTH OF THE LORD'S FLOCK

Through our correspondence with the dear friends of the cause throughout the world we, so to speak, have our finger upon their spiritual pulse, and we are glad to inform you all that the indications are that the spiritual condition is good—better than ever before. During the past few years we were impressed with the thought that some of the dear readers of this journal had received more knowledge than they were making use of in their daily lives—that some of them were more interested in the letter of the truth, in the knowledge of God's plan, than in conforming their lives to the Spirit of the truth. In harmony with this conviction we have sought, during the last three years especially, to draw attention to the necessity for receiving not the grace of God in vain, but on the contrary permitting the truth which we so dearly love to work in our hearts both to will right and, so far as possible, to do right—God's good pleasure respecting us.—Phil. 2:13.

Apparently the Lord has blessed these efforts, as no doubt he guided and led toward them. To him we gladly render the praise for the evidences we see through your correspondence that you are appreciating more and more not only the heavenly prize, but also the trials and difficulties which, under divine providence, are intended to develop our characters, and make us copies of our Lord, and thus to prepare us for the kingdom and for the great privileges and work of blessing others through it. It is our desire, and we believe yours also, to still progress in this "narrow way" of self-sacrifice; to still recognize the Lord's hand in all of life's affairs toward "the called ones according to his purpose;" and the advantage of every trial and discipline rightly received; and to still be helpful to all who are in the way, assisting them to put on the armor of God, and to be clothed with all the graces of the spirit, and to be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, that they may tread faithfully this royal way opened up by our Redeemer, walking in his footsteps, until the heavenly kingdom shall have been attained.

We do not mean to say that there are no drawbacks, no difficulties, no discouragements, in any part of the field. Quite to the contrary, there are many such; but these also, interpreted in the light of the divine Word, are encouragements to us, since we know that they are needful. We realize that the Lord himself is pruning his "vine," taking away the branches that will not bear fruit, and that unto perfection, fully ripe. When we say, therefore, that the outlook is encouraging, we mean the broad view of the harvest-field, rather than every little microscopic view of a particular point in it.

We have learned, too, that sometimes matters which seem to be dark clouds and troubles amongst the brethren are really, under divine providence, messengers of blessing, which, rightly received, do good in showing the brethren their own weaknesses and imperfections, and in leading them to seek more and more of the grace of God to overcome these, that they may be filled with all the fulness of God. It is along this line, then, that we congratulate you and bid you be of good courage and continue to press along the line toward the "mark" of perfect character—perfection in love: assured that if faithful we shall ultimately obtain blessings far beyond our present conceptions.

PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:13, 14.

Few in the nominal church see any particular mark or any particular prize with definiteness;—to be sought and to be attained. The majority are merely fleeing from an imagined eternal torment, which pursues them as a fear, a dread, a nightmare, a horror from the cradle to the tomb. Others of the Lord's people (chiefly of "this way") have had the eyes of their understanding illuminated by the holy spirit through the divine Word, and have gotten a glimpse of the great *prize* which God has set before the elect church of this Gospel age. No wonder if these are enthused with the glorious spectacle which (the natural) eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive of, but which "God hath revealed unto us by his spirit!" No wonder, either, if they have given more attention to the prize than to the mark which must be attained ere the prize is won.

Full of enthusiasm and appreciation of divine love, these have entirely lost the fear of eternal torment, and have learned that this doctrine is of Satan, and not of God, from man, and not of the holy Spirit; from the dark ages, and not the teachings of the inspired words of Scripture. They have learned, too, that what scriptures seem to give any color of sanction to this blasphemy against God's character and plan are certain parables, symbols and dark sayings which misinterpretations have more or less glossed and colored in the common translations of the Scriptures.

It is quite common for this latter class to think and to speak of "running for the *prize*," and to measurably lose sight of the fact that it is not the prize that we run toward, but the *mark:* that the prize is entirely beyond our grasp;—as the Apostle expresses it above, "I press toward the mark." Whoever reaches the mark of character which God has established for the elect will receive the prize; and whoever fails to reach that mark of character will fail to get the prize. It is therefore a very serious error to run for the prize and forget or ignore or disregard the "mark," which must be first attained.

The thought that a certain standard or mark of character is necessary to all who will pass divine approval as "overcomers," and hear the Lord's "Well done!" is an astounding one to many. Many have thought of the Christian race as merely an avoidance of open sin; others have included an avoidance of secret faults; others have gone still further, and have included a general disposition to sacrifice many interests of the present life; others have gone still further, and have understood the test of discipleship to be full self-surrender to the Lord, a full sacrifice of earthly life and all of its interests to the will of our Head, the Lord;—but almost none have the thought that all our sacrificings and experiences and self-denials must lead up toward and eventually bring us to the "mark" of character which God has set for the "elect,"—else they will not get the prize of joint-heirship with Christ in the Millennial kingdom. Nothing, probably, has contributed so much to this oversight of a "mark" or fixed standard of character than the false interpretation given to our Lord's conversation with the dying thief on Calvary.*

It is indisputably reasonable, that God has some standard or test by which he will determine who are worthy to receive the great blessings and honors offered to the elect—who are worthy to be members of the body of Christ and to share his Millennial kingdom—what shall constitute *faithfulness* in those who "seek for glory, honor and immortality," and who are "the called and chosen and *faithful.*" The Apostle, in our text, unquestionably declares that there is such a mark, and that all who are running with any hope of attaining the desired prize must be running toward that mark, and must attain it or lose the prize. And we see, too, that the Apostle judges himself according to this standard, and declares that at the time he wrote he had not yet reached this mark or standard of character-development. Such reflections cannot but awaken in the hearts of all who are in this race earnest desires to see distinctly the mark toward which we must run: and it should stimulate each and all of us to run the more patiently and the more perseveringly, and to watch day by day the measure of our progress toward the grand mark which the Lord our God has set before us.

We notice that the Apostle has in mind foot-races, and we see the forcefulness of the illustration: 1) As the racers must enter the race-course in a legitimate manner, so must we get on our race-course in a legitimate manner, through the only door—faith in the precious blood which redeemed us and justified us before God. (2) Those who enter the course must be regularly recorded or registered as runners; they must positively declare their intention, else they will not be in the race. So with us: having been "justified by faith," and having been informed of our privileges in connection with this race, and the attainment of its prize, it was incumbent upon us to declare our intention—to make a covenant with the Lord, and to thus be regularly entered—our names being written, not upon earthly church rolls, but in the Lamb's book of life—"written in heaven."—Heb. 12:23.

With foot-racers there is a prize offered also, but it is not the prize that is hung out to their view while on the race-course; it is not the prize toward which they run, but the mark. There is the quarter-mile mark, the half-mile mark, the three-quarter-mile mark, and the mile mark at the close of the race; and each racer watches for and encourages himself as he passes one or another of these marks by the way, until finally he reaches the last one, the mark for the prize. And this watching of the marks by the way, and reckoning up to the standard, is a great incentive to him—an encouragement as he speeds along, a reminder if he is going slackly. So, too, it is with the Christian runner in the narrow way *toward the mark* of the great prize which God has promised—joint-heirship with his Son, the Lord of glory.

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* See our issue of June 1, 1896, "The Thief in Paradise."

It will encourage us to note the marks on our way, and to perceive our progress—if we are coming nearer and nearer and nearer to "the mark for the prize"—the mark which wins the prize. And if any be careless, indifferent, slack, in his running, nothing could be a greater stimulus to him than the knowledge that only his own carelessness or slackness can lose him the prize.

WHAT IS THIS GREAT "MARK" OF CHARACTER SET BEFORE US BY OUR GOD?

We answer It is stated under various names; as for instance, our Lord Jesus mentioned it when he said, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48) The same mark is mentioned by the Apostle when he says that God predestinated that all who will be of the elect must be "conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom. 8:29) These two statements differ in form, but are the same in substance. The same mark is mentioned again by the Apostle when he says, "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." And again he tells us that "Love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 8:4; 13:10) Here, then, we have an aggregated definition of what constitutes the "mark" of Christian character, in the elect: it is godliness, Christ-likeness, love. The requirement, therefore, would seem to be that the Lord's people, holy and elect, must attain to the same character or disposition of love that God possesses and that was manifested also by our Lord Jesus.

But some one will say, How can we, "who by nature are children of wrath, even as others," ever hope to attain to so high a standard or mark of character as this, that we should love as God loves, as Christ loves? We answer, that we need never hope to attain to this high standard as respects the flesh, for so long as we are in these mortal bodies, and obliged to use their brains, we will necessarily be more or less opposed by the selfishness which through the fall has come to have such complete possession of our race through the mental, moral and physical derangements incidental to six thousand years of depravity.

The attainment of this mark of perfect love is to be an attainment of the heart, of the will—the new will," "begotten, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," through the holy Spirit. Nor do we find, nor should we expect that the new mind would come up to this standard at the beginning of our Christian experience. The new mind, altho inspired of God through the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word, is nevertheless our own will, and more or less circumscribed by its channel and instrument, the human brain. Hence the Apostle informs us that the new mind must constantly fight a battle against the flesh, and that its victory means the death of the flesh—that it cannot be actually perfect until the "change" shall come, by which this newly begotten will shall receive its spiritual body in the first resurrection. But since the receiving of a spiritual body in the first resurrection will be the receiving of the prize, we see that the race toward the mark and the attainment of that mark must be made by the new mind while it is still in this mortal body or "earthen vessel."—2 Cor. 5:2-4.

In a word, the new mind must grow, must develop. As the Apostle exhorts, we, as new creatures, must grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of God—the growth here corresponding to the running in the figure under consideration. We must run or press nearer and nearer to the mark day by day, week by week, year by year, until it shall be attained, —if we would gain the prize. Nor is it merely a question of time, for we all know some who have been a long time in the race and have made comparatively little progress in the cultivation of the gifts of the Spirit, the sum of which is comprehended in the one word, perfect love—the mark.

And we probably all know some others who have been a comparatively short time in the narrow way who have made great progress,—going from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, from glory to glory—rapidly nearing the mark. And we know some who, so far as human judgment can discern, have reached the mark; but of these more anon.

That we may clearly comprehend this subject, let us notice how small were the beginnings of this grace of love in our hearts; and let us hope that many, as they trace the matter here, and compare it with their own experiences, will be able to find large developments in their own characters—that they have passed one after another of the quarter-mile marks in the way, and that they are rapidly nearing, if they have not already reached, "the mark of the prize."

(1) The beginning of our experience as Christians the Apostle expresses, saying, it was not that we first loved God, but that "he first loved us"—that attracted us to him. (1 John 4:19) A sense of justice told us that since God had so loved us as to redeem us at so great a cost, and to provide for us so great salvation, it would be as little as we could do—it would be *our duty* to love and serve him in return. This beginning of love we will designate as *duty-love*. It lacked in many respects qualities which now permeate our love for God, which is of a higher, a more advanced character, because we have grown in grace, and in knowledge, and in love. The Apostle seems to speak again of this same duty-love, when he says, "The love of Christ *constraineth* us [draws out our love in return]; for we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead [under divine sentence, the curse]; and that we who live [who have been justified to life through faith in Jesus' redemption] *should* henceforth live not unto ourselves but unto him who died for us." (2 Cor. 5:14, 15) Here again it is the "*should*"-love or duty-love, —the first, the crudest, the simplest development of our love toward God, our starting-point in the race toward perfect love.

(2) After we had exercised the duty-love and sought to obey God, not only in the avoidance of sin, but also in sacrificing our earthly interests and rights for his sake and the truth's sake, in obedience to his will—in obedience to duty-love—we began to find in our hearts an appreciation of the principles of righteousness; we began to love righteousness—justice, mercy, love: not at first with a fervancy of love, but rather with respect for the glorious qualities of the divine character, plan and law. This was our first quarter-mile mark, so to speak—love of principles of righteousness.

(3) The more we learned to love these elements of divine character, the principles of righteousness which find their perfect representation in the divine being, and through which the divine being is revealed to the eyes of our understanding —in that proportion the true love of God (based upon principles rather than upon duty), comes into our hearts. So to speak, here in the race-course we had gained the second quarter-mile mark—love of God's character; even tho we had not yet discerned the length and breadth and heights and depths of that character, we had begun to love the Lord in the true way—from appreciation not only of what he had done for us, but also and specially for what he is;—from appreciation of his character.

(4) Love of God from this latter standpoint as the representative of every grace and every virtue, as the representative of righteousness, and the opponent of every injustice and inequity, led us to seek and to follow out these principles amongst our fellow-men, as well as in our own characters. As we began to love truth, purity, nobility of character, wherever it could be found, we found some of it in a mottled and streaked condition even in the world of mankind: we found that the original law of God, written in the heart of Father Adam, altho largely erased and obliterated from the hearts and consciences of his children, is not wholly gone;—that to some extent, especially under the influence of Christianity in the past eighteen centuries, some features of this perfect law may be dimly discerned amongst men.

But our scrutiny, backed by our increasing love of these principles of righteousness, found nothing satisfactory amongst natural men—nor even amongst those professing godliness—professing to be followers in the footsteps of Jesus. We found these all, like ourselves, far short of perfection, far short of the glory of God. But as the true love, of right principles, burned in our hearts more and more fervently, we learned to *sympathize* with the entire "groaning creation," and to "*love* the brethren," for in the latter we perceived a class inspired by the same Spirit by which we ourselves had been begotten of God, the Spirit of the truth; we saw some of them struggling as we had struggled, with appreciation only of the duty-love; we saw others who had gained a higher conception than this, who had learned to appreciate the principles of righteousness and to love them, and to hate iniquity, and further, to love the God who is the embodiment of these. And the realization that these "brethren," like ourselves, were gradually approximating the divine standard—"pressing toward the mark"—filled us with interest in them and in their battle against sin and its weaknesses, and against the adversary and his beguilements. We became more and more interested in their welfare and overcoming in proportion as we were striving and making progress in the same "narrow way." This love of the brethren we did not have at the beginning; it marks a distinct progress in our race toward the "mark;" we might term it the third quarter-mile mark. But altho a grand attainment was achieved when this love of the brethren reached the point of willingness to "lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16), yet it was not the *full* attainment of the "mark" for which we are running.

(5) The "mark of the prize" is a still higher attainment in love;—the one which we understand the Scriptures to point out as the very highest attainment is that of *loving our enemies*—not merely tolerating them, abstaining from injuring them, etc., while thinking evil of them; but far beyond this, it signifies the full purging out of all anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, not only from our actions but also from our words, and even from our thoughts, our sentiments. It means such a *complete triumph of love in our hearts* as not only loves God supremely and delights to sacrifice in his service from love of the principles represented in his character, and love for the brethren, which makes us careful of their feelings and interests, and ready to lay down our lives on their behalf, to deliver them from evil, or to avoid putting a stumbling block in their way, but it means additionally that the love of God has been so thoroughly shed abroad in our hearts that we can love and do love every intelligent creature, and delight to do good unto all men, and to serve all men as we have opportunity, especially the household of faith.—Gal. 6:10.

This does not mean that the love which we have for the world must be of the same kind that we have for the Lord, who is the personification of righteousness, and for the "brethren," who are striving to have love, the righteousness of the law, fulfilled in them through Christ. It means rather a sympathetic love; a benevolence such as God himself exercised toward the whole world of mankind. It does not mean that we are to love the world in the sense condemned by the Apostle when he said, "Love not the world, neither the things of the world." (1 John 2:15) It does mean the attainment of the condition indicated in the expression, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever should believe on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) It is a love for the world, which will not only be glad to see them lifted up out of degradation and sin to holiness and purity and righteousness, but which will be glad to coöperate to these ends as opportunities may offer—not, however, anticipating God's love and the development of his plan of the ages; but co-working with God in that great plan which he has promised shall eventually bring, during the Millennial age, blessing to every creature through the elect class now running in this race for attainment of the "mark," to win the great prize of joint-heirship with his Son. This perfect love, which, including the other developments, extends even to enemies and those who injure us and speak evil of us falsely for Christ's righteousness' sake, is the fourth mark in the race—"the mark for the prize."

While it is well for us to notice these various steps in the progress of our race toward the "mark," we are to remember that the illustration does not fit perfectly, but that rather while there is this order of progression it is less distinctly marked in our experiences, in which duty-love but gradually leads into the higher forms, remaining, but subordinately, to the end. It is a part of the blessed arrangement of God that those who are running in this race are not reckoned with according to the flesh, but as "new creatures," according to the spirit, the mind, the will, the intention. We may never hope to attain to this grand "mark" of perfect love in our flesh, so that every act and every word would give full proof of the real spirit of love which fills our hearts. Some may have greater weaknesses and defects in the flesh than others, and hence may be less able than others to uniformly and thoroughly show the real sentiments of their hearts. But God looketh at the heart; it is the heart that he sees running in this race; it is the heart which is to attain to this "mark" set before us in the Gospel—this mark of perfect love, which includes even our enemies. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

If now we see clearly that perfect love is "the *mark* of the prize," we see something to strive for in our daily lives; a condition which we can by God's grace attain, and which must be obtained if we would be counted worthy a place in the kingdom. The Lord is not selecting the members of the bride of Christ by an arbitrary election; neither is he selecting them on the lines of a mere sentimentality; he is selecting them on the lines of character, heart-development; and those who attain this likeness to his Son, this "mark" of the prize, this standard of what is pleasing and acceptable to the Father—these, and these alone, may have confident hope of joint-heirship with our Lord. How important, then, that each runner in this race follow closely the Apostle's injunction to lay aside every weight and hindrance, and to run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel—"looking unto Jesus," the author of our faith, until he shall have become the finisher of it (Heb. 12:1)—giving us grace to conquer, and keeping us through his Word and through his providence unto the end of the race.

Each one on this race-course should examine himself, rather than examine others, in respect to progress in this narrow way; for each knows his own heart condition and the weaknessess of his own flesh better than any other knows these, the Lord alone excepted. Let us each note just where he is in the race-course, rejoicing that he is in the race at all; considering it a great privilege to be thus called and privileged to enter in this race. If we find that we have passed the first quarter-mark, let us rejoice and press on. If we find that we have passed the second also, let us rejoice so much the more, but not slack our running. If we find that we have passed the third quarter we may properly rejoice so much the more, and press with vigor on; and if we have attained to the fourth mark, of perfect love, which includes even enemies, we have indeed cause for great rejoicing. The prize is ours, if we but remain faithful. But, as the Apostle says, "Having done all, *stand*"—with all the armor on; stand in various testings which will then, as much as ever along the race-course, be brought to bear against us to divert us away from the mark, before the great Inspector and Giver of rewards shall say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."—Eph. 6:13-17.

It is indispensible to those who have reached the mark of perfect love that they shall keep actively engaged in the service of the Lord, laying down their lives for the brethren, because he who loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, what assurance hath he that he really loves God, whom he hath not seen? (1 John 4:20) Such must stand, not only as representatives of God and of the principles of righteousness, but as representatives of those strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and in the faith of his Word,—ready and willing and efficient in the encouragement of other runners in the race-course, that they likewise may attain to the "mark." As the Apostle says: "As many, therefore, as are perfect should be of this mind; and if in anything you think differently, God will reveal this to you; but to what we have attained, let us walk by the same line. Brethren, become joint-imitators of me, and watch those who are thus walking, as you have us for a pattern."—Phil. 3:15-17, *Diaglott*.

"WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?"

MATT. 22:34-46.—JAN. 27.

Our Lord's public teaching evidently ended with the Tuesday prior to his death, and with the teachings of that day our lesson has to do. The incidents of the two days preceding tended to bring matters to a climax: the leaders realized that the new Teacher was undermining their influence with the people. They considered him a false claimant to the Messiahship, yet could not deny his purity of life, the high standard of his teaching, and his wisdom. Now they saw him boldly teaching in the Temple day after day, and altho his teachings were in parabolic form their significance was undoubtedly recognized by many of the people. This very morning he had given three forceful parables, which, if received by many, would correspondingly weaken the influence of those who "sat in Moses' seat," the doctors of the Law and the Pharisees.

One of these parables represented God as a father, and two classes in Israel as sons: the one avowing his obedience to the Father's will, nevertheless was disobedient, and represented the Scribes and Pharisees; the other son, who, refusing to do the Father's will, but subsequently obeying it, got the Father's blessing and approval, represented the class of publicans and sinners who were now flocking to Jesus and becoming interested and seeking to do the divine will, and who were accepted of the Father, notwithstanding that previously they had shirked and even publicly denied their allegiance.

The second parable represented Israel as the Lord's vineyard, and the Pharisees and doctors of the Law as the husbandmen, whose duty it was to care for the vineyard, that it should bring forth much fruit to the owner; but who appropriated the fruits to themselves—seeking honor one of another and not God's glory. The result the parable showed to be the complete overthrow of those husbandmen, and the giving of the vineyard into the care of others—the overthrow of the Jewish system or polity, and the establishment of a new order of things through other servants—our Lord Jesus and his apostles, who did not seek honors to themselves, but sought the glory of God and the welfare of his vineyard.

The third parable, the marriage of the king's son, pressed home the truth still more strongly, indicating that Christ was the King's Son, and that the heavenly Father had sent forth the invitation to the wedding-feast first to the officials of the Jews, as the representatives of that people, the doctors of the law, the Pharisees, etc., and upon their refusal he found others to take their place at the feast, which was not at all interrupted.

A consultation of the leading Jews showed that they were in accord in thinking that this Teacher must be interrupted in some manner; otherwise his influence would be too great; but the question was, Who could meet him in argument? Who would confute and refute his propositions, and thus break his influence with the people? The counsellors were of different factions, quite opposed to each other, but they were drawn together by mutual interest in their opposition to Jesus. And thus it ever is with error; the most contrary theorists are ready to coöperate with each other in opposition to the truth. Nevertheless, truth is mighty and shall utimately prevail against all its opponents; not always so quickly, however, as in the case before us, when the Truth himself, with superhuman wisdom, confounded and overthrew the machinations of error.

Apparently the religious leaders, after conferring, decided that they would attempt to confuse the Lord and confound his teachings, and thus make a division amongst the people, getting some of them against him. First came the Herodians, who were not Jews at all, but, like Herod, Ishmaelites—sons of Abraham, through Hagar, as the Jews were his sons through Sarah. The Herodians, we may presume, were not very religious, but in considerable measure politicians; nevertheless, the desire to break the influence of Jesus was sufficient to unite with these Ishmaelites the Pharisees, who claimed to be the most strict and holy of the Jews. They had thought of a method of entrapping the Lord, which they felt sure would be a success. It was a simple method: they would ask him a question respecting taxation in which all the people were interested, high and low, rich and poor, publicans and Pharisees. They felt sure that in answering this question he would either lay himself open to the charge of teaching sedition, and therefore himself liable to arrest as an opponent of Herod and of Cæsar, or by approving the taxes they esteemed that he would alienate from himself many of the Jews who were now regarding him favorably. Hence their question: "Is it lawful to pay tribute [taxes] to Cæsar or not?"

It would scarcely be right to say that our Lord avoided their question. Rather, we would say that he gave it a much broader and more comprehensive answer than they or anyone else would have supposed possible. He said, in the hearing of the people, "Why tempt ye me?" thus in a word showing that he perceived the real animus of the question, that it was an endeavor on their part to entangle him. Then he asked for a coin of the kind generally used for taxes, and having their assent to the authority which issued it, he said, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's." What a lesson in these words! How clearly they indicate that God's people are to be subject to the powers that be, and to *wait* for God's kingdom, rather than to attempt opposition, insurrection, conflict with the laws of earthly authorities!

In this respect our Lord's words are a lesson to his people today, to the effect that they should keep their religious affairs, which are of God and toward God, separate and distinct from worldly politics, which are of the Gentiles, during this period of the "Times of the Gentiles." "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world." On the other hand, the Lord's people are to remember that, as originally created, man bore *God's image* stamped upon his very nature; and the persons addressed should have remembered also that God's superscription was upon them, that he had accepted them as his people,—Israel. The thought is that the heart, the life, the affections, belong to God, and should be rendered to him, and this being done the rendering of a little tribute-money to some earthly prince would be of comparative insignificance, and the will of God recognized in the heart would cause all things to work together for their good.

The questioners found themselves answered in a manner they had never dreamed of; they were put to silence; they could take no exceptions to such an answer. It had lifted their quibble to a plane of thought which they must confess was far higher than had ever entered into their minds, and had settled it effectually.

Next came the Sadducees, no doubt boastfully saying, We alone are competent to deal with this man, and to show up his faults, tho at the same time we will be showing up the errors and faults of you Pharisees respecting a future life through a resurrection. The Sadducees were what we might term the Agnostics or Rationalists of that time. They denied that there were any spirit beings, and denied a future life for mankind, claiming that there would be *no resurrection* of the dead,—that faith in a resurrection was not warranted by any satisfactory Scriptures, and that reason also repudiated the thought.

By their question they would endeavor to show that Jesus' teachings as a whole were built upon a false foundation;—that the present life is everything, instead of nothing, and to be sacrificed to attain a future life by a better resurrection, as Jesus taught. They put what they supposed would be an unanswerable question respecting the condition of things in the resurrection age. Our Lord's reply was that the difficulty was with them, and not with the divine plan; that they had failed to understand the Scriptures, and did not properly understand the power of God, who is abundantly able to arrange for all the exigencies which will arise in the perfecting of his own gracious plans and promises. Then, going beyond this answer to their question, our Lord demonstrated to them that the resurrection *is* taught in the Old Testament Scriptures—not in so many words, but indirectly—that God's language with reference to the patriarchs implies that they are *not annihilated*,—implies that they are *to be resurrected*, to live again, because God would not use such language as he did use respecting beings who had passed totally out of existence, and were never to be in existence again. The answer was a complete one, as the first verse of our lesson shows.

But our Lord's opponents still hoped that they might find some one capable of vanquishing in argument him who "spake as never man spake." And so we read that when the Pharisees heard that he had "muzzled the Sadducees" they were gathered together. Their disappointment at not seeing Jesus confounded by the Sadducees was offset by their pleasure in having their Sadducee opponents thus effectually silenced. Then one of the Pharisees, who was a doctor of the law, a scribe, bethought him that he would test our Lord with a theological question much discussed amongst the Jewish rabbis; a question upon which they were very generally divided. He would at least get this great Teacher confused and show the people that, while the Scribes had such contentions amongst themselves respecting the Law, this Teacher also, when treating theological subjects, would be confused. Altho it is said that he propounded the question temptingly, this does not necessarily mean that this scribe was dishonest or in affiliation with others of the rulers who were conspiring *merely* to entrap Jesus; for our Lord himself testifies of him that he was "not far from the kingdom of God."—Mark 12:34.

His question was, Which one of the Ten Commandments is the most important, the greatest? Our Lord's answer was most direct. He divided the Law into two parts, as on the two tables of stone; the one part relating to God and man's obligations to his Creator; and the second part relating to man's responsibilities toward his fellow-men. Man's duty to God our Lord placed as supreme, yet the other as linked with it and necessary to perfect harmony with God. The force of our Lord's words is found in the fact that they are mainly a quotation from the Jewish law.—Deut. 6:4, 5.

Matthew's account does not include all the words which our Lord spoke, as recorded by Mark,, beginning, "Hear, O Israel! The Lord [Jehovah] our God is one Lord [Jehovah]." This declaration the Jews were in the habit of calling, "The Shama," because the first word in the sentence in Hebrew is *Shama*, translated in English, "hear." This *Shama* declaration was considered a sacred one amongst the Jews and was enclosed in their phylacteries, repeated in their prayers, etc. The Scribe, therefore, could have not the slightest objection to our Lord's answer: it was conclusive, and, as recorded by Mark, he acknowledged the truth saying, "Well, Master, thou hast said the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but he; and to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the soul [being] and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."—Mark 12:32-34. See MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. V., Chap. 2.

No wonder, then, the inspired Apostle declares that "Love is the fulfilling of the law!" We can readily see that only in proportion as love is in the heart can the divine law be fulfilled by any. This does not interfere with the Scriptural declaration that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." The reason why the Jews could not keep the law was that they did not have perfect love in their hearts, and the same difficulty would stand in the way of us who are of the *New Covenant, were it not that our Covenant makes for us the favorable arrangement through the precious blood of Christ, that our intentions as new creatures are accepted of God as instead of our natural hearts. Those who have entered into covenant relationship with God through Christ, to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, are walking "after the spirit," following *after* love, even tho they be not able to walk *up to* the spirit —up to the full standard of love in every thought and word. Their efforts in this direction are accepted as tho they were perfect, and day by day, week by week, and year by year, under the Lord's instruction and leading by his Word and providence, they are making progress in this good way—learning more and more what love is, as they see it exhibited in the Lord's Word and plan and character, and seeking and attaining more and more to the likeness of God's dear Son, whose perfect love was a copy of the Father's.

As shown elsewhere, it is this "mark" of perfect love, which must be attained in the heart, so that our wills will be fully in accord with it (however imperfect our expression of those wills in words and deeds, by reason of imperfections of the flesh). And to grow in this grace of love to God necessarily implies a growth also in love toward mankind; and especially toward those who are in sympathy and harmony with righteousness. (1 John 4:8, 20, 21; 5:1) Truly the divine Law is grandly beautiful to those who see it; and none can see it fully except as he has gradually come to appreciate its lengths and breadths and heights and depths. And each additional step of knowledge and appreciation must be accompanied by efforts toward obedience in the practice of love toward God and fellow-men, otherwise progress is impossible. Our Lord's declaration is that all of the teachings of the law, as well as all the teachings of the prophets, are in harmony with, and made dependent upon this law;—that God's promises are not intended for any others than those who are in heart-accord with his law, and if in heart-accord they will desire and endeavor to be good and do good in every sense of the word, as far and as rapidly as possible.

Seeing the number of Pharisees in his audience, gathered by the question before mentioned, our Lord considered this a favorable opportunity to turn the tables, and to ask them a question—not that he was endeavoring to trap them as they had been endeavoring to do with him; but because there is no better method of presenting a truth strikingly to the attention of a person than through a wisely directed question. He saw that the difficulty of the Pharisees in respect to himself was, (1) that as a man he did not have the outward evidences of ability to establish himself as the King of Israel, the Messiah—he lacked wealth and soldiers and influence; and he lacked also that fierceness of disposition and haughty domineering manner recognized as the usual accompaniments of successful generals. (2) Their chief objection to him was, as they would put it, that he was bolstering up the weaknesses of his earthly conditions by claiming that he himself was of a heavenly origin, and that somehow or other the establishment of his kingdom would be by spirit-power.

When our Lord asked the question, "What think ye of Messiah? Of what family should he be expected?" he well knew what the answer would be;—that they would acknowledge that they were expecting Messiah to be of the tribe and family of David: and no doubt the Pharisees, while answering this question, expected that the next question would be, Do you not acknowledge that I am of the tribe and family of David, etc.? But our Lord desired to bring out another point. His earthly genealogy they knew, or could easily prove: he wished to show that the Scriptures taught that Messiah must be something more than the Son of David, and that he must be both the Son of David and Lord of David. Hence, when they answered that Messiah would be the Son of David, he enquired, What then is David's meaning when he makes use of the expression, "The Lord [*Jehovah*] said unto my Lord [*adon*, master], Sit thou at my right hand [associated with me in the kingdom, highest in my favor]"? (Psa. 110:1) The Pharisee had not studied the Scriptures sufficiently, else they would have seen this feature before, that Messiah was to be not only the son, or offspring of David, but also greater than David, the Root of David. No wonder they were unable to answer; there was nothing for them to say; the matter thoroughly upheld our Lord's claim that Messiah must have a divine origin, divine authority, and be backed by divine power in whatever he would do.

It should be noticed in this connection that both this quotation from the Psalms and the previous quotation from Deuteronomy by our Lord, are against the Trinitarian view of several persons in divine power, "*equal* in power and glory." They are in full accord, however, with the Scriptural teachings of a heart-oneness between the Father and the Son, and the high origin as well as the high exaltation of the Son, —"that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father;" yet nevertheless keep the two distinctly separate, as our Lord did in his teachings. See *"The At-one-ment Between God and Man,"* Chaps. 2 and 6.

"From that time forth no man durst ask him any question." They were afraid to question him further in the sense of endeavoring to entrap him, having learned that he always got the advantage; the answers only resulted in greater honor to Jesus and the confusion of those who sought to entrap him. And so it is sometimes with the Lord's people today when armed with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; it is so sharp that their adversaries stand in fear of it. And yet this sword should be always used as our Master used it, not in bitterness nor in wrath, nor with sarcasm; but in meekness, in gentleness and patience and love, "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil."—2 Tim. 2:25.

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* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

CHRIST THE MAGNET—"I WILL DRAW ALL MEN"

JOHN 12:20-33.—JAN. 20.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"We would see Jesus."*

Our Lord continued his teachings in the Temple daily after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the ass,—going to Bethany at night, and returning to the Temple each morning during the few days that intervened prior to his arrest and crucifixion. It was at this time that certain Greeks sought an interview with Jesus, and made known their desires through Andrew and Philip, who were probably the only two of the disciples who spoke the Greek language, they coming from a city (Bethsaida) in which the Greek language was considerably used, and their names are of Greek origin. It was most natural, therefore, that these two should be the mouthpieces of the visitors, to communicate their wishes to our Lord. The reason for the request doubtless was that our Lord at this time was in a part of the Temple inaccessible to any except Jews by birth, and these Greeks were Jewish proselytes, hence were not permitted to approach nearer the holy places than the Court of the Gentiles. Their request therefore meant that Jesus should come out to where they were for an interview.

What may have been the object of their visit we are not told; nor do we presume that our Lord's words recorded in the succeeding verses of our lesson were addressed to the Greeks, but rather that a break in the narrative occurs. Our Lord doubtless responded to their request for an interview, but the substance of their converse has not been considered necessary for the church, and hence has not been recorded. It may not be amiss, however, to mention that Eusebius, a church historian of early days, relates that an emissary was sent to Jesus by the king of Edessa, Syria, inviting him to take up his abode with him, and promising him a royal welcome. It would not be surprising if there were truth in this statement, but we know well that our Lord would refuse any such overtures, for he himself had plainly declared to the disciples when he sent them forth, "I am not sent but to to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

God had blessings in store for all the families of the earth; but not yet, and not in this way. All things must be done in a divine order and according to the divine plan, which provided for the selection of the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16, 29) before the general blessings could come upon the world; and the offer of membership in this seed of Abraham must, according to divine arangement, be to the Jew first.

It was probably after the interview with the Greeks had ended, and while the hearts of the apostles were beating fast with anticipation that finally the world was waking up to recognize their Master in his true light, and would shortly exalt him to the high position foretold for the Messiah, and while their hopes on their own behalf were also running high that they should be joint-heirs with him in the kingdom, that Jesus uttered the words constituting the remainder of the lesson. It was a good opportunity for him to show them how his sufferings of the immediate future were the foundation upon which all the future glory must rest. He well knew what bitter disappointments and heart-aches would come to his faithful few when they would realize the literalness of what he had already told them respecting his death. He would give them some suggestions which would be helpful to them subsequently, and enable them to look through the sufferings to the glories in reservation, unseeable except with the eye of faith.

It was, we believe, with this thought in mind that our Lord declared, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified." The disciples at first would take this as intimating his earthly exaltation, but he speedily drew their attention to the fact that while the beginning of his glorification was near, it must be preceded by the suffering of death. His glorification began in his resurrection from the dead, when he was raised in incorruption, in power, a glorious spiritual body—"a quickening spirit," as the Apostle explains. (1 Cor. 15:42-45) This glorification was enhanced when he was received up into glory in the Father's presence, there to appear on our behalf, and at the right hand of divine power to wait for the appointed time when he should take unto himself his great power and reign as King over all the earth, which he had redeemed with his own precious blood.

"THE HOUR IS COME!"

The expression, 'The hour is come," is not necessarily to be understood as signifying sixty minutes; just as the word "day" does not always signify twenty-four hours, but a comparatively short period or epoch, as for instance, "Noah's day," "Moses' day," "Jesus' day," etc. As compared with "Jesus' day" the experiences referred to were properly enough said to be occurring in that "hour," or short time.

Having thus assured them that the beginning of his glorification was not far distant, our Lord makes very impressive the necessity of his death, by saying, "Verily, verily,"—that is, Truly, truly, most positively, emphatically, I give you the illustration that my glorification according to the divine arrangement, must come through my death, even as a grain of wheat would remain but one grain unless it were planted, and through the dying of one grain life and being were given to a number. Had our Lord chosen to do so, he at one time had the privilege of remaining alone,—of not dying on our behalf. Had he followed this course we would still have been unredeemed and he could have brought forth no fruitage. But he had consecrated his life; he had voluntarily engaged to sacrifice himself on behalf of Adam and his race, in compliance with the Father's will, and hence he declares that if *now* he would love his life he would lose it; that on the contrary, instead of seeking to save himself he must indeed hate or *despise* the present life in comparison with the future and eternal one which the Father had promised him as a reward for obedience unto death.

It will be noticed that in this understanding of it, this 25th verse is applicable to our Lord alone, and not to his followers, for they had no life to lose; they and the whole world were dead, under condemnation of death, because of father Adam's transgression. Our Lord alone had life, which he had a right to lay down or exchange in order to keep it unto eternal life. Such privileges could not come to his followers until first Jesus had given his life "a *ransom* for all." Then as soon as the ransom was given and had been accepted of the Father, the redeemed ones (believers justified by their faith) could be reckoned as having life-rights which they would be privileged to consecrate upon the Lord's altar, and to exchange for the heavenly life, following in the footsteps of Jesus.

And in full accord with this interpretation is the next verse, which distinctly speaks of Jesus' followers, saying that all who desire to serve him, and to be with him, must follow him—follow him in this experience, which he, as the forerunner in this way, was already passing through; *viz.*, the consecration and then the despising of his earthly existence, as compared with the spirit life and heavenly glory promised.

It is to their great disadvantage that Christian people so generally fail to discern that there are to be several different classes of saved ones—the overcomers, the great company and the restitution class. The benevolently disposed of those seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, in earthly self-denials and sacrifices, and in despising the present life in comparison with the future one promised, are robbed of much of their joy and peace and consolation by the thought that only such footstep-followers can ever be with the Lord and honored by the Father; for they realize that such servants constitute a "little flock" indeed. The effect of their ignorance of the divine plan is, with many, a hardening of heart in an attempt to be more like what they understand God to be, as expressed in what they believe to be his plan of eternal torment for all except the little flock. Others, on the other hand, cultivating their benevolence, refuse to believe that the way to this association with Jesus and the divine glorification is so narrow—they widen it more and more to take in their friends, their families, their neighbors, and as many as possible of the heathen; and thus, unconsciously perhaps, gradually but surely they lower the standard of true discipleship, not only for others but also for themselves: they become more and more satisfied with outward forms and ceremonies and platitudes and moralities, and come more and more to consider that their former views were incorrect—when they supposed, in harmony with our Lord's words, that all who would be with him and be honored of the Father, must take up his cross and follow in his footsteps.

The light of this harvest-time now shining upon the divine Word and plan makes clear to us, not only the height of the calling of the "elect" church to joint-heirship with her Lord in his glory, but also the reality of the fact that all who would share that glory in the future, must suffer with him in the present life—must be crucified to sin and to self and to the world; must rise to newness of life in Christ Jesus reckonedly now, actually, if faithful, in the first resurrection. But this harvest light makes clear to us also that the class now called, now intended of the Father to be joint-sacrificers with his son and joint-heirs with him of his glory, is altogether but a small fraction of the human family, and that the others who receive not this high calling are to be otherwise blessed in due time under the Millennial kingdom, by the glorified Jesus and his glorified church and bride.

Those who have this light and appreciate it are saved from the discouragements common to others. They can see the reasonableness of making the way to so high a station as that to which they are called a very narrow one, which will admit at its opening only those who are justified through faith in Christ and who are desirous of pleasing and serving God, and which, at its furthest end, will admit to glory only those who have passed faithfully through the experiences of this time, and are found in heart and character copies of God's dear Son. —Rom. 8:29.

"Now is my soul troubled"—my feelings are turbulent; I am in a commotion. Shall I pray, Father, deliver me from this hour? Shall I not, on the contrary, remember that for this very cause I am come to this hour, that I might endure, and that willingly, rather than ask to be delivered? I might ask the Father for a certain kind of deliverance which would not invalidate the engagement which I made, that I would give my life in obedience to his will. I might ask him to permit some calamity to befall me which would result in my death and thus save me from the peculiarly trying and ignominious conditions incident to my apprehension and execution as a criminal—as the worst kind of a criminal, a blasphemer against my heavenly Father. Such a deviation would seem to me not an unreasonable concession for one who has shown his faithfulness to the Father's will in all things. And yet I will not ask even this concession. Rather, I will submit my will to the Father's will most absolutely, and carry out to the very jot and tittle the spirit as well as the letter of my covenant. Let the Father's will be done in every particular; it must be the wisest and best, else it would not be his plan. It is for this very purpose that I came to this hour, that I might manifest, demonstrate, to the Father my devotion, my most implicit obedience to his will. Proceed, Father! Glorify thine own name and in thine own way, at whatever the cost to me!

Then a voice was heard, a voice which some understood and which others misunderstood, as is always the case with the voice of God. The world heareth no message; believers hear the message partially; but the begotten sons, in perfect accord with the Father, hear and understand fully. No doubt our Lord received a blessing through this message from the Father, and yet he assures us that it was not specially sent for him, but rather as a demonstration for the benefit of the disciples—that they might note that God attested his teachings. God does not today speak to his people by such an audible voice; but he speaks none the less forcibly to us—through his Word and through his providences. Yet now, as then, some hear and appreciate more than others. Some, who have the word of God in their hands appreciate it only as another book, and likewise discern not God's providences in the affairs of his people. Others see in the Lord's Word a message, a good message, and reverence the book and see in his providences something of the divine care and provision in connection with the body of Christ. But only the spirit-begotten sons, the members of the body of Christ, today, like the Head eighteen hundred years ago, hear the Father's Word, with distinctness and clearness and understanding. These also note divine providences, and are enabled to rejoice in them, and to realize that all things are working together for good to them because they love God, and have been called according to his purpose, and are in the way of responding to that call, seeking to make their calling and their election sure.

THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD

When our Lord said, "*Now* is the judgment of this world, —*now* shall the prince of this world be cast out," he evidently meant by *now* the same as in his previous expression, "*The hour is come.*" But a little space of time *now* intervened until this would be accomplished. The judgment of this world, so to speak, was in the balance and would speedily be decided. The first trial took place in Eden, father Adam being the one who was on trial, and the world of mankind, still in his lions, was in a certain sense on trial, in the balance, with him. That trial, as we know, resulted in disaster to Adam and all his posterity. "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as a result of sin, and so death passed upon all men for all [through inherited weaknesses] are sinners." (Rom. 5:12) That judgment (trial and sentence) of the world was unto death; and Adamic death had reigned up to the time that our Lord spoke, for 4161 years. But now under divine providence, under the grace of God, a substitute or *ransom* had been found, acceptable to God, and willing to give his life a ransom for Adam and his race. This one was now on trial, and the fate of the whole world was in the balance and depended upon his victory. Hence, as our Lord expressed it, *now* the world's *krisis*, or trial, was at its climax, and his decision to be faithful to the Father's will, and to despise the present life in obedience to that will, determined that trial favorably to the world; for the Apostle declares that as the world's condemnation was unto death through Adam, so the world's justification is unto life through Christ—that so far as the divine law was concerned Jesus paid the full penalty for the whole world, and hence will have both the right and the opportunity, not only to rescue mankind from the tomb by an awakening but also to rescue fully and completely so many as will accept the favor, by raising them up fully out of sin and death to perfection and harmony with God during and at the close of the Millennial age.—Rom. 5:18, 19.

Our Lord's other statements is quite in accord with this: "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." That is to say, the trial now in progress in my own person will result not only in a reversal and cancellation of the divine sentence of mankind unto death, but it will also result in the overthrow of the present rule of evil in the hands of Satan, the prince of this world. He shall be cast out; he shall be chained for the period of my Millennial reign, and shall subsequently be destroyed. Since the whole matter of the world's judgment and the removal of its present captor through sin was dependent upon our Lord's victory, it was quite proper that he should date all those results from that "hour," notwithstanding the fact that it would be centuries before these things would be accomplished;—the binding of Satan, the release of mankind from the Adamic sentence through the instrumentalities of the Millennial kingdom (Christ and the glorified church), into the glorious liberty (from these things) which belongs to all sons of God,—whatever their plane of being. Not that we are to suppose that all men will avail themselves of these heavenly mercies and privileges, but that all are to have a full opportunity to do so; so that whosoever will die the second death will die for his own sins and not through inherited imperfections—not because the fathers ate the sour grape of sin.—Jer. 31:29, 30; 1 John 5:16.

WHEN CHRIST WILL DRAW ALL MEN

The statement of the next verse is in absolute accord with this: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto [toward] me." While, as the narrator records, these words signified by what manner of death Jesus should die—lifted up on the cross—nevertheless, they meant more than this. They meant, also, If I shall faithfully give my life according to my covenant, and shall receive of the heavenly Father the high exaltation or lifting up which he has promised, that exaltation will bring with it the power to bless all the families of the earth; first, according to the Father's will and prearrangement, he himself will draw unto me a church or bride; I will not draw these, but the Father: "No man can come unto me [in the present time, in the narrow way] except the Father which sent me draw him, and I will *raise him up* [exalt him] at the last day"—the Millennial day, "early in the morning" of that day.—John 6:44; Psa. 46:5.

And when these shall have been thus exalted as members of my body, raised up as sharers with me in the first resurrection, then I will begin *my* drawing work, which will not be confined to a special class, a royal priesthood, like the Father's drawing. Mine will be a general drawing: I will draw all men; it will be a universal opportunity to come unto me and receive from me, as the Father's representative, full remission of sins that are past, and such instructions in righteousness, such chastisements, such experiences, such judgment, as will tend to lift them up, up, up, to the glorious condition of human perfection from which all fell through Adam's transgression, and the right to restore to which I gained for them by not counting my earthly life precious unto me, but instead by despising it, that I might redeem men and gain this high, heavenly condition in which, according to the divine arrangement, I and my servants who will be with me, and whom the Father will honor also, and whom I will call my bride and brethren and joint-heirs, shall bless all the families of the earth.—Rev. 22:17; Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:16, 29.

Vol. XXII ALLEGHENY, PA., JANUARY 15, 1901 No. 2

WHICH IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?

[This article was a reprint of that published in Tower of March 15, 1900, which please see.]

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES CONCERNING HELL?

"To the Law and to the Testimony: If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them."—Isa. 8:20.

[This article was a reprint of that published in Tower of March 15, 1900, which please see.]

GIDEON'S BAND

"Count me the swords that remain."
"Lord, hundreds on hundreds are daring."
"These yet are too many for me to attain
To the victory I am preparing.
Lead them down to the brink
Of the waters of Marah to drink."

"Lord those who remain are but few,
And the hosts of the foe are appalling,
And what can a handful such as we do?"
"When ye hear from beyond, my voice calling,
Sound the trump! Hold the light!
Great Midian will melt in your sight!"

Vol. XXII ALLEGHENY, PA., FEBRUARY 1, 1901 No. 3

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

The dawn of the twentieth century has naturally led to the launching of new programs along ethical and religious lines. The United Free Churches of Great Britain, it is announced, "have been quietly working to bring about one of the greatest and most striking revivals on record." Their primary effort, for which they have prepared for more than a year, is the conversion of London, tho it expected to extend more or less to the whole world. In the same metropolis Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker has for a week tried to demonstrate the advantages of a religious daily newspaper. In our own land various Union-movements have been started which welcome Jews, Romanists, and Unitarians who deny the ransom, to unite with the so-called "Orthodox" who ignore the ransom. The general plaint of all is that an effort to uplift mankind must be made, and yet they ignorantly oppose or ignore the divinely appointed uplift so near at hand— the Millennial kingdom of God's dear Son, the result of the great sin-offering finished at Calvary over eighteen centuries ago, but delayed until now for the calling and perfecting of the elect church to be joint-heirs with her Saviour and Bridegroom in that heavenly kingdom.

What these various "movements" and "crusades" will accomplish is hard to guess: our surmise is that they will amount to little socially so long as times are prosperous; and that they will amount to nothing spiritually—along the lines of true spirituality—"sanctification through the *truth;*" because they are not built upon the truth of God's Word, but upon various human philosophies and theories.

Some, however, seem impressed with the fact that the new century opens under conditions very unfavorable to peace on earth and good will amongst men. For instance,—

CARDINAL VAUGHN DECLARES THE WORLD OUT-OF-JOINT

In a recent address in London he is reported to have said: "The twentieth century will dawn on a world badly out-of-joint and sick unto death. The sense of uncertainty and unrest is universal. Races are exasperated against races. Rival nations have provoked each other to strife by gibes and insults, and men are asking whose influence is to dominate mankind when Asia is armed like ourselves? Will the heathen races prevail against Christian?

"Envy, jealousy, hatred, desires for revenge, avarice, greed of power and influence, have broken out among the nations like a plague of vices that threaten to destroy them. Remedies have been applied, but remedies are worthless.

"The nations called a conference for peace, but excluded the pope. They have forged weapons of destruction; harbored compulsory education without religion; preached the gospel of commerce; of the 'open door' and 'spheres of influence,' and then dispatched armies to fight the people.

"They have dug passionately into the bowels of the earth for more and more of the precious metals; yet taxation is increased and wants multiplied, and there is a chance of conflicting cries, but no common agreement."

THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE'S VIEW OF THE NEW CENTURY

"The nineteenth century goes out in war all around the world. The Hague Conference led some to sing 'Hosanna!' and to cry, 'The age of peace dawns!' We sat among the doubters; for human nature unregenerated is the same all over the world.

The Christians are still cutting one another's throats in South Africa. The Christians are not done cutting one another's throats in the Philippine Islands. The Christians and the pagans are but pausing for breath in China.

"Clouds are rising over various parts of Northern Africa, and the shadow of revolution is upon a score of nations in South and Central America and on the continent of Europe.

"An epidemic of lynching pervades this country. Prize-fighting is a great popular amusement. New York loves it, and also can breed a race riot. . . . .

"Those premillennarians who think that the world must get worse before Christ can come are solemnly pointing to these things as portents."

HOW THE NEW CENTURY LOOKS TO A MILLIONAIRE

At the annual meeting of the Educational Alliance recently held, former Mayor of New York City, Abram S. Hewitt made caustic criticism of the rich men of New York City and of the country, and prophesied that unless they changed their attitude toward the masses of society the twentieth century would bring forth a social cataclysm such as the world has never seen. Mr. Hewitt said in the course of his remarks:

"The rich are blind. There is not one among them who is giving what he would give if his conscience were properly aroused. They do not seem to realize that this is a government by the majority. Ours is the only country in which there is universal suffrage. To be exercised rightfully and righteously, that suffrage must needs be educated. The rich in contributing to its education are but building for their own protection. If they neglect so to build, barbarism, anarchy and plunder will be the inevitable result.

"I believe that in the twentieth century the spirit of commercialism will steadily grow less strong and the spirit of altruism stronger. I believe that the rule, 'Do unto others as you would have others do unto you,' will more generally prevail than in all the centuries which have gone before.

"If I am mistaken in this—if the spirit of commercialism and greed continues to grow stronger—then the twentieth century will witness a social cataclysm unparalleled in history. It is only by the discountenancing of commercialism and the spreading of altruism that we can safeguard justice, property and liberty."

How much the above words resemble the Scriptural declarations respecting our day, and their assurances that the growing selfish rapacity will eventuate in that great time of trouble "such as was not since there was a nation," in which "every man's hand shall be *against* his neighbor," and lead to mutual distrust and anarchy!—James 5:1-5! Zech. 8:9, 10.

The closing words of Mr. Hewitt's address remind us forcibly of Malachi's words (4:6) "He shall turn the heart [sentiment] . . . *or else* I will come and smite the earth with a curse." Here the Lord puts an alternative, as Mr. Hewitt suggests; but other Scriptures clearly indicate that no such reform will occur, and that the "curse" or trouble will surely come. How refreshing it is to have the Lord's assurance that the coming trouble (in which the groaning creation will suffer and groan still more than ever) is but a preparation for their introduction to the long promised Millennial kingdom blessings. How the Lord links the fire upon the tare-field with the speedy shining forth thereafter of the Sun of Righteousness to heal and bless all the families of the earth! (Matt. 13:43) How this trouble, in which every man's hand shall be against his neighbor, is prophetically connected with the building of the great spiritual temple!—Zech. 8:9, 10.

All faithful "Watchers" may well lift up their heads and rejoice in the evidences which abound on every hand corroborative of what the Scriptures so clearly show is to be expected now. These evidences portend the speedy finishing of the Gospel age, "harvest," the binding of Satan, and the inauguration of the reign of righteousness. Let us be glad and rejoice and give glory to God while patiently waiting for the consummation of his plans, and seeking to become more and more copies of his dear Son and meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

GOD'S BLESSING BRINGS RICHES

"The blessing of Jehovah it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."—Prov. 10:22.

How reasonable it seems that those who become God's friends, and especially those who are adopted into his family as children, should be blessed of him in multitudinous ways, in which others of mankind, who are aliens, strangers, and foreigners to him through wicked works (Col. 1:21), should not be blessed. We look back into the past and see father Adam, while in divine favor, very rich,—the possessor of the whole world filled with bounties. We read of Father Abraham, "the friend of God," very rich in cattle and goods; and Jacob, altho losing all inheritance in his father's estate, was blessed of the Lord, so that he became very rich in flocks and in herds. So Israel was promised that if as a nation they would be obedient to the Lord they should be blessed in all of their temporal affairs; their land would bring forth bountifully; they would not be afflicted with drought or pests; their flocks and herds should prosper and multiply exceedingly, and even their physical health was provided for, so that God guaranteed them that abiding in his favor as a people they should not be subject to pestilence, diseases, etc., for the Lord himself would be their physician to preserve to them health and every prosperity.

However, with the introduction of the new age, the Gospel age, came a great change—not in the divine plan, but in the divine dealings; and henceforth the favored of the Lord were not promised earthly blessings and good things, nor immunity from sickness and pain and persecution; but to the contrary of this, they were assured that whoever would be received into God's family on the high plane of sonship, begotten of the spirit, and, prospectively, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, would be required to pass through experiences of suffering more than others; of trials of faith and of patience and of character to which others would not be subjected; and they were instructed that these adversities should be accepted by them as marks of divine favor, as evidences that God was *dealing* with them as with sons, and by these experiences fitting and preparing them for positions of honor, and untellable blessings in the future. (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12: Heb. 12;6-8) "Eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit."—1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

In harmony with this change of dispensation, we find the New Testament declaration to be to the effect that those accepted to this high honor of sonship (John 1:12) should not expect earthly riches or temporal blessings or marks of divine favor, but that, quite to the contrary, the Apostle says, "Hearken my beloved brethren: hath not God [as a rule] chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (James 2:5) And again he assures us that not many great, not many rich,* not many mighty, not many wise, according to the course of this world, are to be found amongst the called and sanctified sons of God.—1 Cor. 1:26-29.

From the foregoing Scriptures and many others we see, not only that those who become the Lord's sons are very rarely blessed with temporal riches, but we see also that the principle extends still further, and that very few who possess earthly riches in advance of hearing of the truth are very likely to attain the high calling of this Gospel age. This is not because God is opposed to riches, for he himself is rich above all others. It is rather, we might say, the outworking of a natural law or principle which has its force in the fact that all mankind, by reason of the fall, are selfish. The possession of wealth in combination with selfishness leads to a measure of satisfaction with present circumstances and conditions unfavorable to faith in God's heavenly promises. The wealthy, selfish, satisfied soul says to itself, Eat, drink and be merry; enjoy your advantages; take your pleasure out of these, rather than speculate respecting future advantages and future riches, which are intangible, and which must be accepted by faith. It is in harmony with this that our Lord declared, "How hardly [with what difficulty] shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."—Mark 10:23.

By this term, the kingdom of God, our Lord evidently did not refer to the earthly nominal church, for we are all aware that the rich men find very little difficulty in getting into it Evidently he referred to the real kingdom, the glorified kingdom which shall be established in the end of this age, the Millennial kingdom. It will be difficult for a rich man to obtain membership in this glorified body of Christ, to which the kingdom work will be entrusted. But why is this so?

The reason is that God, desiring to select in this Gospel age a peculiar people to be kings and priests and judges of the world in the next age, desires to select for the rulers and teachers only such as will come up to certain tests or requirements of character and obedience. One of these requirements is sacrifice—self-sacrifice—and hence all of this class now being selected are Scripturally designated a priesthood—"a royal priesthood," because royalty eventually is to be added to their office, partly as a reward for their faithfulness as priests in sacrificing the present life, and partly to enable them as priests in the future the better to serve and bless all the families of the earth.

The beginning of these terms or conditions of this age was with the great Head of the church, our Lord Jesus—he must sacrifice ere he could be made the King, and have the power and authority to bless. His sacrifice, as is well known, was a comprehensive one; it began with the sacrifice of his riches, and ended with the sacrifice of his life. "He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might [eventually, in the Millennial kingdom] be made rich." (2 Cor. 8:9) His wealth, consisting of heavenly glory and, subsequently, of human talents, and every kind of good possessions, was all sacrificed, including even his reputation, so that the Apostle declares, "He made himself of no reputation." His will also was sacrificed,—the strongest individual thing that any being can possess; as he himself declared, he sought not his own will, but the will of the Father who sent him. His life, the most precious thing to any intelligent creature, was freely laid down, a sacrifice, a sin-offering, in harmony with the divine plan, on our behalf.—Phil. 2:5-8.—*Diaglott.*

But all these sacrifices, under divine providence and promise, to still greater riches, greater honors and greater powers, as the Apostle, after reciting how our Lord humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross, declares,—"Wherefore, [as a record for this sacrifice] God hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a name that is above every name;" he has been exalted "far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named." He has been given a name more excellent than all others, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. (Phil. 2:9-11) It is by virtue of his sacrifice of riches and honors and will and life itself that our dear Redeemer is now the great and glorious royal High Priest, with all power in heaven and in earth, which he soon will take to himself. (Rev. 11:17) Soon he will exercise it in accomplishing the wonderful work which he already has begun, and which it is the Father's good pleasure that he shall complete, viz., of subduing all things, and bringing all sin and rebellion against divine authority into subjection, rescuing so many as desire to return to harmony with their Creator and his laws, and destroying with an everlasting destruction all who love and practice sin knowingly and wilfully.

These, our dear Redeemer's experiences, are set before believers as an example; and so many as desire during this Gospel age, and under its high calling, are permitted to become his followers, and to walk in his footsteps—to have fellowship in his sufferings, sharing in his sacrifice, that ultimately they may be sharers with him in the glorious rewards. As a matter of fact, none of these followers have anything of value to sacrifice. It cannot be said of them, as of their Redeemer, that they were rich and became poor; on the contrary, they are all poor as respects everything that could be considered true riches. Even their own righteousness was as filthy rags, which needed to be replaced with the imputed robe of the Saviour's righteousness (justification), ere they could be invited to be his followers.

But while none called to the under-priesthood possess any real riches, each one possesses something of some value in his own estimation; some possess a little honor amongst men; some possess a little of this world's goods, bringing measurable comforts; some possess talents capable of exercise and development; each one possesses a will, more or less weak and imperfect; and each one possesses a little fragment of life which has not yet flickered out. The invitation to each would-be royal priest is, that being justified by faith through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, he should sacrifice his *all*, and thus be reckoned a joint-sacrificer with the great Redeemer, as having fellowship with him in his sufferings, that he might also share in his glory. (Rom. 8:17) This is the particular feature of this Gospel age: it is the age of sacrifice and self-denial as respects all *earthly blessings* and privileges and advantages. And the object or hope inspiring to such sacrifices of present things is, that all such shall be made partakers of far greater riches of glory. honor, immortality and eternal life, in the kingdom. Thus we have the key to the difference between God's dealings with his faithful ones in this present age, and his dealings with some of his faithful ones in a preceding age.

From this point of view earthly riches of every kind, opulence of money, of influence, of talent, should not be despised by the Lord's people, but, on the contrary, should be appreciated—not after the worldly manner of appreciation, for selfish interests and purposes, but because those who possess riches of any kind, have that much more than they otherwise would have to offer upon the Lord's altar as a sacrifice in his service, to glorify his name, to advance his truth, to bless his people. But the consecrated should keep ever in mind that this is the only value of any kind of riches to them: they are not to seek to keep these riches, but to seek opportunities for using them wisely,—spending them all to the very last farthing.

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* Riches, while generally applied to money and physical comforts and opulence, may properly enough be applied to any valuable possession; as, for instance, one might be rich in talents of music or oratory or art; or he might be rich in mental endowment which would carry with it weight of influence amongst men.

There are some who are rich in talents, and who could, if they would, turn those talents into the service of the Lord and the truth; and they make a great mistake and lose a precious opportunity if they hold them for themselves in any selfish manner or degree. There are those who have more or less of the money talent, earthly riches, and they make a great mistake if they hoard these; for their only value as respects the kingdom, its glories, its riches and its honors, is in using them, now. If they hold and hoard their earthly riches they are burying their talent, their opportunity, instead of using it; and such will demonstrate to themselves eventually the meaning of our Lord's words, "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye* than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom." (Luke 18:25) He cannot get into the kingdom at all except as he strips himself of his riches,—sacrifices them. devotes them to the Lord.

However, the stripping of oneself of riches, sacrificing riches, does not signify the reckless and wasteful disposition of them; rather, all riches of every kind should be considered consecrated to the Lord at the time their possessor consecrates himself and his all to God's service; and henceforth those riches should be used, not as his own, but as the Lord's riches, the Lord's talents, to be used according to the steward's understanding of the divine will. But certainly no steward is faithful who hoards and accumulates to hand down selfishly to his own posterity. We are not here opposing a reasonable provision being made for the steward's household, as the Apostle enjoins (1 Tim. 5:8; Rom. 12:17), but we are opposing the thought that God has ever authorized his stewards to avoid using their stewardship, and to attempt to pass that stewardship onward at their death, to others.

This is one of the fallacies with which many deceive themselves, for, as the Scriptures declare, the natural mind (heart) is exceedingly deceitful and at times misleads the new creature, the new will, the new heart. (Jer. 17:9) It is for this reason that God in his Word gives us in so many ways line upon line, precept upon precept, that we may know the terms of our calling, that they are terms of *sacrifice* and not of *acquisitiveness* as respects earthly things,—that knowing this we may make our calling and our election sure by conformity thereto,—by becoming copies of God's dear Son, "who was rich [in every sense of the word, far beyond our comprehension], but who for our sakes became poor [sacrificing it all]."

The Apostle speaks of the deceitfulness of riches; and on every hand we may witness this deceitfulness; we see how often earthly wealth deceives and misleads and corrupts the reasoning powers, and turns aside the force of God's Word to those who possess it. We see the same in respect to the wealth of influence, how those who possess this wealth frequently deceive themselves, and hoard it, and refuse to sacrifice it for the truth, for the Lord, for his cause. We see the same deception operating powerfully in those who possess a wealth of talent in any direction; they feel like keeping all of it for self, and if not all, the larger and choicer parts; they are deceived into thinking this is the right course, notwithstanding the Scriptures so plainly declare that our privileges in connection with these is that of *sacrifice.* As a whole, then, we daily witness, as the Scriptures declare, that those who possess any kind of riches, wealth, talent or influence, are rarely amongst the sacrificers. We might almost say, Blessed are those who are poor in this world's goods, and in talents and in influence, for they having practically nothing to sacrifice to the Lord but their wills, find it easier to comply with the conditions, and we presume that the larger proportion of those who will through faith inherit the kingdom will consequently be of this poor class, rich in faith only.—Jas. 2:5.

When we would see a noble example, like that of our Lord, who was rich in everything, and who gave all, we rejoice in it, and realize that as his sacrifice was so great his reward also is proportionately great. When we see the noble example of the Apostle Paul, who possessing some considerable wealth of ability, talent and influence, and possibly of financial means also, laid these all, a willing, a glad sacrifice, at the feet of the Lord, laying them all down with joy in God's service, in the service of the truth, in the service of the brethren, it causes our hearts to rejoice, and we feel sure that one so rich, and who spent his riches so faithfully, will be one to shine very brightly in the kingdom, when it is set up and manifested. And so, undoubtedly, it will be with all the royal priesthood,—in proportion as they have sacrificed their possessions. Those who joyfully endure for the Lord's sake, the truth's sake, the greatest shame, the greatest ignominy, the greatest trials, the greatest persecutions in this present life, and thus have experiences most like those of the Master and Pattern, we may be sure will in proportion to their faithfulness manifested in such sacrifices, have a future great reward;—as the Apostle has declared, "star differeth from star in glory."—1 Cor. 15:40-44.

HEAVENLY VERSUS EARTHLY RICHES

We have said that the heavenly riches are to be attained in the resurrection, when the Millennial kingdom shall be inaugurated, and the faithful overcomers, by their resurrection change, shall be richly endowed with all the good things which God hath in reservation for them that love him, and who prove their love by present-time devotions, sacrifices, etc. But, we should notice that there is a foretaste of these heavenly blessings granted to the faithful in this present life; these heavenly riches granted us now the Apostle speaks of as "riches of grace" (Eph. 1:7, 18), and these grace-riches include faith, hope, and joy in the holy spirit and an ability to see and appreciate with the eye of faith things actually not seen as yet. The Apostle declares that these treasures of wisdom and grace—knowledge of divine good things in reservation, and the fellowship with God which permits us to anticipate and enjoy those blessings in a measure now, are all *hidden in Christ*, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. 2:3) We must come into Christ, as members of his body, the true church, by sacrifice,—before we can have the opportunity of even searching for these hidden treasures, or of finding any of them. And then, as we progress faithfully in our sacrificial service, as priests, walking in the footsteps of the great High Priest, we find more and more of these true "riches of grace" day by day, and year by year, as we progress.

Moreover, another kind of riches comes to the royal priesthood, faithful in performing their self-sacrifices. These are riches of the holy Spirit. They find as they sacrifice the selfish interests, earthly aims, earthly projects, etc., in the service of the Lord and the truth, that they grow more and more in likeness to their heavenly Father and to their Lord, and that the fruits of the holy Spirit abound in them more and more—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love.

Furthermore, they find a peace and a joy to which formerly they were strangers, and which the world can neither give nor take away. This peace and joy come through a realization that having given their all to the Lord, all of his exceeding great and precious promises *belong* to them. Now their faith can firmly grasp these promises as their own; they can realize that as their justification and call were not of themselves, but of the Lord, so all their course of sacrifice, in harmony with that call, is under divine supervision and care, and sure to work out blessings; and that to whatever extent they shall work out earthly hardships, trials and sufferings, God will proportionately make them to work out a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory in the kingdom.—2 Cor. 4:17.

With this peace of God and confidence in his leading and care, they can apply to themselves the prophetic statement, "All the steps of a righteous man are ordered of the Lord, and he [the righteous man] delighteth in his way." (Psa. 37:23) They can delight in this way, be it ever so thorny and narrow and rugged, because of their confidence in God's love and wisdom, and that he who began a good work in them is thus completing it and blessing them with experiences which divine wisdom sees will be to their profit eventually. Thus the Lord's blessing is upon this class; and they realize indeed that, "The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich." How rich it makes their hearts in the present time—rich in noble sentiments, rich in faith, rich in love, rich in good works to all men as they have opportunity, especially toward the household of faith; and very rich in God's blessing and under his providential care, which, if rightly accepted, will ultimately make these members of the Royal Priesthood heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, in an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them.—1 Pet. 1:4.

We have been considering the true riches, present and future, provided for the true Israel, the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, and whose Head is Christ. But the Scriptures draw to our attention the fact that the nominal church of this present-time, symbolical Laodicea (Rev. 3:17, 18), claims also to be very rich. "Thou sayest, I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing." Alas! this seems to be the prevalent condition of nominal churchianity on every hand. Only the few in her who are Israelites indeed, and who have not yet heard and obeyed the voice speaking in this harvest-time, and saying, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues"—only these very few know of the true riches; the remainder are deceiving themselves with a counterfeit wealth. They look with pride upon their numbers, and count them by millions: they rejoice in this wealth of numbers, not realizing that nearly all are "tares," not begotten by the good Word of the kingdom;—indeed very few of them know anything about the kingdom at all, not being begotten of the truth, but begotten of error.

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* A small gate in the walls of ancient cities, for the convenience of belated travelers after sundown, after the main city gates were closed. These needle-eyes were so low that camels could enter them only upon their knees and after being stripped of their burdens.

LAODICEA'S COUNTERFEIT RICHES

Laodiceans look upon their material prosperity, and the numbers of wealthy people associated with their confederating denominations, and count their money and their donations by millions, and say, We are rich as never before. Alas! that they do not realize that these are earthly riches of the kind which our Lord declares are no evidence of his favor during this Gospel age, but rather to the contrary. And they see not the true riches which the Lord admires, and which are the foretaste of his favor and the coming kingdom wealth.

And so the Lord declares to Laodicea, "Thou knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." She is poor, in that she has so little of the Master's spirit, so little of the truth and the spirit of the truth. The only riches which God can recognize are those which he promised to, and bestows upon his people in this present time. Laodicea is blind, in that the god of this world hath blinded her perceptions of God's character and plan and is leading her further and further away from confidence in his Word, under the guidance of her chosen and well-paid lords and masters, the clergy, who under the name of Higher Criticism and Evolution are rapidly taking away from her every good possession and thing which would be estimable in the sight of the Lord, and who are thus denuding her, making her naked, taking from her the robe of Christ's righteousness, and leading her to trust, not in the precious blood of the redemption, the death of the Redeemer, but to trust in an evolutionary process which needs no Saviour, which denies an atonement for sins, yea, denies that there is, or has been any sin to make atonement for; and claims, on the contrary that humanity has ground for pride in its own progress, which will be quite sufficient eventually to bring to them every desired blessing, without any Saviour and without his kingdom, which God has promised as the hope of the groaning creation. —Rom 8:19-23.

Laodicea is indeed counseled to buy the true gold, the true riches of the Lord, and to use eyesalve that she may see, and to put on the garment of Christ's righteousness, that she may not be put to shame; but we have no intimation in the Scripture that she will give any heed to this counsel; on the contrary, the intimation is that more and more she will become a Babel of confusion, and that she will go down with political and financial systems of this present age, in the great time of trouble with which this age will terminate, and which will fit and prepare mankind for the kingdom of God's dear Son, and its reign of righteousness. "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isa. 26:9.

Then, with the new Millennial age, will come a new order of things and no longer will the blessing of the Lord entail sacrifice and self-denials, as at the present time; because the sacrificing priesthood will all have been found and proven and glorified. Then the blessing of the Lord will come, as to the Jews, in earthly favors and earthly blessings, in proportion as they shall be obedient to the laws of the kingdom and to the spirit of those laws. "In that day the righteous shall flourish"—flourish in all temporal prosperity, and in mental, physical and moral growth, upward and still upward in the highway of holiness; in that day the evil-doer will receive the stripes, and be at the disadvantage; and, if he continue in evil-doing, ultimately he will be cut off from amongst the people,—in the second death.—Isa. 35:8; Psa. 37:9; Acts 3:23.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches,—but in the living God who giveth us [all his people] all things [needful] to their rich enjoyment; that they do good; that they be rich in good works, liberal, ready to bestow; treasuring up for themselves a good preparation for the real life."—1 Tim. 6:17-19.

PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS

MATT. 25:1-13.—FEB. 3.

"Watch ye therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."

Of deep and special interest to every consecrated believer this parable should surely be, referring, as it does, to the Lord's true people only—the "virgin" or pure class—ignoring the worldly and hypocritical, and yet showing that amongst the *true* saints there are two classes, only one of which will enter the kingdom and be the bride, the Lamb's wife. Those who pin their faith to the creeds of "Christendom" find little light and comfort in this parable. Those creeds teach (contrary to the Scriptures) that death inducts the church to heavenly joys, and all others into endless torment. No wonder those who believe those creeds seek to deny or at least to forget the Scriptural statement that there is "no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved." No wonder they seek in generosity of heart to extend God's favor, and heaven's protection from eternal misery, to hundreds of millions who have never heard of the only name, and consequently have never believed in Jesus unto justification, as well as to all except the most vicious of civilized lands. To such creed-deceived people this parable should give such a shock as would thoroughly awaken them to search for the truth in God's own Word. For to interpret this parable in harmony with their creeds would not only cut off for eternal woe all but the truly consecrated Christians, but would divide these "virgins" (pure ones) into two classes, only one of which attains the heavenly kingdom, and joint-heirship with Christ as his bride. All must see error in such a conception of the divine Word and plan, whether they have seen the truth on the subject or not.

For our interpretation of this parable, which we believe to be both Scriptural and reasonable, we refer our readers to MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. III., page 91 and on.

The Golden Text should not be overlooked;—particularly because its real lesson is the very reverse of the interpretation usually given it. It is usually quoted and considered separate and apart from its context, and understood to *mean*, Watch; because *no one will ever know* anything respecting the second coming of Christ. How absurd it would be to tell us to watch for a thing, and in the same breath assure us that our watching would be useless because none would ever know!

But this verse taken in connection with the parable of the Virgins, as our Lord gave it, and meant it to be considered, means much of great interest and importance to God's people. It means that all of God's people should watch, because if watching faithfully they *will know* of his second coming—it will be distinctly announced—not to the world, ignorant of the Bridegroom and non-expectant of his second coming—but to *all the "virgins"* (the pure in heart, the truly consecrated, the church). These alone (not the world) are called upon to watch and wait for the Lord from heaven, the Bridegroom. And the parable shows the necessity for this expectancy, watching, and readiness on the part of the consecrated;—that only such would be ready for, and share in the great blessing expected. The unready were too drowsy spiritually;—overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches. This *proved* that they did not love the Lord enough, more than earthly interest, and hence did not sacrifice the latter for the spiritual interests; and surely in this they are foolish, and will so assert some day.

The parable belongs to our day. It is *now* in process of fulfilment; and it is but a kindness on the part of the "virgins" who are awake that they shake and otherwise attempt to arouse the sleeping "virgins" in time for them to get the oil in their vessels and make all needed preparations, and be among the wise before all the wise have gone in to the wedding and the "door" of opportunity is shut. This is the meaning of the exertions being put forth through the circulation of WATCH TOWER literature in every conceivable way. We seek to awaken the sleeping "virgins." Some of them get awake and thank the Lord and his faithful, while others are merely angered by our kind endeavors and say all manner of evil against us falsely;—thus showing that they are not of the kind whom the Lord desires shall be members of "the bride, the Lamb's wife."—Rev. 19:7, 8.

The portion or future of the foolish virgins is not shown in the parable—except that they, not getting the proper supply of the "oil" in season to go in before the "door" to this joint-heir class closes, will not be admitted to it;—its number being limited, and by that time completed. Other Scriptures seem to show us that these foolish virgins will pass through the great time of trouble with which this age is just about to close; and that in it they will be chastened and tested and made fit for a good place in the Father's house; and that tho they will never be sharers of the Bride's portion they will be of *"the virgins her companions* that follow her."—Psa. 45:14; Rev. 7:14-17; 19:9.

"TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS SEVERAL ABILITY"

MATT. 25:14-30.—FEB. 10.

"So, then, every one of us shall give an account of himself before God."—Rom. 14:12.

It was on the way from Jericho toward Jerusalem that our Lord gave the parable of the ten pounds, delivered one each to ten servants. (Luke 19:11, 12. See our issue of Dec. 1) The parable of the talents which we are now considering is a different one in several particulars, tho bearing close resemblance to the other. It was part of our Lord's teaching to his disciples during the few days preceding his crucifixion, probably the Tuesday preceding it, on the evening journey from Jerusalem to Bethany. This parable illustrates to us the differing abilities of God's people in respect to his service, and how each is accountable according to his ability, and that the same results are neither required nor expected from all, but simply faithfulness by each in the use of that ability and opportunity which he possesses.

The Revised Version notes the fact that the words, "the kingdom of heaven," in the opening verse, are not found in the ancient MSS., but this does not interfere with the thought that it is the kingdom of heaven in embryo (the church) that is discussed, and that is likened to these servants who receive the talents; for this parable, it is to be remembered, followed immediately the parable of the ten virgins, which is declared to be an illustration of the kingdom. The parable of the talents, therefore, merely continues the thought respecting the kingdom class, making these fresh observations respecting it.

Altho a number of servants are implied, yet only a sample illustration of three is given, leaving it to be inferred that the others were more or less distinctly represented in these three, without attempting to show or to teach which of the classes would predominate, in this respect also this parable corresponds to the parable of the pounds. This parable was evidently, like the other, to prepare the minds of the apostles for our Lord's departure from the present life—to the "far country," heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God to present on behalf of mankind the sacrifice for sins which he was about to accomplish at Calvary; and incidentally to be crowned, highly exalted and honored far above angels, principalities and powers, at the right hand of divine favor, and there to remain till the appointed time for him to take possession of his kingdom under the whole heavens, to subdue it and to bring it into full accord with the divine government, that God's will should be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

The expression "far country," would give the thought of a considerable time to elapse between the Master's leaving and his return to establish his Millennial kingdom. Meantime the apostles were to understand that they themselves were his servants to whom he entrusted his property, and that he would expect them to be faithful in guarding all of his interests and affairs, and promoting the same according to their several abilities. But since the parable covers the long period of eighteen hundred years, and looks down to certain servants living at the time of the Master's return, it is evident that it was intended to include, not the apostles only, but, as our Lord's prayer expressed the matter, "All those who shall believe on me through their word." We are to notice distinctly that the parable does not concern the world; nor do the decisions mentioned as taking place at the second coming of our Lord in any sense of the word represent decisions respecting the world, but merely decisions respecting the church. Nor are we even to understand that the parable includes the general "household of faith;" but simply and only the specially consecrated servants of the Lord, to whom he has committed certain responsibilities; *viz.*, those only who have been begotten of the holy Spirit.

In the early church, following the Pentecostal outpouring of the holy Spirit, every consecrated believer received a gift or talent, and some received many of these, as the Apostle says: "The manifestation of the Spirit [a portion, at least one talent] is given to every man [in this consecrated church] to profit withal." Each had a responsibility in proportion as he had talents or gifts of the spirit, and hence the Apostle Paul, having more than the others, had a greater responsibility because he had greater opportunities; and we judge that he measured up to these responsibilities in a manner most acceptable to the Master. (1 Cor. 14:18) But those gifts must have ceased within a short time after the death of the Apostles, because we most clearly find that the gifts of the Spirit were imparted to believers only through the laying on of hands of the apostles—that they did not come supernaturally from God to every individual,—and that those who possessed the gifts themselves, except the apostles, could not communicate them to others.—Acts 8:12-20.

The object of those gifts, as we have already seen, was the establishment of the early church, but with its establishment their necessity ceased, and hence the gifts ceased in that form, and have since continued with the Lord's people in a very different form; that is to say, since then the *natural* gifts or talents which each person possesses through birth, education and training are reckoned, when he is consecrated to the Lord and accepted by him, as being owned or possessed by the man's new or holy Spirit, and hence are reckoned as talents or abilities committed to his care, and for the use of which he will be held responsible in the outcome. If he remained one of the world he would have other responsibilities, but not such as are implied in this lesson, which represents only the responsibilities of the consecrated servants in the use of their Master's spiritual goods.

We may safely say that there are comparatively few five-talent servants amongst the Lord's people: the majority of the saints may safely be considered as being of the one-and two-talent classes. There are not many five-talent people in the world anyway, and it would appear that the world, the flesh and the devil bid so high for the services of these few that the number of them to become the Lord's servants, and to make consecration of their five talents fully and exclusively to his service, is comparatively small—"not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble."

The parable shows that five-talent people amongst the Lord's servants are not to measure themselves with others and to say, I have done enough; certainly more than A., who has one talent, but as much as B., who has two talents. Rather, each disciple is to seek to know truthfully just what talents of natural ability and opportunity the Master has committed to his care, and to seek to use everyone of these as fully, as thoroughly and as constantly as possible, so that the results may be much fruit, much praise, much service, much honor to the Lord. And as this parable should be a check upon those servants who have five talents, to hinder them from taking a slothful view of the matter so it should also be an encouragement to those having fewer talents of ability and opportunity, showing them that the Lord will not expect as great things from them as he would expect from those having greater opportunities and greater natural talents. It teaches such that they should do with their might what their hands find to do, and realize that this reasonable service is what the Lord expects and what he proposed to reward in each. The servant who had only one talent of ability and opportunity should have felt equally his responsibility, and might equally have had the Master's approval had he been faithful, in which event, no doubt, his one talent would have increased to two.

Our Lord's arrangement of the parable, that the person who received the one talent was the one who digged in the earth and buried it, should not be understood to mean that the one-talented people are more likely than others of the Lord's servants with more talents to thus neglect and misuse them. So far as observation teaches, we might conclude that proportionately as many of the two-talented and five-talented dig in the earth and hide their talents, as of those who possess only one; and of course their so doing would be proportionately more blameworthy than that of the one-talented man. Why, then, is the one-talented man chosen as an illustration of these talent-burials? We answer, that it is to show the responsibility of those who have least—that the Lord expects even the least of his consecrated people to know of, and to use the talents he has in his possession, and that he will not hold guiltless even those who have the smallest ability to serve him and his brethren and his truth and who neglect to use it. As the responsibilities accompanying a larger number of talents would be greater, so the losses in their case would be greater, and thus the punishment more severe.

"After a long time the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them." By these words our Lord gave to the disciples as clear an intimation as was proper of the fact that they were not to expect him to return and reckon with them in a very few days, a few months or a few years, but when they subsequently asked him respecting the particular time, he refused them, saying that it was not for them to know the times and the seasons, which the Father had put in his own power. And so for eighteen hundred years the Lord's people have been left without clear information on this subject. This, however, does not militate against the thought that it is the privilege of God's people *now* to know something of the times and seasons, because the due time has come in which the Father wishes to communicate these;—the time mentioned through the Prophet Daniel, when the [truly] wise shall understand, as we saw in the preceding lesson.—Dan. 12:10; 1 Thess. 5:4; John 16:13.

There is no intimation in the parable that the disciples would die and *go to* their Lord, and be reckoned with and rewarded then, as many believe to have been the case. The Scriptures are harmonious and consistent with themselves in their teachings, and not only declare that "David is not ascended into the heavens," and that "no man hath ascended up to heaven" save Jesus, but they declare also that *our Lord will come* a second time, to receive his people unto himself and to then reward them. The Apostle Paul, who was one of these five-talented servants, declares respecting himself, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me [in reservation, in waiting] a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me *in that day*, and not to me only, but also unto all them that love his appearing."—2 Tim. 4:7, 8; John 3:13; 14:3; Acts 2:34.

To our understanding we are now living in "the days of the Son of man," and he is now reckoning with his servants in this the day of his revelation. We understand, according to the Scriptures, by faith and not by sight, that the reckoning was to begin with those servants who had fallen asleep, and that "we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord" should not prevent or hinder them, nor take precedence to them in this matter of being reckoned with and rewarded. (1 Thess. 4:15-17) To our understanding as already shown in the MILLENNIAL DAWN series, 1878 marked the date for our Lord's assumption of Kingly authority and his judgment upon Babylon the Great, characterizing her as "fallen," and calling for all the people of God to come out of her: and that it marked also the date for the faithful overcomers of the past to have a share in the first resurrection—to enter into the joys of their Lord, and hear his words, "Well done, good and faithful servants." In harmony with this, it is our understanding that all of this class are now enjoying the glory, honor and immortality promised to the faithful. This work of judging the *servants* is totally distinct from the judging of the *world*—the world's judgment is very different everyway, and is to take place during the Millennial age, and is represented in the parable of the sheep and the goats, the scene of which is located "when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory," at which time the faithful servants of the present age, whose trial is now in progress, and whose reckoning and rewards are shown in the parable of the lesson, will sit with the Lord in his throne as he has promised.—Rev. 3:21.

As other Scriptures show, "we who are alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord" will not be omitted from the company of the glorified, altho our being alive will not give us precedence to them. The inspection and rewarding of the Lord's servants having begun in 1878 as respects those that had fallen asleep, is since progressing in respect to those who remain: these are granted a reasonable time in which to finish up their contract of full consecration,—to become *ripe* "wheat"—and to render up their accounts. Each of the elect now, as he finishes his course, reports immediately, and does not need to "sleep" in death, to wait for the coming of the King, but is immediately, in the moment of death, changed, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," experiencing fully and instantly the first resurrection blessing of glory, honor and immortality—in the moment of death.

Realizing from this view of the parable that the Lord's people of today are represented in it, it is for each one of the consecrated (while yet it is called day—before the night cometh) to make a full and thorough inspection of himself: and to determine to what extent he has talents, abilities, privileges, opportunities, to serve the Lord, and to what extent he is using these; and to remember that his share in the reward depends upon his faithfulness in the use of his talents. There may be instances in which persons of five talents will use three of them faithfully in the Lord's service, and bury the other two in business and cares of this life—"in the earth," in earthly affairs. There may be instances in which those who have two talents use one for the Lord's service and bury the other one; but the fact that our Lord does not give such illustrations would lead us to question the probability of such a course. Some might plan certain things respecting two talents for heavenly things and three for earthly things; or of one for earthly things and the other for heavenly things; but the result probably would be either that he would become thoroughly immersed in the earthly things, and bury all his talents there, or else that his heart would become so thoroughly infused with the Lord's spirit and the desire to serve his cause that all of his talents would be thus employed. This tendency and result is implied by our Lord's statement on another occasion: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." "No man can serve two masters." Experience and observation corroborate this; and hence as a rule we find that people are either cold or hot in spiritual things; either it is the kingdom of heaven first and far above all other considerations, demanding and receiving the very best we have of time, energy and influence; or else the kingdom of heaven is neglected and forgotten, and time and influence are spent in money-getting or other selfish and earthly occupations of mind and body.

The lesson of this to every one of the Lord's consecrated people is plain: we are to "seek first [chiefly] the kingdom of God." It is to be our chief concern and to receive from us all the time, attention, thought, energy, influence and means we have—the things *needful* for the present life being understood to be excepted; and our love and zeal will be manifested by the proportion of these even, which we are willing to sacrifice in the interest of heavenly things.

The reward given to the faithful servants was the same in each case—the entering into the joys of the Lord; and we may reasonably understand that this will mean that the cup of joy to each will be full. In this, too, we have a great encouragement for all, and one which perhaps is specially needed by the majority of the Lord's servants, who possess only one or two talents of opportunity, etc. They have an equally good opportunity of entering into the joys of the Lord as tho they had five or ten talents; and the reward, "Well done, good and faithful servant," will be truly meant for, and as fully appreciated by the one as the other.

The reward to these servants is in full harmony with the foregoing application of the parable, and shows that during the Millennial age the faithful servants, the "elect" of this Gospel age, will be the rulers of the world, "joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord" in his kingdom, and upon his throne of rulership; for the reward specifies, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee *ruler over* many things." If the parable were intended to represent the world's judgment, such a conclusion would be inappropriate, because by the time the world's judgment will have ended there will no longer be necessity for rulership in this sense; for, as the Apostle declares, Christ shall reign [during the Millennium] until he shall have put down all authority, etc., and then he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. The *rule*, or reign of righteousness, the Mediatorial kingdom, is to be established during the Millennial age,—thus to overthrow the rule of unrighteousness now prevailing amongst men, and to lift mankind in general out of the present condition of sin and death—to deliver as many of them as will accept the deliverance from the power of Satan into the liberty of sons of God. And with the accomplishment of this work the time for all such ruling will be at an end; hence this parable is a strong lesson in support of the pre-millennial coming of our Lord and exaltation of his faithful, the elect church.

The servant who hid his talent in the earth, and who failed to use it, endeavored to justify his course by blaming the Master with being too hard and exacting. And so it is with many, who, having taken upon themselves the vows of consecration to the Lord, subsequently fail to perform them. They are disposed to blame the Lord rather than to blame themselves, and this course indicates what their real lack is,—love. They do not love the Lord fully, truly, sufficiently, and their course reveals this fact. Had they loved him they would have delighted to do to their ability his will; and only such are blessed with rewards.

The punishment of those who failed to perform their covenant as servants, who failed to use the talents provided for them under this covenant, is shown to be great loss;—but not the loss which many suppose, whose minds are blinded by the theory that eternal torment is the wages for sin, and that it is visited upon all except the "overcomers" of this Gospel age. Such claim that the unfaithful servant would be delivered over to Satan and be tortured in flaming fire, and so blind are many of the advocates of this theory that they read all this into our Lord's statement in this very parable; but instead of mentioning flames of fire, which would surely make the place *light*, our Lord mentions *darkness* as his portion—"outer darkness." Neither does our Lord mention the demon-tormentors, generally believed in.

We offer another and much more reasonable, much more consistent, interpretation of our Lord's words. The servant who fails to use the present privileges of consecration and service and sacrifice will find the opportunity taken from him. He will have it no more; neither will he have any share in the reward given to the overcomers;—he will suffer this great loss. He is represented as going into "outer darkness," implying that he had already been in the light of divine favor, blessing, privilege, knowledge of divine things;—that he would lose this enlightenment, and that his understanding would become darkened as respects spiritual things. It is "outer darkness," because it is the darkness common to and resting upon the whole world of mankind;—only the consecrated, accepted of the Lord, being permitted to come fully into the clear light of the knowledge of the Lord and of his plan now shining. Any others than these, upon whose this light may temporarily fall, have it only in a secondary sense, at very most, and see not the glorious things themselves, but merely, so to speak, their reflections. The unfaithful servant is to be cast completely out of all favor; even the reflected light will be obscured from his vision, and he will find himself, now or shortly, in the darkness of the world as respects the divine plan, work, etc. And there he will share with the world in its great time of trouble with which this age is about to close, a time of trouble which is fittingly pictured in the parable by the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Question.—Is it so that children are not amenable to the high calling, and that consequently they should be let go, without special religious instruction—into the nominal church Sunday Schools, etc.?

Answer.—Only believers have ever been amenable to the high calling of joint-heirship with Christ, and to suffering with him. The innocency of childhood is in the Scriptures set forth as a beautiful picture, and one that it to be emulated by all of the Lord's people in spiritual matters—they are to be children as respects malice; they are to be simple in their faith and love, not given to duplicity, misrepresentation, deep scheming, etc. In this sense of the word the Lord assures us that we must all become as little children, else we cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven. But to be as a little child in these respects, and to be a little child, are two different matters. The Lord did not accept any of the infants of Palestine to be his disciples, nor has he called infants to be his disciples since.

However, the age at which an intelligent faith in the Lord might be exercised and the time, therefore, at which, after the exercise of that faith, a covenant of full consecration to the Lord's service could be intelligently entered into, must vary with the individuality of the children. We have known some that we considered quite competent both to believe and to consecrate at as early an age as fourteen, and all we should ask of any would be an evidence of their faith and an evidence of appreciation of consecration.

We have a duty to our children, even tho they be too young to appreciate matters for themselves. They are our children, and under our care, and for us to deliberately lead their young feet into the snares of the Adversary, and to assist in entangling them in sectarianism, when we know how much evil it has done us, would be a crime on our part against them and against the truth. Every parent should recognize himself as having incurred grave responsibilities toward his children, not only for their temporal necessities, but equally for their mental and moral training; and the parents who are most faithful in the discharge of this God-appointed responsibility are sure to be the ones who are running the race themselves most successfully: for they will find that every effort to make clear the divine plan to the child will bring clearness and force to the parent's mind, and every attempt to inculcate the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of truth, will be sure to bring with it a blessing, not only upon the heart of the child, but upon the heart of the parent. And years will show that the faithful parents will have reward through their children, of joy and peace and comfort, while those parents who neglect their children, or who trust them to those who are likely to mislead them in spiritual things, are pretty sure eventually to reap according as they have sown—poor or meager results.

Question.—Would it be proper for us after withdrawing from a church to return to it and commune with it?

Answer.—There is no law to hinder the Christian from going anywhere he believes the Lord would have him go, and where he believes he can get and do good and serve the truth, and feed the Lord's flock, and use his influence to the Lord's praise. If therefore you feel that your visiting the church from which you have withdrawn would have the above beneficial results, and if you would be made welcome by the said church, we see no reason why you might not, as occasion would offer, attend such church.

However, on the other hand there is something to be said. Are you sure that your going would either do good or bring good? Are you sure that your influence would be favorable to the truth, if invested in that manner? Or would it be unfavorable to the truth and favorable to error? Are you sure that your attendance would furnish you any opportunities for speaking the truth and serving it to fellow-members of the household of faith? These are questions which each of the Lord's people must decide for himself. We think that as a general rule denominational lines are so closely drawn that there is no opportunity inside of them for bringing the truth clearly and fearlessly before the attention of the attendants.

Respecting the taking of communion: It would seem to us that to do this regularly would certainly be unwise and prejudicial to the truth, because it would be favoring what we think is not Scriptural. And yet if by accident we happened to be with Christian people when they partook of the communion we would not feel condemned by our conscience in celebrating the Lord's death with them, explaining subsequently to our acquaintances what we considered to be the Scriptural truth on this subject. But in visiting a nominal church we should, if possible, avoid visiting on the Sunday when they erroneously celebrate the Lord's death out of its memorial season.

SIN AND SICKNESS

It is frequently asserted by some of the faith-healers of the present day that personal sin is the cause of all personal sickness, and that if persons who are sick will repent and be saved from their sins they may expect to be also saved from their sickness and diseases; the one only condition being that they shall believe that the Lord does heal them in answer to prayer.

The proposition may be true that sin is the general cause of sickness, or, rather, that sickness is a consequence of sin, in the sense that had not Adam sinned death would not have entered into the world, neither sickness as an antecedent of death; yet to hold that the sickness of the individual is the consequence or result of the sin of the individual in every instance, and that salvation from sin necessarily carries with it, on the exercise of the requisite faith, the healing of the body, is a doctrine fraught with error and evil; bringing those who come under its influence into great mental trouble because they cannot exercise the necessary faith for healing, and they therefore count themselves base unbelievers, when they may be exercising all the faith that is required of them, and should 'rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory,' because they are receiving the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls.—1 Pet. 1:8, 9.

It will, therefore, be a desirable thing to disprove this unwholesome doctrine, and, in order to do so, it will be only necessary to show that the Lord Jesus Christ was sick, for he "did no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22), "and in him is no sin" (1 John 3:5), and he could boldly ask, while he walked the earth, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John 8:46), and, therefore, personal sin could not have been the cause of sickness in him, as it was not in the case of the man born blind, and may not be in a thousand other instances.

Jesus was a very sick man in the garden of Gethsemane. Luke, who was a physician, tells us that, being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops (thromboiclots) of blood falling down to the ground. This sickness with which Jesus suffered was *diapedesis*, a sickness not very common, and yet frequent enough to receive note and attention in the medical works and the cyclopedias. In McClintock and Strong's great work we have several instances given, under the phrase, "bloody sweat," especially that of Charles IX, of France, and allusion is made to Dr. Stroud's book on "The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ," where the matter is scientifically treated. . . .

No one can read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, in the original, without being fully convinced that (the chapter containing a prophecy of Christ) it is intended to present him as one suffering from sickness. In the third verse we have the words, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," Here the Hebrew word for sorrows is "makaboth," and means pains, while the word for grief is "choli," and is from the verb "chalah," which means to be sick, weak, diseased. This word "choli" is the word used when the sickness of Hezekiah is spoken of, also when it is said, "Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died (2 Kings 13:14), and in numerous other instances of bodily sickness. The same word is used in the fourth verse, when it is said, "Surely he hath carried our griefs." In Matthew 8:17 this word is translated in the Greek *asthencias*, "infirmities" in our version, but it is the word that is used in the singular when the sickness of Lazarus is spoken of (John 11:4), and as a verb in various other instances of unquestionable bodily illness. Again, in the tenth verse, "he hath put him to grief," where the reading in the Hebrew is, "he hath made him sick," as in the margin of the Revised Version.

Thus the proof from the Scriptures is ample that Jesus Christ was sick, and so able to sympathize with us in our sicknesses and "infirmities" (Heb. 4:15); being without sin, personal sin could not have been the cause of his illness, and, therefore, may not be of ours.

W. S. Urmy,

Pastor of Potrero M. E. Church, California.

Dear Brother in Jesus Christ:—Your divine theology is certainly a helping hand to me. I hope, dear sir, that you will let me have many tracts and Zion's Watch Tower for my religious education. I do certainly believe that the "little flock" will be an instrument by whom all the families of earth will be blessed; because all the churches are in a very poor situation and the world in great desolation [distress]. May God give me opportunity to know more about your divine mission. Come to my help and let me take the water abundantly in your publication. I am, dear sir, with much gratitude

Very truly yours,
J. R. Vilatte, Archbishop of the
Orthodox Catholic Church,
Canada.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

Naturally enough at the opening of a new century thinking men inquire each other's views respecting the outlook. Naturally enough, too, hopes and fears chase each other through these imaginings, according to the temperaments of the thinkers and their experiences and their light.

The child of God, with his Father's Word of revelation in his hand, surely has much advantage every way over others as he seeks to scan the horizon of the twentieth century. But alas! how few among the millions of Christendom are in this position scanning the future through the glass of divine revelation. The masses nominally assent to the wisdom of such a course, yet will not follow it, confessing themselves "babes" as respects the Bible, "unskilful in the word of righteousness." (Heb. 5:11-14) Such "babes," realizing their own inabilities, look to their teachers as to nurses, care-takers; and the latter, sad to relate, are fulfilling prophecy in turning away their ears from the truth unto fables—evolution theories and higher criticism unbelief.—2 Tim. 4:3, 4.

But the few, the very few, the Lord's "little flock," those who do trust the Lord and search his Word—the very class to whom our Lord declares, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom"—the very class specified by the Apostle as "taught of God" and guided by his holy Spirit to an understanding of his Word—these certainly have much advantage every way; notably as respects the kingdom, but also in respect to the affairs of the present evil world.—1 Cor. 2:6-16; Matt. 13:11.

As this class faces toward the sunrise to note the world's prospects for the twentieth century, what a sunburst meets their eye of faith peering with the aid of the divine glass—God's Word—through the clouds and mists! They see, just beyond the vail, the Lord of Glory ready to take possession of earth's empire, just as soon as the allotted "Times of the Gentiles" shall have run out! They see, with the same eye of faith, the Lord's jewels, his bride, his joint-heir in the kingdom, mostly with him and waiting now while the remainder of the 144,000 finish their course and make their calling and election sure—passing one by one beyond the vail—changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to the glorious perfection of the first resurrection, with its glory, honor and immortality, which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, but which, as the Apostle declares, God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit.

Then looking for the world's portion through the same inspired glass and with the same eye of faith they see still other wonders and glories. They see God's (spiritual) kingdom about to be established in the earth: they see its wonderful provisions of heavenly love—for justice, equity, righteousness and the resultant blessings of peace on earth, good-will toward men: they see the binding of Satan and every evil principle and thing: they see the release of earth's dead and dying millions from the curse to an opportunity then to be theirs to return to full heart-harmony with the Creator through their Redeemer: they see the channel of this favor to be Christ and that the knowledge of this grace of God is yet to fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep.

Seeing these things their hearts rejoice and their faces are glad—truly the holy anointing oil, the holy Spirit and the blessed enlightenment which it brings them, is the oil of joy which replaces the spirit of heaviness. True, they see also the intervening trials of faith to themselves, and the sharp experiences which lie before them in the narrow way ere the goal is reached, and they see with even clearer distinctness than do the worldly-wise the great time of trouble coming upon nominal Christendom; but realizing all these things to be but incidentals preparing the way for the great blessing so soon to follow, they can and do lift up their heads and rejoice in the God of our salvation, saying: "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

"What if the clouds do for a moment
Hide the blue sky where morn appears?
Soon the glad sun of promise given
Rises to shine a thousand years!"

But now let us contrast with the above bright prospect the fears and doubts which trouble the wisest of the "children of this world," because they see only with their own mental eyes and lack the cheering enlightenment of the Bible spy-glass. These views have been collated by the *New York World*, which sent out some time since to prominent people a query respecting their view of the greatest menace to twentieth century progress. Some of the replies are summarized as follows:

"I believe that ere the twentieth century closes, the earth will be purged of its foulest shame, the killing of men by men in battle under the name of war," says Andrew Carnegie.

W. T. Stead declares that the chief menace to man's progress is "war, which threatens Christendom as the result of ignoring Christian principles in its dealings with one-fourth of the human race which is born inside a yellow skin." Sir

Walter Besant fears especially the increasing naval armaments, designed "apparently for self-protection," but in reality for aggression; while Lord Charles Beresford regards "the Chinese question" with most apprehension.

In many quarters the greatest menace is believed to be of a social rather than international nature. The Earl of Wemyss states it as his opinion that Socialism is blocking the march of human progress, and Arthur W. Pinero, the dramatist, attacks trades-unionism. Joseph Arch, the English labor leader, retaliates by declaring that "a large accumulation of wealth on the one hand, and a large increase of pauperism on the other" is the growing evil in society; and Samuel Gompers expresses fears for the lowering of the American standard of living, by Oriental competition.

"The greatest political danger of the twentieth century is that the increasing influence of wealth will lead to increasing disregard of the inalienable rights of man," says William Jennings Bryan. President Schurman, of Cornell University, fears most the "exaltation, worship, and pursuit of money as the foremost good of life. The salt that may save us from this blight," he adds, "is to be found in our schools and churches; in every union for a righteous cause; and most of all, in the ideals and aspirations of the noble souls who will not suffer human society to degenerate into a mere brutish struggle for life and the survival of the fittest." President Hadley, of Yale University, finds the threat to the public welfare in "legislation based on the self-interest of individuals, or classes, instead of on public sentiment and public spirit."

Among the ecclesiastics, emphasis is laid on the moral virtues. When questioned regarding coming dangers, the Bishop of Hereford replied, in the words of Col. 3:5: "Evil desires and covetousness." The Bishop of Llandaff answered: "Infidelity, anarchy." Cardinal Gibbons says that "the greatest dangers that now seem to confront us are political corruption and lust for gain and the unholy purposes to which it is perverted."

"MEN'S HEARTS FAILING THEM FOR FEAR"

"The view ten years ago showed a placid, smiling river; now we see the boiling rapids of a torrent plunging toward what abyss no one knows. War has followed war with swift succession. . . . What the next stroke will be, who can say?"—*Springfield Republican.*

Lord Salisbury said of threatened wars:

"These wars come upon us absolutely unannounced and with terrible rapidity. The war cloud rises in the horizon with a rapidity that obviates all calculation, and, it may be, a month or two months after the first warning you receive, you find you are engaged in, or in prospect of a war on which your very existence is staked."

Gen. N. A. Miles, after his European tour, said:

"I have seen all the great armies of Europe except the Spanish army. What I have seen does not indicate that the millennium is at hand, when swords shall be beaten into plowshares."

The late Bishop Newman gave his view thus:

"This is the most unsettled condition of the world since the crucifixion of Christ. The stability of government is no longer a fact. Change is in the atmosphere. It is just as true now as a thousand years ago, 'Thou knowest not what a day will bring forth.' . . . Statesmen are at their wits' end. Philosophers speculate in vain."

Archbishop Ireland, Roman Catholic, declares:

"The bonds of society are relaxed; traditional principles are losing their sacredness, and perils hitherto unknown are menacing the life of the social organism."

Prof. Andrews, ex-president of Brown University, says:

"No well-informed person in Europe seems to believe that peace is destined to endure there very long. On all hands people are preparing for war. Armies and navies are strengthened; fortifications multiplied; immense war treasures of gold piled up; all possible hypothetical plans of campaign, offensive and defensive, studied and discussed; firearms, great and small, ceaselessly experimented upon and improved; civil measures subordinate to military, and statesmen to great army men and navy men."

Signor Crispi, ex-prime minister of Italy, says:

"Europe resembles Spain from a certain point of view. *Anarchy is dominant everywhere.* To speak frankly, there is no Europe. The European concert is only a sinister joke. Nothing can be expected from the concert of the powers. We are marching toward the unknown. Who knows what tomorrow has in store for us?"

All of these are right to some extent, for indeed and in truth the new King, Immanuel, will bring in an everlasting peace, but his reign will be ushered in by the political and social and ecclesiastical troubles, which the Bishop of Hereford properly ascribes to "evil desires and covetousness"—otherwise selfishness, which, as Bishop Llandaff declares, lead to anarchy.

RELIGIOUS FEDERATION IN UNBELIEF AND WORKS

In Great Britain and in various quarters in the United States religious federation is making progress. These unions are for greater and more effective *works* of righteousness according to their own statements, and religious conviction, faith, is generally lost sight of—denominations of opposite faiths seeking rapprochement—in growing unbelief as respects Bible doctrines. Note the following public affirmation of unbelief in the reliability of the Scriptures by Rev. Rainsford, D. D., of New York City, reported in the *New York Journal.*

"In his sermon at St. George's Protestant Episcopal church Rev. Dr. W. S. Rainsford said that the teachings of Jesus Christ in regard to his second coming had been grossly misunderstood by the Apostles; that they had incorporated their mistakes into the New Testament; that the church had been grossly misled; and that the prayer book's teachings had been largely influenced by a handling of the Bible which did not discriminate between the spiritual teachings of Jesus and the concepts of men.

"The preacher's thesis was that the kingdom of God was not a world power at all, but a spiritual kingdom in all men's hearts, which could never be established by force, but could be wrought only by the persuasion of truth. Dr. Rainsford said that the prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem, in the Gospel of St. Mark, had been understood to include the promise that the Lord would come again within the generation of the Apostles. When he did not come, St. Jude attempted to explain the apparent failure of the prophecy by saying that one day was with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

"'A delightful theological subterfuge,' remarked the preacher; 'a complete twisting of the meaning of Jesus. There is no terrible judgment ahead, no physically burning hell. Judgment is a process here and now; salvation is a process here and now. There is no standing before an awful throne and the separation of impossible sheep and goats; but the separation is here and now, as men go on up or slip down into the bog and mire.'"

Here we have one of the nominal church's great men, one of its "princes," doing his best to undermine the faith of the people who pay him a princely salary to help them to see and follow the Lord's paths. Nor must we condemn the man as a hypocrite, for doubtless it is but another case of the blind leading the blind into the ditch. This learned man has possibly not yet learned that it was not Jude who wrote the words to which he objects, but Peter. (2 Peter 3:8) He perhaps has not noted, either, that the same holy Spirit indited the same lesson through the Prophet David centuries before Peter's day, saying, "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday." (Psa. 90:4) The expression was so used by the Lord himself also.—Gen. 2:17.

However, Dr. Rainsford is only following the logical course of all "higher critics," who, starting out with too much egotism, find fault not only with all of the Old Testament, but also with the New—confounding both prophets and apostles by their superior wisdom, and classing our Lord with these because he quoted those very prophecies which the superior wisdom of the higher critics show to be spurious, while our Lord, lacking their wisdom, thought these to be genuine prophecies and quoted them as such. Truly, as the Prophet Isaiah foretold, the wisdom of their wise men is perished.—Isa. 29:13, 14, 9-12.

A PLAIN STATEMENT OF THE CASE

The Rev. M. O. Simons, a Cleveland minister, is reported by the *Plain Dealer* to have summed up present conditions in Christendom as follows:

"Rev. Simons referred to some of the old battle fields in this warfare of ideas, and indicated how recent have been the great changes in religious thinking, by referring to the fact that only in 1876 Dr. Minot J. Savage preached a series of sermons on 'The Religion of Evolution.' So far as known, he was the first minister in Europe and America in the regular course of pulpit work to frankly accept evolution and to frankly attempt a reconstruction of religious thinking. 'And it is hard for us to realize now,' said Mr. Simons, 'the hue and cry that was raised over these sermons. Where are we now in this conflict between the old and the new? I believe we are on the verge of a frank confession that there must be a complete religious reconstruction. The old system of Christian doctrine rested upon the fall of man as a foundation.

But now modern thought has utterly discredited this story of the fall and the subsequent depravity of all human nature. What then becomes of the system that is built upon it?'

"Mr. Simons then referred briefly to some of the great Christian bodies to show how *every one of them is yielding to the broader and more liberal interpretation of Christian doctrine.* He said: 'Officially, the Catholic church stands squarely opposed to all modern tendencies, and yet its people cannot be prevented from thinking. We find much unrest among Catholic leaders, much suspicion in European Catholicism of American Catholicism. The Catholic church has its radical wing as truly as any Christian denomination. In the Church of England we find reactionary tendencies, but these simply indicate that the conservative element has turned to the only things left to it, the traditional value of church machinery and apostolic succession. That reaction does not represent the whole church. Some of the most enlightened scholars in the world are in that church; the great liberal interpretation of all doctrinal points is winning its way and the future of the English church is in the hands of those who are rebuilding their religious thought on new foundations.

"'I may say much the same of the Episcopal church in America. It has its conservative reactions, but the growing sentiment in the church is broad and liberal. I have friends in its ministry who are as liberal as I am. In the Congregational church there is going on a rapid reconstruction of religious thought. A book like Dr. Gordon's, 'The Christ of Today,' is proof of this, not only because of its ideas, but because it did not convulse the whole Congregational body as it once would have done.'

"In the great Presbyterian church there is a great rising tide of liberal thinking. The movement for revision of the Westminster Confession, or for some relief from the outgrown ideas of that document, is plain evidence.

"In all the great Christian denominations the conservatives who would keep fighting the church upon its old foundations are fighting a losing battle. The advance of liberal thought is irresistible."

We quote the above to prove the reverse of what the speaker intended--to prove the great falling away from the truth to vanity and fables and from vital godliness to moralizing infidelity. However, the wider the chasm grows between the "wheat" and the "tares," between the children of light and the children of darkness, the easier it will be for each to know his place, and by taking it he will make the division the more quick and complete. Who is on the Lord's side? Who?—Speak and live accordingly!

ONE-DAY CONVENTIONS AND ALLEGHENY MEETINGS

The Editor has accepted quite a number of invitations for one-day (Sunday) Conventions of late—at points which can be reached by railroad in one night's travel, permitting him to leave Allegheny Saturday night and to get back to his editorial duties on Monday morning. One of these (D. V.) will be held at Canton, O., Feb. 10; one at Toledo, O., Feb. 17; another at Baltimore, Md., on March 10. These are only *local* conventions, usually attended by friends within a radius of 50 miles.

But some dear friends from neighboring towns who have come to Allegheny at such times have felt a little disappointment at not seeing "Brother Russell" as they expected. We therefore announce that hereafter such one-day conventions will be arranged for on only the second and fourth Sundays of each month. Brother Russell may be expected to be at Allegheny on the first and third Sundays of each month, no preventing providence.

VOLUNTEER WORK FOR 1901

Remarks respecting the new tract "Food for Thinking Christians," No. 52, are favorable: all of our readers seem to consider it well calculated to awaken interest wherever it may be read. We are getting ready large editions for the "volunteer" service on Sundays near Protestant churches, and hope to be ready to fill orders about April 1.

It is time now to prepare by choosing a "captain" and enlisting as many volunteers as may be able and willing to serve. Let your "captain" report to us the names of volunteers, the number of churches, the average attendance at these, and his estimate of the quantity of the booklets needed, and the addresses to which they are preferred to be sent.

"RESIST, STEADFAST IN THE FAITH"

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist, steadfast in the faith."—1 Pet. 5:8, 9.

The Scriptures set before us the thought that as Christians we are subject to assaults from three different quarters, by three different enemies, who, nevertheless, frequently coöperate the one with the other; the world, the flesh and the devil. We are not to suppose that every difficulty and trial which besets us is of the devil; but rather to remember the Apostle's words, "A man is tempted when he is led astray of his own desires and enticed." (James 1:13, 14) Such temptations, then, are of the flesh—the result of our being members of the fallen race, whose weaknesses and imperfections have been aggravated and intensified for now six thousand years. So, then, we are to recognize as one of our chief foes our own inherent weaknesses and predisposition to things depraved, selfish, sinful.

The whole world, thus depraved and under the control of the spirit of selfishness, is largely, tho unconsciously, the tool of Satan, who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience. (Eph. 2:2) The world has become an enemy and tempter by reason of the fact that we (the church) have been "begotten again" to *new* hopes, *new* ambitions, *new* aspirations, *new* desires, which are along radically different lines from any the world knows or has sympathy with. Our begetting is of the holy Spirit, and its tendencies are heavenly and spiritual, and in harmony with principles of righteousness, truth and love. Yet it is only our hearts that are thus changed—our flesh is still much more in harmony with the world than with the new order of things established in our hearts and wills by grace and truth, through Christ. Consequently, when the world, through any of its children, by their words or writings or general spirit, comes in contact with the Lord's people, immediately they find that altho their hearts are loyal to the Lord and loyal to all the gracious things which he has promised them, and to the spirit of righteousness, love and truth, nevertheless their flesh has an affinity for and an attraction toward the world, its things, its views, its arguments, its pleasures, etc.

It is for this reason that the Christian is called upon to reckon himself dead, not only sin, but to his own natural desires, appetites, inclinations, and to the world, which is in harmony with sin and perverted tastes and appetites. As the Apostle intimates, there is a constant battle between the new creature, the new will, and the old creature, the fleshly or depraved disposition. He says, "The flesh desires *contrary* to the Spirit, and the Spirit *contrary* to the flesh." (Gal. 5:17) And even tho the advanced Christian has reached the place where he is enabled to reckon his flesh and its will completely dead and buried, he nevertheless has need continually, with the Apostle, to re-examine the matter, lest the flesh should become alive again. This was the Apostle's method; he says: "I keep my body under [dead, buried, in complete subjection to the new mind], lest having preached to others I myself should be a castaway." (1 Cor. 9:27) This keeping of the body under, this watching of it lest its will become alive again, is a constant necessity to those who would be "overcomers;" for it is the victory of the new mind, the new will, over the old will, the will of the flesh, that constitutes us victors, by developing in us strong, holy characters.

And now we come to the third feature of the Christian's temptations—Satan, our adversary; strong and lion-like, vigilant and fully awake, he seeks to use every opportunity against us, as the Apostle declares. He seeks to devour us, to swallow us up in calamity, patiently waiting and insidiously laying snares for the "new creatures," using his many blinded servants to brow-beat or cajole or otherwise inveigle us into yielding to the old will; thus separating us from the Good Shepherd and making us more and more deaf to his Word. Since our Lord sees best to permit Satan to have this liberty, and will not take it from him until the beginning of the Millennial age, when he shall be bound, to deceive the nations no more, it implies that in some sense it is profitable to the Lord's people that this adversary be granted liberty against them. If it were not so, faith assures us that he would be bound forthwith—at once restrained of liberty to assault us.

Writing on this same subject, the Apostle Paul declares, "We are not ignorant of his devices." Again he refers to the "wiles of the devil," implying that he is an ensnarer who seeks to entrap us. Again he declares, "For we wrestle not with flesh and blood [merely], but [our chief conflict is] with principalities and powers [unseen], with wicked spirits in exalted positions." (2 Cor. 2:11; Eph. 6:11, 12) The Apostle here seems to call attention to the fact that not Satan alone, but all the fallen angels, the demons, his coadjutors, are the foes of the church, against whose wiles and schemes and plottings, more subtle than that of human beings, the Lord's people must be continually on the lookout.

SATAN'S ATTACKS THROUGH HUMAN AGENCIES

As to Satan's methods of attack, we are given some suggestions also. Altho he is alert, like the roaring lion, he never attacks us with a roar, but, on the contrary, subtly; he creeps upon us in an unlooked for place and at unlooked for times, to devour us, to overcome us, to crush out of us the spiritual life, and particularly to deprive us of faith in the Lord.

The Apostle Paul shows us that these subtle approaches of the adversary are to be expected through human agencies, assuring us that the adversary worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience, and the better and more honorable and more closely identified with the Lord and his flock these children of disobedience may be, the more pleased the adversary will be to use them, and the more service they may render him. Thus the Apostle declares that Satan presents himself in his temptations as an angel, a messenger of God —not a messenger of darkness, of error and of gross sin, for he knows that these qualities would alarm and repel all the children of the light: rather he appears as an angel of light, a messenger of divine grace and truth. And we are not ignorant of his wiles and devices; we see that for centuries he has used not only heathen religious systems to delude and ensnare the heathen, but Christian religious systems, to deceive and ensnare God's people. At the making of the creeds of Christendom, during the dark ages, we may be sure that he was present, and that through various agencies he took an active part in framing their many blasphemous misstatements of the divine character and plan, and of deluding the people into thinking that these were the teachings of the divine Word; and so through these channels he has wrought great havoc with the truth and greatly hindered God's people from receiving both the milk of the Word, and its strong meat, and from growing by these means to the stature of the fulness of manhood in Christ.

We see again that after he could no longer control the world under Papacy and its darkness of error, when he perceived that the light of a clearer knowledge of divine things was breaking out here and there, he zealously presented himself as a messenger of light, to help on in the formation of the various sects and parties which then sprang up. How well he succeeded in getting into them all the leaven of false doctrine, and in getting each denomination, after having organized, to declare that it had the whole truth, and that *there must be no further progress* in the knowledge of the Lord and in the understanding of his Word, all may judge.

MODERN METHODS OF DESTROYING CHRISTIANS

Coming down to our own day, we see that as the light of truth became due, and when the minds of all thinking Christians were surely awakening from many of the superstitions and fallacies of the past, Satan again becomes the leader and reformer, and starting in with the principal colleges and theological seminaries, he leads them, professedly in a search for truth, into the gross darkness of skepticism, under the names of Higher Criticism and Evolution; and through these fountains of learning and instruction his influence is permeating Christendom through the ministry, in all denominations and in every quarter of the civilized world.

But, foreseeing that all minds would not be influenced along the same lines, our wily adversary has been leading other parties into other doctrines along other lines, all of which, however, have the Satan mark upon them; *viz.*, either a tacit or an active *denial of the ransom*—a denial of the redemption accomplished once for all by the man Christ Jesus at Calvary, and a denial, consequently, of all the gracious things which the Scriptures declare respecting the establishment of Christ's kingdom and the blessing of all the world of mankind with a knowledge of the truth, and with opportunities of restitution to Edenic conditions and harmony with God and everlasting love.

These various devices of the adversary in recent times are well known. Mormonism is one of these that attracts and ensnares a certain class; Spiritualism is another which attracts and ensnares another class of minds; Christian Science is another, very distinctive and totally different from the others; Theosophy is still another that has its attractions for other minds. In testing all the "new light" theories let us not forget that the Cross of Christ and the redemption thereby accomplished are the central point of antagonism between all these spurious theories, and the doctrine of the Scriptures. "The faith once delivered to the saints" has as its foundation, "how that *Christ died for our sins* and rose for our justification." However much Satan's various systems of delusion may differ from one another, they all agree in opposing this central point of the truth; and however they may seek to use the name of Christ, call themselves Christians, and seek to cover themselves with that "holy name" as a garment of light, it is only to deceive; it is in full accord with the policy which our great adversary has employed for centuries.

OCCULT INFLUENCES AT WORK

One of the most recent of Satan's devices to ensnare those of God's people who could not be misled by something presenting itself as another religion and another gospel, is what claims to be a Christianity of good works and good morals without respect to faith in things past or future. The good works are usually presented in the form of healing of disease. The methods employed, and the claims set forth vary considerably, yet back of and underneath all is an occult power, a hypnotic power, which, however much it claims to be "merely human power," nevertheless gives evidence in various ways that it is a part of the great deception of our day, wrought by the adversary himself as an angel of light, and respecting which the Scriptures forewarn us that there would be such strong delusions, which, if possible, would deceive the very elect.—Matt. 24:24.

If the very elect will be in danger, what must we expect respecting the world of mankind in general, and nominal Christianity? We must expect, as the Scriptures forcefully picture it, that many will "fall from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." We must expect the number thus to fall from the faith to be large, as again it is prophetically stated, "A thousand shall fall at thy side; ten thousand at thy right hand—but it shall not come nigh thee, . . . because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation."—1 Tim. 4:1; Psa. 91:7-9.

"NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES"

This gives us a clew to the security of the saints. Their strength will lie in great part in that they are *taking heed* to the warnings of the Apostle respecting the present time, and hence know how to beware of the wiles of the adversary. The "very elect" will be so in harmony with the Lord and so filled with the spirit of his Word, and so blessed by the exercise of their privileges as under-reapers in this harvest, and so disposed to lay down their lives for the truth, and in its service, that none of these snares and delusions of the adversary, promising life and health, will be special attractions for them. On the contrary, knowing what to expect, and looking forward with joy to the finishing of their course in *death* and thus passing "beyond the vail," they will be wholly out of sympathy with the snares which the adversary will present. Nevertheless, as the Apostle intimates, there will be in this time also some of the Lord's people who will require the sympathy and assistance of others, respecting whom he says that we should seek to pull them out of the fire—away from the influence and snares of the adversary.—Jude 22, 23.

The Apostle Peter's counsel respecting the way in which the Lord's people should meet the adversary implies that they will all somehow or other be enabled to recognize him. He says, "Whom resist, steadfast in the faith." These words imply that in order to resist we must have the faith—the faith that has confidence in God; the faith that has led to a consecration on the Lord's altar, even unto death; the faith that would not take back the sacrifice under any consideration, but which delights to see it consuming, and which rejoices, hoping thereby to share in the glory that shall follow.—Jude 3; Rom. 8:17, 18.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

MATT. 26:17-30.—FEB. 17.

"This do in remembrance of me."—Luke 22:19.

Various are the theories throughout Christendom respecting the Lord's Supper—its meaning and the proper time for its observance. Most Christian scholars recognize the fact that it was instituted as the antitype of the Jewish Passover. Amongst the older churches, Roman and Greek Catholic, Episcopal, etc., there is an attempt made to celebrate our Lord's death as a memorial on its annual recurrence. Originally the celebration was according to Jewish calculations, on the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month, Nisan—the day on which the Jews kill the typical Passover lamb. Subsequently, however, a change in the method of calculation was made so as to commemorate our Lord's death on the nearest Friday and his resurrection on the Sunday—Good Friday and Easter Sunday. With the younger denominations of Christendom this custom has generally fallen into disuse, probably with a desire to put as much difference as possible between Protestant customs and ceremonies, and those of Catholics. As a consequence of this we find that the majority of Protestants fail to associate the Lord's Supper with the Jewish Passover, and fail to appreciate the fact that the death of the Jewish lamb celebrated annually on the fourteenth of Nisan typified the death of our Lord Jesus on the same date, the latter being the antitype, the fulfilment of the type.

Nor are they wholly without excuse in this oversight, for we are to remember that while the older churches celebrate our Lord's death upon its anniversary, they introduced other ceremonies resembling the Memorial, but not authorized in the Scriptures, nor in anything pertaining to the type. For instance, to the average Catholic mind, as well as to the Protestant, the Catholic mass is merely a commemoration of our Lord's death; but this is not its true significance. The mass, rightly understood, from a theological standpoint, is a *fresh sacrifice*, and not merely a commemoration of the one sacrifice at Calvary. Protestants, misinterpreting it to be a repetition of the Lord's Supper, have come to believe that from the earliest times the Memorial Supper was celebrated at any convenient season. Hence we find among Protestants a variety of views on the subject, some partaking of it weekly, others monthly, and others quarterly, as each esteems to be the most desirable, most profitable.

We hold that no such irregularity was ever intended by the Lord or by the apostles—that our Lord instituted it at the particular time, on the particular day of the year, that was proper; and that the words, "As oft as ye do *this*" had reference, not only to the bread and the cup, but also the *time*—the general incident commemorated. We will not here attempt to go into detailed expose respecting the Roman Catholic doctrine of the mass, but merely refer our readers to MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. III., pages 98-104, remarking incidentally that to the informed Catholic, Greek or Roman, the mass is in no sense of the word a *commemoration* of the original sacrifice of Christ. The claim is that the first sacrifice of Christ was sufficient for sins that are past, but not for subsequent sins, and that God has given authority to the properly ordained bishops and priests to representatively create Christ afresh on any occasion, and then to sacrifice him afresh for any special sin or sins—High Mass for particular sins of an individual, Low Mass for general sins of a congregation.

The claim of Catholicism is that the blessing of the priest transforms the ordinary wafer and wine into the *actual* body and blood of Christ, who is thus recreated thousands on thousands of times every year, by thousand of priests, and resacrificed for thousands and thousands of sins. We, of course, object to all this as being thoroughly anti-Christian, and the majority of orthodox Protestants will give their cordial assent. Nevertheless, those who organized Protestant denominations seem to have entirely overlooked this matter when they use this frequency of the mass in the older churches as an excuse for a frequency of commemoration of the Lord's Supper. However, the majority of Protestants seem to have been well aware that great frequency of observance (as in the mass) would be unwise, unprofitable; and hence the majority commemorate only three or four times a year, believing the service to be thereby rendered more impressive and solemn to all who participate. We hold that the original method of celebrating our Lord's death on its anniversary is still more solemn, still more impressive; besides which it has the sanction of the Scriptures, which we claim no other method has.

OTHER MISCONCEPTIONS, BASED UPON SCRIPTURE

Our so-called "Disciple" and "Plymouth Brethren" friends and others who have adopted the custom of celebrating our Lord's death every Lord's Day—on the first day of the week—seem to us to have fallen into a serious blunder. The inappropriateness of such celebrations is manifest in several ways: first they celebrate it on Sunday, which is itself the memorial of our Lord's resurrection, a totally different thing—a joyous Easter occasion. And losing sight of the importance of the date, it is not remarkable that they have likewise lost sight of the proprieties respecting the time of the day—that as originally instituted it was partaken of at night, whereas the usual custom is to commemorate in the morning or in the afternoon.

We are not to suppose that these Christian friends adopted their weekly custom without any reason whatever; but noticing the reasons they give we find them quite insufficient. It is their claim, for instance, that the statements of Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7, which speak of the disciples coming together on the first day of the week "to break bread," refer to the Memorial Supper. To the contrary, we hold that these first-day-of-the week gatherings were love-feasts, and never intended to take the place of nor in any sense to represent our Lord's Memorial Supper. It will be noticed that in these various accounts nothing whatever is said of "the cup," representing our Lord's blood, and which must be considered as important a part of the symbol as the unleavened bread, which represented his body. The Love-feasts appropriately took place on the day which celebrates the church's joy in her Lord's resurrection, and no doubt were all suggested by the circumstances of the first Sunday—the day of our Lord's resurrection, on which occasion he was known to the two at Emmaus in the breaking of bread, and later in the evening to the eleven as they sat at meat, saying: "Peace be unto you," and causing their hearts to burn within them. (Luke 24:30, 31; John 20:19) Our Lord's Supper, on the contrary, was evidently intended to be a reminder of his death and of our covenant as members of his body to have fellowship in his sufferings.

THE FIRST CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Our lesson points us to the first institution of this memorial, indicating that it was celebrated on the day before the Passover proper began—on the fourteenth day of Nisan. The law respecting the Passover was very exact. The lamb was to be taken into the house on the tenth day of Nisan, was to be killed on the fourteenth, and was to be eaten during the night before the dawn of the fifteenth. In the antitype Jesus offered himself to the nation on the tenth, but they, except his faithful few, neglected to receive him, and on the fourteenth he was crucified. It was in the same Jewish day in which he was crucified that he ate the Passover mentioned in our lesson, and later on he was betrayed. (The day with the Jew began at sundown and lasted until the next evening.) There can be no doubt from the account that our Lord and his disciples ate the Passover Supper on the day preceding the one on which the Jews in general ate it; for in John's Gospel we read (18:28; 19:14) that when our Lord was before Pilate in the Judgment Hall, which was after he had eaten the Passover, the Pharisees, his accusers, had not yet eaten it—nor would they eat it until the evening after his crucifixion.

One Evangelist records that our Lord said to his disciples, "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." It was his last commemoration of the Jewish rite, which as a Jew he was bound to observe legally, fully. We may not know positively the particular hour of the fourteenth day at which our Lord and the disciples partook of the Passover, but probably it was near midnight when, after the Passover had been eaten, our Lord instituted the new memorial of his own death, the Lord's Supper, substituting it for the Passover supper of the law, and intimating this in his words, "Henceforth, as oft as ye *do this* do it in remembrance of me." "This" represented the antitypical Lamb, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and doing this—breaking the bread and drinking of the fruit of the vine—showed forth our Lord's death and not any longer the death of the type, because the antitype had now come, and in this same day, a few hours later, he would be killed, crucified. Our Lord was thus laying a deep and broad basis for the new institution, his church, and separating it from the Jewish type by pointing out to the believers himself as the antitype, and the higher meaning connected therewith—the deliverance of all true Israelites, not from Pharaoh, but from Pharaoh's antitype, Satan, the deliverance of all the first-born of God's people from death into life more abundant—eternal life.

All who see clearly the type should realize that it could never pass away until its antitype had come, and the antitype of the killing of the Passover lamb must occur on its anniversary, the fourteenth day of Nisan. Hence the significance of the Scriptural statement that "they could not take him because his hour was not yet come." (John 7:30; 8:20) God had foreseen the entire matter, and had forearranged everything pertaining to it, and the type had marked it most definitely. We no longer celebrate the type, but believing that the antitypical sacrifice of the Lamb of God has taken the place of the type, we as Christians "do this" in remembrance of the antitype; for, as the Apostle says, "Even Christ our Passover [Lamb] is slain; therefore let us keep the feast."—1 Cor. 5:7, 8.

It was while the Lord and his apostles were eating the Passover Supper, the typical roast lamb, that our Lord said to them, "One of you shall betray me." John tells us that our Lord was "troubled in spirit," manifested emotion, at the time he said this. His emotion was not caused, we may be sure, by the matter of his betrayal, for he evidently foreknew the particulars as well as the fact of his death. The cause of his sorrow, we may reasonably suppose, was the thought that one of those whom he had so tenderly kept and cared for should now prove so ungrateful, unthankful, unholy—evidently his sorrow was for Judas. His statement drew forth from the disciples inquiries, "Lord, is it I?" Or rather, as the Greek word would seem to indicate, the question signified, Lord, do you mean to accuse me? I am not the one, am I? And the disciples in general were sorrowful, too. It was well, perhaps, that they should pass through this experience at this time, as they evidently needed it all, in order to prepare them for the trying times just before them.

Judas, of course, asked the same question with the rest, for not to have asked it would have implied that he admitted his guilt. Our Lord's answer was that it was one who supped with them, and dipping the sop he gave it to Judas, who forthwith went out. (John 13:25-30) So far from these incidents melting the heart of Judas and leading him to change his course before it was too late, they seem to have aroused in him a malevolent spirit, just as divine mercy toward Pharaoh, in the stopping of the plagues, hardened his heart. Instead of resisting the adversary's suggestions Judas entertained them more and more, until he was filled with the Satanic spirit, "Satan entered into him" fully, completely—took possession of his heart as an instrument of evil, and it was doubtless because he felt out of place in such society that he went out.

It thus seems probable that Judas was not with the others when our Lord washed their feet, and subsequently instituted with the bread and the fruit of the vine the memorial of his death. It was better that he should be absent; and so it would be preferable, where possible, that only the true, loyal, devoted disciples of Christ should meet together to celebrate his death on its anniversary. Nevertheless, let us remember that we are not competent to judge the heart, and hence in coming to the memorial table all should be invited to come who trust in the precious blood of Christ for redemption and who profess a full consecration to the Lord. Let us leave it to divine providence to scrutinize those who profess to be fellow-disciples.

PRIMARY SIGNIFICATION OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

In presenting to the disciples the unleavened bread, as a memorial, our Lord gave a general explanation, saying: "Take, eat; this is my body." The evident meaning of the words is, This symbolizes or represents my body. It was not actually his body, because in no sense of the word had his body yet been broken; in no sense would it have been possible for any to have partaken of him actually or antitypically then, the sacrifice not being as yet finished. But the picture is complete when we recognize that the unleavened bread represented our Lord's sinless flesh—leaven being a symbol of sin under the law, and specially commanded to be put away at this time. On another occasion our Lord gave a lesson which interprets to us this symbol. He said, "The bread of God is he that came down from heaven and giveth his life unto the world. I am the bread of life."—John 6:33, 35.

In order to appreciate how we are to eat or appropriate this living bread it is necessary for us to understand just what it was. According to our Lord's explanation of the matter it was his flesh which he sacrificed for us. It was not his prehuman existence as a spirit being that was sacrificed, altho that was laid down and its glory laid aside, that he might take our human nature. It was the fact that our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and without any contamination from father Adam, and hence free from sin—it was this fact that permitted him to be the Redeemer of Adam and his race—which permitted him to give his life a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. And when we see that it was the pure, spotless human nature of our Lord Jesus that was laid down on behalf of sinners, sacrificed for us, we see what it is that we are privileged to appropriate. The very thing which he laid down for us we are to "eat," appropriate to ourselves: that is to say, his perfect human nature was given for us and redeemed Adam and all his race from condemnation to death—to a right to return to human perfection and everlasting life if they could. The Scriptures show us, however, that if God would consider all of past sins canceled and should recognize us as having a right to return to human perfection, this still would not make us perfect nor give us therefore the right to everlasting life. In order for the race of Adam to profit by the redemption accomplished by our Lord's sacrifice it is necessary that he should make a second advent, and then be to the whole *world* a Mediator, Prophet, Priest and King, to assist back to perfection and to harmony with God all who will avail themselves of the privileges then to be offered.

It is this same blessing which the Gospel church in this age receives by faith from the Redeemer; *viz.*, justification by faith —not justification to a spiritual nature, which we never had and never lost, and which Christ did not redeem; but justification to human nature, which father Adam did possess and lose, and which Christ did redeem by giving his own sinless flesh as our ransom-sacrifice. The partaking of the bread, then, means to us primarily acceptance and appropriation to ourselves, by faith, of justification to human rights and privileges secured by our Lord's sacrifice of these.

Likewise the fruit of the vine symbolized our Lord's life given for us—his human life, his being, his soul, poured out unto death on our behalf; and the appropriating of this by us signifies primarily our acceptance of restitution rights and privileges which the Lord has thus, at his own cost, secured for us.

THE SECONDARY AND DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LOAF AND THE CUP

As we have already seen, God's object in *justifying by faith* the church during this Gospel age in advance of the justification of the world through works of obedience, in the Millennial age, is for the very purpose of permitting those who now see and hear and appreciate the great sacrifice which Love has made on our behalf, to present their bodies living sacrifices, and thus to have part with our Lord in his sacrifice—as members of his body. This additional and deep meaning of the memorial our Lord did not refer to directly. It was doubtless one of the things to which he referred, saying: "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth, and show you things to come."

The Spirit of truth, speaking through the Apostle Paul, clearly explains the matter of this secondary and very high import of the memorial, for he says, writing to the consecrated church: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the *participation* of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the *participation* of the body of Christ?"—to share with Christ as joint-sacrificers even unto death, that thereby they may be counted in with him also as sharers of the glory which he has received as a reward for his faithfulness. "For we being many are one *loaf* and one body." (1 Cor. 10:16, 17) Both views of this impressive ordinance are important: it is necessary that we should see, first of all, our justification through the Lord's sacrifice. It is proper then that we should realize that the entire Christ is, from the divine standpoint, a composite body of many members, of which Jesus is the Head, and that this church as a whole must be broken, and that in this respect each member of it must be a copy of the Lord Jesus and must walk in the foosteps of his sacrifice. We do this by giving our lives, "laying down our lives on behalf of the brethren," as Christ laid down his life for all. It is not our spiritual life that we lay down, even as it was not our Lord's spiritual life that he laid down in sacrifice; but as he sacrificed his *actually perfect* being, so we must sacrifice our justified selves, *reckoned perfect* but not actually so. Likewise the cup represents suffering. It is one cup, tho it be the juice of many grapes, even as it is one loaf, tho it be from many grains. The grains cannot maintain their individuality and their own life if they would become bread for others; the grapes cannot maintain themselves as grapes if they would constitute the life-giving spirit; and thus we see the beauty of the Apostle's statement, that the Lord's people are participants in the one loaf and one cup.

Our Lord distinctly declares that the cup, the fruit of the vine (nowhere is this cup described as wine, tho it may have been) represents blood, hence life; not life retained, but life shed or given, yielded up, sacrificed life. He tells us that it was for the remission of sins, and that all who would be his must drink of it—must accept his sacrifice and appropriate it by faith. All who would be justified through faith must accept life from this one source. It will not do to claim an immortality outside of Christ; it will not do to declare that life is the result of obedience to the law; it will not do to claim that faith in and obedience to any great teacher will amount to the same thing, and bring eternal life. There is no other way to attain eternal life except through accepting the blood once shed as the ransom price for the sins of the whole world. There is no other name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved. Likewise there is no other way that we can attain to the new nature than by accepting the Lord's invitation to drink of his cup, and be broken with him as members of the one loaf, and to be buried with him in baptism into his death, and thus to be with him in his resurrection to glory, honor and immortality.—Rom. 6:3-5; 8:17.

THE CELEBRATION IN THE KINGDOM

As usual our Lord had something to say about the kingdom. It seems to have been associated in his every discourse, and so on this occasion he reminds those to whom he had already given the promise to share in the kingdom if faithful, of his declaration that he would go away to receive a kingdom and to come again to receive them to share it. He now adds that this memorial which he instituted would find its fulfilment in the kingdom. Just what our Lord meant by this might be difficult to positively determine, but it seems not inconsistent to understand him to mean that as a result of the trials and sufferings symbolized there will be a jubilation in the kingdom. "He will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." He will look back over trials and difficulties endured in faithful obedience to the Father's will, and will rejoice in these as he shall see the grand outcome in the kingdom blessings which will come to all mankind. And the same jubilation will be shared by all his disciples who drink of this wine, first in justification and secondly in consecration, and who suffer with him. They are promised that they shall reign with him, and when the reign is begun and when the kingdom work has been established, looking back, they as well as he will praise the way that God has led them. even tho it be a "narrow way," a way of sacrifice, a way of self-denial.

Our Lord's faith stood the test of all these trying hours which he knew to be so near to the time of his apprehension and death. The fact that he rendered thanks to God for the bread and for the cup are indicative of a joyful acquiescence in all the sufferings which the breaking of the bread and the crushing of the grapes implied. He was satisfied already with the Father's arrangement, and could give thanks, as by and by he will greatly rejoice. In line with this was the singing of a hymn as they parted, a hymn of praise, no doubt, thanksgiving to the Father that his course was so nearly finished, and that he had found thus far grace sufficient for every time of need.

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER THIS YEAR

The anniversary of our Lord's death will this year fall, according to Jewish reckoning, on Wednesday, April 3. Consequently, the appropriate time for celebrating his memorial would be on the "same night in which he was betrayed," the night of Tuesday, April 2—not immediately at six o'clock, but later on, allowing time for certain necessary preparations then, and for certain examination of the meaning of the symbols and considering the whole subject afresh, now.

According to custom, the church at Allegheny will meet on this anniversary date to celebrate the great transaction by which we were bought back from condemnation, and to celebrate also our consecration to be dead with Christ, if so be that being dead with him we shall be sharers also in his resurrection, the first resurrection, to glory, honor and immortality.

We recommend that the dear friends in various parts of the world neglect not this precious memorial, which is so full of meaning to all who intelligently appreciate it. We do not advise gathering together in large companies, but rather that each little company or band meet together as is their usual custom; for this seems to have been the method in the early church. Let us keep the feast in joy of heart, and yet with due appreciation of its solemnity, not only as relates to our Lord's sacrifice for us, but also as relates to our own covenant of sacrifice to be dead with him. We recommend that all the leaders of the little companies of the Lord's people make arrangements to obtain, if possible, unleavened bread (from some Hebrew family, possibly) and either unfermented grape juice or raisin juice, or other fruit of the vine, as may be decided. Our recommendation is against a general use of wine, as being possibly a temptation to some weak in the flesh. However, we recommend that provision be made for those who conscientiously believe that wine was meant to be used. As satisfying to the consciences of some it might not be amiss to put a small amount of fermented wine into the unfermented grape or raisin juice.

We recommend that these little gatherings be without ostentation—yet decently, orderly, quietly, let us come together, full of precious thoughts respecting the great transaction we celebrate, rather than with our attention much taken up with forms and ceremonies. Let us in this, as in all things, seek to do that which would be pleasing to our Lord, and then we will be sure that it will be profitable to all who participate.

We have already intimated that none are to be forbidden who profess faith in the precious blood and consecration to our Saviour's service. As a rule there will be no danger of any accepting the privilege of this fellowship who are not earnest at heart. Rather, some may need to be encouraged, since wrong views, we believe, are sometimes taken of the Apostle's words respecting those who "eat and drink damnation to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body." (1 Cor. 11:29) For the sake of these timid ones, who, we trust, will not forego the privilege of commemorating this great transaction, we would explain that to our understanding the class mentioned by the Apostle is composed of those who fail to realize the real import of the sacrifice, and who merely recognize it as a ceremonious form. They eat and drink *condemnation* because, if they would investigate the matter, they would clearly see the terms upon which the Lord is accepting the "little flock" being chosen in this Gospel age. Their failure to do this brings a measure of condemnation, reproof; they are more responsible than others of the world who know nothing of the Lord, his sacrifice, etc.

Let us, when we celebrate this grand memorial, not forget to give thanks to the Lord for our justification, and also for the grand privilege we enjoy of being fellow-sacrificers with our Redeemer, and filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ. And while sorrowful and thoughtful, meditative and full of heart-searchings on this occasion, let us, as did the Lord, triumph through faith and go forth singing praise to him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, and who has privileged us thus to have fellowship in the great transaction now in progress.

GETHSEMANE—WATCHING AND PRAYING

Matt. 26:36-46.—Feb. 24.

"Not my will, but thine, be done."—Luke 22:42.

No one can thoughtfully read this lesson of our Lord's dark hour in Gethsemane, and his "strong cryings and tears unto him [the Father], who was able to save him out of death" (Heb. 5:7), without feeling that there is something thoroughly incorrect in the idea so prevalent amongst Christian people that our Lord Jesus was his own heavenly Father, Jehovah; and that it would have been a pretense, a mockery of prayer, for him to have supplicated as here represented, unless it were true also that instead of being in any sense the Father, he was simply what he claimed to be, the Son, the sent of God, the only begotten of the Father, the firstborn of all creation, the beginning of the creation of God. (John 10:29; 1:14; Col. 1:15; Rev. 3:14) There is absolutely no other standpoint from which the language of our Lord and the apostles and his course of conduct are reasonably interpretable. On this point the earnest truth-seeker is referred to Millennial Dawn, Vol. V.

Our previous lesson closed with our Lord and his disciples leaving the upper room, where they had commemorated his death. They went to the Mount of Olives, to an orchard there, known as Gethsemane—the name signifying "oil-press place," probably because olives were there pressed and the oil extracted used both for light and for food. One of the evangelists speaks of it as the "garden of Gethsemane," but the word garden, as used in olden times, corresponds more nearly with our word orchard; it was not a flower-garden. There is a small enclosure now on the side of Mount Olivet, about 150 feet square, which is reputed to be the place of our Lord's agonizing prayer. It contains eight very old and very gnarled olive trees, and whether the exact spot or not, it represents it sufficiently well.

Our Lord probably had two reasons for going forth as he did that night. First, realizing that he would be arrested by the traitor Judas and the band he would bring. our Lord probably did not wish to bring commotion or trouble upon the friend who had so kindly permitted him the use of the upper room. Secondly, he desired the still quiet of midnight, out upon the hillside, where he could be alone with God, to pour out his soul in prayer and obtain the strength necessary for the ordeal at hand. In harmony with this last thought, we find that when our Lord reached the entrance to the orchard he left eight of the disciples there, as an outer guard, so to speak, or as pickets, to give notice; and took with him the same three disciples whom he had specially honored on other occasions, Peter, James and John: Peter, the bold and impulsive, James and John, the so-called "sons of thunder"—the three most courageous, most zealous, most earnest, of his disciples. These he wished to have nearest to himself in this time of anxiety. And yet, on this occasion, he desired to be still more alone in his prayer, for even these truest friends could not appreciate the situation: "of the people there were none with him." Hence he left these and went a stone's throw further, where he prostrated himself upon his knees, and with his face to the earth, as the various accounts show, and thus alone, he communed with the Father.

The different accounts of our Lord's experience on this occasion, grouped together, show us that mental anguish seemed to come upon him here with a force of poignancy he had never before experienced; and that the load became increasingly heavy—"sorrowful even unto death," a sorrow which almost crushed out his very life, says Matthew. Mark says (14:33) that he was "sore amazed." as tho the sorrow had come upon him unexpectedly, as tho he were bewildered. Luke, who was a physician, says that he was "in an agony," a contest, a struggle, the language used in the Greek implying a struggle of increasing force and severity, so that "his sweat became as it were great drops of blood;" and this bloody sweat is not unknown to physicians today, altho very rare. It marks an extreme tension of feeling—sorrow nigh unto death.*

Infidelity has suggested that this account of our Redeemer's sorrow, tears and prayers, attests his weakness. They argue that there have been many martyrs of various religions who have faced death with boldness, stoical firmness, sometimes with smiles, and that this account shows Jesus to have been cowardly, and inferior instead of superior to others. But there is a philosophy connected with the matter which they seem not to grasp. There is a dullness and numbness connected with fallen, degraded, coarse manhood that can regard pain and death with indifference—which permits them either to undergo it themselves without great emotion, or to inflict it mercilessly upon others without compassion. We are glad that Jesus was not one of those cold, stoical icebergs, but that he was full of warm, loving, tender feelings and sensibilities; and that we can realize consequently that he is able to sympathize with the most tender, the most delicate, the most refined, the most sensitive, more than any other human being. He must have felt keenly the conditions under which he had placed himself, in laying down his life on our behalf; because the more perfect the organism the more sensitive and high-strung the feelings, the greater the capacity for joy and the greater the capacity for sorrow: and our Lord being absolutely perfect must have been immeasurably more susceptible to the influences of pain than others.

Besides this he had a perfect life, unforfeited, and knew it, and realized that he was about to part with it; while others of the human family possess only a forfeited or condemned existence and realize that they *must* part with this some time anyway. It would therefore be a very different matter for our Lord to lay down his life than for any of his followers to lay down their lives. Supposing 100 to represent perfect life, our Lord had the full one hundred units to lay down, while we, being more than ninety-nine-hundredths parts dead, through trespasses and sins and condemnation, could at most have only the one-hundredth part to lay down. A cold, stoical indifference to the loss of life, based upon knowledge that it could last but a short time longer anyway, would therefore be a very different thing from the clear knowledge which our Lord had, based upon his experiences with the Father "before the world was," and the realization that the life he was now about to lay down was not forfeited through sin, but was his own voluntary sacrifice.

There can be no doubt that this thought of the extinguishment of life was an important factor in our Lord's sorrow. The Apostle clearly intimates it in the words (Heb. 5:7), "Who in the days of his flesh . . . . offered up prayers and supplications, with strong cryings and tears, unto him who was able to save him from [out of] death, and was heard in [respect to] that he feared"—extinction. Intent continually upon doing the Father's will, day by day had passed in self-sacrifice, until now, in a few hours, the whole would be complete; and the thought of this brought with it another thought, *viz.*: Had he done the Father's will perfectly? Could he claim, and would he receive the reward promised him, a resurrection from the dead?

Had he failed in any particular to come up to the exact standard of perfection his death would have meant extinction; and altho all men fear extinction, none could know the full depth and force of its meaning as could he who not only had the perfection of life, but had recollection of his previous glory with the Father before the world was. For him the very thought of an extinction would bring anguish, terror of soul. This thought seems not to have come to our Lord with the same force previously. It was this, therefore, that bore down upon him now so heavily as an astonishing sorrow unto death. He saw himself about to suffer according to the Law as an evil-doer, and the question naturally arose, was he entirely blameless, and would the heavenly judge thoroughly acquit him whom so many were disposed to condemn?

After praying awhile he went to the three disciples, in whom he had greatest confidence, and who, more than any others, were his tried and trusted companions, but he found them asleep. Luke explains that their sleep was the result of sorrow. The night and its lessons had been impressive; the memorial supper, which they did not fully understand, nevertheless left a weight of sorrow upon them, as the Master had intimated that it represented his death, and had further intimated that one of their number would betray him. The reaction from the sorrow brought a measure of stupor. Very gently our Lord upbraided them: "Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." It is not merely that you need to watch on my account; you need to be in a watching attitude on your own account. An hour of severe trial is upon us all; watch and pray lest ye fall in this evil time.

Then our Lord went to pray again. We are told that his prayers were in the same words; that is to say, that the same sentiments were expressed; and again a third time similarly: the one matter was weighing upon his heart. Could he rely upon it now, that having sought to do the Father's will, that having finished his course, he had done it acceptably? Could he have full assurance of faith that God would save him out of death by a resurrection? In answer to his petition a heavenly messenger was sent to comfort him, to assure him, to strengthen him. We are not informed what message the angel brought, but we can see that it was a message of peace, and that he brought assurances that our Lord's course had the Father's approval, and that he would be brought again from the dead by a resurrection. These were quite sufficient to give our Lord all the strength and courage necessary for the ordeal before him; and from that moment onward we find him the coolest and calmest of the notable figures brought to our attention. When approached by Judas and his band he was the most calm and self-possessed of all; when before the chief priest, Caiaphas, it was the same way; when before Pilate the same; when crucified, the same; he had found peace in the message that he was approved of the Father, and that all the gracious promises of glory, honor and immortality were his, and now he could pass through any ordeal.

The Scriptures assure us that our Lord was tempted in all points like as we (his brethren) are, and we see in this his experience in Gethsemane an illustration of one of the most severe trials which come to the Lord's people. It would seem as tho the adversary at times attempted to discourage us by making us think that the trials and difficulties of the "narrow way" of sacrifice will be all unavailing anyhow, and that we might as well give up. When such thoughts come to those who are earnestly and faithfully seeking to fulfil the conditions of their consecration vows they constitute one of the severest trials that could overtake them; if they have given up this world and its affections, hopes, aims, desires, exchanging all these for the heavenly, then anything which seems to becloud the heavenly hopes, leaves them in a darkness more utter, more dense, than they could have known had they never seen and appreciated the glorious promises. And what course should we pursue at such a time? We should follow the example of our Lord, and seek the Father's face, anxious to know whether or not everything is all right with him; anxious for some assurances that while the world may hate us, and say all manner of evil against us falsely, we still have his approval; anxious for some fresh assurance that it will be well with us, that the Lord will grant us a part in the better resurrection to life eternal.

But while we draw this correspondency between our experiences and those of our Lord we should not forget that there is an immeasurable difference; that we are of the dying and ninety-nine hundredths parts dead already, and that therefore we cannot so fully appreciate the meaning of death nor the meaning of life eternal; and besides all this we have the example of our Lord, and the further assurance that our share in the first resurrection is not to be attained through perfection of our own, but through his perfection, provided we shall have attested to the Lord our full loyalty of heart, of intention, of will, however imperfect the results of our efforts to glorify him in our bodies and spirits.

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* Prof. Tischendorf shows that this account of our Lord's bloody sweat is not found in the *Vatican MS.*, and that altho it appeared in the original *Sinaitic MS.* it was crossed out by a later critic. The passage is therefore doubtful, or at least questionable.

The Evangelist records that our Lord prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." It may be that our Lord meant by this, If your infinite love and mercy see it possible in any manner to accomplish your purpose of salvation for mankind without it being necessary for me to die, then grant it to be so. But if this were the Lord's thought it would imply that he had not fully grasped the Father's plan of a restitution for mankind, made possible through a *ransom price* for Adam and his sin; for, seeing this, our Lord could not have supposed that anything short of the full ransom could secure the results. Quite possibly, however, the thought which bore heavily upon him was the realization now coming vividly to his mind that if apprehended as a blasphemer it would be the policy of his enemies not to destroy him secretly, but to deliver him over to the Romans; and he could realize the influence and power they would exert to secure the performance of their wishes, and he knew that the Roman method of execution was that of crucifixion, and he knew also that the Scriptures explicitly said, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

Here, then, seems to have been the centre of his thought: I shall be esteemed of all my countrymen as forsaken of God, and as accursed of him; I shall die as a blasphemer, as a malefactor; whereas my every sentiment is, and has always been, fealty, loyalty to the Father. This, we believe, was the special feature of our Lord's anxiety, called the "cup" of sorrow, which he wished, if possible, might be removed. We believe that he knew his *death* to be necessary, unavoidable, as he had many times informed his disciples; but that it was this ignominious form of death, "even the death of the cross," that staggered him; for it not only bespoke shame and misrepresentation before the people, and those whom he loved and to whom he sought to do good, but it carried with it also the thought that he was accursed of God; and if accursed of God he could have no hope for a realization of the glorious promise of a resurrection. But when assured through the angel that he would not be actually accursed of God, even tho he would for a time take the place of the accursed Adam and be "made a curse for us," his race, then even the cross and its shame could be endured with fortitude.

WATCH AND PRAY LEST YE ENTER INTO TEMPTATION

In the case of our Lord and the apostles we see illustrated the value of watchfulness and prayer in the dark hour of trouble. Our Lord followed the direction he gave to the disciples: he watched, he prayed, he got a blessing, he was strengthened, and came off victor. They did not watch and did not pray, failing to realize the necessities of the occasion, and as a result we find them scattered, bewildered;—and one of them, the very strongest of them all, who boastingly had said a little while before, "Tho all men forsake thee yet will not I," was so overpowered by his surroundings, and so weak through lack of the very strength he should have obtained through watching and prayer, that he denied the Lord with profanity.

Whenever we find the Lord's people attempting to live a life of holiness and consecration, yet ignoring the injunction of our Lord to watch and pray, we know that they are unwise; and that however much they may be virgins, pure ones, they are foolish: they cannot hope to gain the victory over self and sin and the Adversary, singlehanded, alone. If the Master himself needed strengthening, surely we also need it; and if he received it in response to supplications with strong cryings and tears, it is an intimation to us of the way in which God is pleased to bestow the full assurance of faith which is able to strengthen us as good soldiers to endure any and everything in his name and service. Those who seek the Lord earnestly and in prayer are as sure to receive a blessing as was the Lord Jesus himself; and altho there will not come to them the same kind of heavenly messenger to comfort and encourage them, nevertheless a heavenly messenger of another kind will surely be sent. It may be in the person of a fellow-disciple, able to enter into and sympathize with us in our trials or difficulties, as none of the apostles could sympathize with our Lord or assist him. Or it may be that the messenger sent will be one of the apostles themselves, through the many gracious words of inspiration which God has communicated to us through them in his Word. But however the strength may come, it must be the assurance, not of men nor of angels, but of God, that we are pleasing and acceptable to him,—and that we may claim and expect the exceeding great and precious things which he has in reservation for them that love him.

So to speak, we are now in the hour of trial which cometh upon the whole world to try them. The present is represented in the Scriptures to be "the hour of temptation" or testing at the close of this age. It is the Gethsemane hour, in this sense of the word, to all who are the Lord's true people, fully consecrated to him. It is the hour, therefore, in which we, like our Lord, should be seeking the Father's face to receive the full assurance that we are his, and that he is ours; and that we may rely confidently on his strength to carry us through this time. It is the time in which we are to make sure, as we sometimes sing:

> "O let no earthborn cloud arise
> To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."

It is a time in which those who neglect the Master's words, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation," will be sure to enter into temptation, and be tolerably sure to fall therein. And the fall will be severe,—and even tho, like Peter, they should afterward be recovered out of it, it will be with weeping.

Some make the mistake of praying without watching; others make the mistake of watching without praying; but the safe and only proper method is that which our Lord directed, to combine the two. We are to watch, and to be on our guard against the encroachments of the world, the flesh and the devil. We are to watch for all the encouragements of the Lord's Word, the evidence of their fulfilment, the signs that betoken his presence and the great changes of dispensation just at hand. We are to watch for everything that will strengthen us in faith and hope and loyalty and love; and while watching we are to pray without ceasing. We are to pray together as the Lord's people; we are to pray in our homes, as families; we are to pray in secret, in private. We are to have the spirit of prayer in all that we say and do: that is to say, our hearts should be going out continually to the Lord for guidance in all of life's affairs, that we may do with our might what our hands find to do, in a manner that will be acceptable to him, and that we may be shielded by him from temptation that would otherwise be beyond our endurance, and that we may be ultimately delivered from the evil one and have a place in our Lord's kingdom. Brethren and sisters, let us more and more remember and put into practice, in every home in which the WATCH TOWER is a visitor, these words of our Lord, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

CORROBORATIONS OF SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY

Gradually, but surely and relatively swiftly, we see unfolding the various features of the divine plan which the Scriptures have taught us to expect—pointing them out in a general way in advance—namely, preparations for the Millennium of blessing and preparations also for the great time of trouble with which it will be introduced. The testimonies following are all the more forceful because they come from men who, so far as we are aware, have no such expectations as we hold—no such light as we enjoy, relative to the teachings of the Scriptures on these matters.

For instance, many have opposed our presentation of the Bible's teachings on *restitution* (Acts 3:19-21), claiming—

(1) That there would not be standing room for so many as probably have been born, reasonably estimated at about fifty thousand millions. We answered this by a mathematical demonstration that twice this number could find standing room in either Texas or France, and that the whole earth under good climatic conditions will be ample for all. They then objected—

(2) That the earth can scarcely feed its present population, as attested by the famines in India and southern Russia. We replied to this, that God is able to provide for the fulfilment of all his promises; and pointed out the declarations of the holy prophets respecting these "times of restitution," that then "the earth shall yield her increase" and the "wilderness shall blossom as the rose."—Isa. 35:1; Psa. 67:9.

Note now how science comes forward to corroborate the Bible's testimony; and let us remember that now is just the time for these things to begin to appear. We quote the following from *The Saturday Evening Post*:—

"THE CHEMISTRY OF SOIL"

"Undoubtedly, one of the most wonderful discoveries of modern chemistry has to do with the soil. It has been ascertained that the most barren land can be made rich simply by adding to it certain mineral elements which cost but little. On this basis it is estimated that the United States will be able eventually to maintain 500,000,000 people—more than one-third of the present population of the world. It is merely a question of supplying the requisite quantities of nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash. The last two are readily obtainable at small expense, whereas the first may be supplied either by furnishing to the soil condensed nitrogen in the shape of slaughter-waste or nitrate of soda, or by planting clover, beans, or peas, which have an affinity for nitrogen and absorb it from the atmosphere.

It is now known that nitrogen is the most important plant food, and inasmuch as this element composes four-fifths of the atmosphere the question is merely to absorb it into the soil. It has also come to be understood that only two per cent of the material of plants is derived from the soil, the remaining ninety-eight per cent. being drawn from the air and from water. It has been learned that certain species of bacteria absorb nitrogen, and these may be propagated in moist earth, and the earth thus treated sprinkled over the land."

"IN THE WILDERNESS WATERS SHALL BREAK OUT AND STREAMS IN THE DESERT"—ISA. 35:6

This prophecy bids fair to have a literal as well as a spiritual fulfilment. Already the drilling of artesian wells has reclaimed thousands of acres of arid land in the "American Desert" of the West; but the cost was too great when many of the holes were dry. Now, on seemingly reliable authority, relief has come to Texas along that line. A boy of fourteen years is found to possess what is styled "X-ray sight," so that in the dark he can see beneath the surface of the ground; just as the "X-ray" proved to science that certain rays of light can penetrate what we call solid substances; and just as Marconi, in connection with wireless telegraphy, has demonstrated that certain waves of ether pass through solid substances unhindered. This boy can see the subterranean creeks and rivers, and can designate just where the wells should be drilled to get the water so much needed on the surface. Whether this should be considered a lost sense of sight, lost through the fall, and which would return during the "times of restitution," or a special gift intended to help forward in the restitution, we are not yet prepared to give an opinion.

Of this boy's powers the *Chicago Record* gives quite a lengthy account, from which we quote the following, accredited to "Judge W. Van Sickle of Alpine, a member of the Texas legislature:"—

"That Guy Fenley, this 14 year-old boy, is possessed of an 'X-ray' sight cannot be questioned. He has demonstrated his ability to see underground streams of water, no matter what their depth may be, on a number of occasions, and the stockmen of west Texas have ample proof of his power in this line. I engaged him to go to Brewster county and locate two wells on the ranch which is owned by D. J. Combs and myself. This ranch is situated in a very dry country, known as the Glass mountains. We had made a vain search for water on this ranch, having sunk a well to a depth of 607 feet at a cost of $1.500 without striking water. This boy has already located two wells on the ranch, one at a depth of 250 feet and the other at a depth of 400 feet, both containing an abundant supply of pure water, and well-drilling outfits are now at work sinking other wells on the ranch with no doubt about securing water.

"There can be no longer any doubt about this boy's wonderful power of sight, because instances are numerous and notoriously known where his 'X-ray' gift, or whatever it may be called, has been proved beyond a doubt. He sees the veins or streams of water under the ground and can tell with absolute certainty the different strata between the surface and the water. He has this 'X-ray' sight only at night, and it is much stronger in the dark of the moon. When he exercises this wonderful power for any length of time, he becomes exhausted and falls into a deep sleep, which restores him to his former self."

THE JEWS CLAIMING CHRIST

"The oldest and the newest traditions of Israel look with favor upon the man of Galilee, who, as the prophets of old, was willing to give his soul unto death that his ideals might live after him. His noble and exalted aims have not been fulfilled. What ideals ever were? But we who are Jews today certainly have no cause to regret his coming into the world, and have every reason to look forward to the time when the message of this hour will find an echo in the heart and life of mankind. The Gospel of Jesus was the glad tidings of Israel's own universal truth. The teacher of Nazareth was our kith and kin, both in the flesh and in the spirit. We revere his memory, claim him as our own, and gladly accord him that high rank which he deserves as one of the greatest benefactors of the human family.

"How absurd and silly it is to expect us, in this age of enlightenment and growing religious fellowship, to mourn on this day, to shut our eyes to the light like wilful, wanton children, and see only the shadows of our past. If we, who are children of the house to whom the prophets belong, and whose mission it is to proclaim peace to them that are far and near, strew the seed of discord and resentment among our own, wherein are we better than those who persecuted our ancestors for wrongs which they had not committed? Shall we hold him whom the millions of our fellowmen commemorate today, and through whom, according to the unanimous opinion of our best and profoundest scholars in ancient and modern times, Israel's divine truths were carried out to the nations, shall we hold him responsible for the crimes that were perpetrated in his name? Nay, we do not mourn, but we rejoice that Jesus was born, and through him, despite the shortcomings, despite the manifold prejudices that still darken human hearts, this world at large is infinitely better and brighter than it would have been without him. We would not conjure the dread spectres of the past; we thank God that we live in the present, with its wider liberty, its nobler humanity."—RABBI SALEE in *Jewish Voice*.

PRESBYTERIAN CREED REVISION

The Presbyterian General Assembly committee has agreed upon the following summary of returns made to them by various Presbyteries. They met in Washington City on Feb. 12 to prepare their statement for the next General Assembly in May.

First—The returns plainly indicate the church desires some changes in its creedal statement.

Second—These returns indicate plainly that no change is desired which would in any way impair the integrity of the system of doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith.

Third—These returns also indicate that a large plurality desire that the changes should be made by some new statement of present doctrines.

Fourth—The returns also indicate a desire upon the part of many presbyteries for some revision of the present confession.

Fifth—It was therefore unanimously agreed to recommend to the assembly that some revision or change be made in our confession statements.

This means that the creed is objectionable as it stands, but that it is desired that the changes shall be made in such a manner as to cast no discredit upon it in the eyes of their own people or other Christians. In a word, they want, if possible, to say, The creed is all right, none better, could not be better; but some people cannot understand it aright, and for their sakes only it was necessary to alter the language without changing the sense. And no doubt some will succeed in deluding themselves and others—who prefer to be deceived rather than to openly acknowledge the wrong, for fear of denominational injury.

ACCEPTED AND REJECTED SACRIFICERS

Great were the anticipations of mother Eve in connection with her first-born son, Cain. Keenly she recollected the blessings of Eden and their loss through disobedience, and her memory clung to the implied promise contained in Jehovah's words to the effect that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head—should crush the evil one, and impliedly, in some sense of the word, thus accomplish a victory, and a release from some or all of the evils entailed through the divine sentence. It was in harmony with this that she named her first-born son Cain, which signifies, "acquired." In his birth she seemed to see a beginning of a fulfilment of the divine promise; this much of it had been acquired, for she said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord"—the Lord has given the promised man, the promised seed. But she was mistaken; the divine promise would be fulfilled in due time, but Cain was not the promised seed, nor even in the line of that promise. This was soon manifested.

In due time another son was born, who was called Abel—

a feeder or nourisher—he being looked to, probably, not so much as the deliverer promised as a helper in the battle for bread with the thorns and thistles, etc. The two grew to manhood, the one becoming a tiller of the soil, a farmer and gardener, and the other a herdsman or shepherd. In process of time it became apparent to both of these men that they should make acknowledgment to the Lord, their Creator, and that it would be but a reasonable service that they should present to him offerings expressive of their dependence on, and of their appreciation of his kindness; and naturally each one took as an offering that which was under his care.

Cain took of the fruits of his harvest, the results of his energy, as an offering to the Lord, and Abel took of his flocks as an offering. So far as the record goes, both were alike acceptable to the Lord up to this point; nor can we suppose that God would be displeased with Cain for bringing of the fruit of his labor as an offering. The fact that he had not respect to Cain's offering need not be understood to imply any prejudice on God's part against Cain, nor any intimation that he had sinned in bringing such an offering; neither did the Lord's acceptance of Abel's offering necessarily imply a prejudice in his favor, nor that he was the holier of the two. The acceptance of the one and the rejection of the other was merely designed to show the kind of sacrifice which the Lord was pleased to have offered and the kind which he was not pleased to accept. Cain should have learned the lesson quickly, and should have secured animal sacrifices and have presented his offering in this form to the Lord, and doubtless it would have been accepted as was Abel's.

Probably neither of the brothers knew at the time why the Lord accepted the animal sacrifices only, but later on no doubt they would have been instructed that this was typical, because the Lord intended ultimately to accept of a great antitypical *sacrifice for sins* which he himself would provide in the person of the man Christ Jesus, and that this sacrifice could best be represented and typified by the sacrifice of animals, and thus the presentation of the thought that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins.—Heb. 9:22.

But Cain, as the first-born, had no doubt already been recognized by his parents as the chief of the two brothers, and no doubt knew of his parents' expectations respecting him, that ultimately he would be the instrument of Jehovah in the crushing of evil. And no doubt this thought had engendered a certain amount of pride in his heart. He felt himself to be the elect of God, the highly honored one of the family; and correspondingly sharp must have been his feeling of disappointment when his offering of the fruits of the field, chosen with great care, and offered no doubt with sincere reverence, met with no sign of divine acceptance, while the offering of his younger brother, whom his parents had viewed as a mere assistant, was accepted of the Lord, probably by fire from heaven consuming the sacrifice. (1 Kings 18:38) The chagrin of this one who considered himself the priest and mediator of the family, and God's specially chosen agent, may be imagined; and whatever of love and kindness and brotherly feeling had previously prevailed, fell before the combination of giant powers suddenly developed in his bosom—pride, chagrin, envy,—and in the heat of his passion and disappointment he smote his brother and slew him.

We are not to think of Cain's crime as a first-degree murder, deliberately plotted and executed; but rather as "manslaughter," a crime committed on the spur of the moment and under the influence of sharp disappointment. The inspired record tells us, "He was of [the spirit or disposition of] the wicked one, and slew his brother." (I John 3:12) He partook of the spirit of the wicked one, of Satan's evil spirit. Satan's spirit was one of *ambition* and *pride*. Already highly favored of God as one of the highest angels, he was not content with his great honors and blessings, but was ambitious, desirous of attaining still greater influence and power than God had been pleased to grant him; and this unlawful ambition obtaining control led him not only to rebel against the divine covenant, but led him also to become the "murderer" (John 8:44) of our first parents, that thus he might attain control over them,—the object of his ambition.

So, for aught we know, Cain may not only have felt the chagrin of seeing the younger brother's offering accepted, but may have felt that somehow or other this younger brother stood between him and the attaining of his ambitions, and that his removal would be a means for the maintenance of his own claims and position. How short-sighted was the adversary, that he should think to out-general Jehovah, and to *exalt himself* and erect a rival kingdom! Soon Satan's folly will be manifested, when the Lord's due time shall come, and the one who *humbled himself* in obedience to the Father's will shall be exalted to kingly power and authority, and to the position at the Father's right hand in the kingdom of the universe; and when the one who attempted the usurpation shall be bound and utterly destroyed. And how foolish was Cain's supposition that fighting against God would avail him anything, or that the destruction of his brother would leave him the heir of the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head! And how similarly foolish are all who foster ambition and pride—even in respect to the promises of God. How sure it is to lead to the murder-spirit of brother-hatred. (I John 3:15) And, on the contrary, how wise are those who follow the example of our dear Redeemer, quenching all ambition in devotion to God and burying pride under love and humility. Let us, therefore, as the Apostle exhorts—humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time, even as he highly exalted our Lord Jesus.—1 Pet. 5:5, 6; Phil. 2:5-12.

Had Cain, on the contrary, yielded to an humble and loving spirit, he would have said to his brother Abel, "My brother, I congratulate you, that the Lord has so remarkably accepted your offering; I rejoice with you, and now that I have learned better what things the Lord is pleased to accept in sacrifice, I myself also will hasten to present an offering like yours, and I will gladly exchange with you some of the fruit of my labors for some suitable sacrifice from your flocks." And who can doubt that Cain's offering, if brought in this manner, would have been accepted of the Lord, as was Abel's? The thing lacking was the humble spirit, the spirit of love, without which he could not be acceptable with God, nor appreciate his privilege of offering the acceptable sacrifice.

This same lesson of the first-born occupying the position of favor and opportunity, yet being unworthy and unready to use it, is illustrated in Abraham's sons. First was Ishmael, who for years was looked upon as the heir of Abraham and the promises made to him, and who continued to so regard himself even after Isaac, the child of promise, was born,—mocking and persecuting him. Similarly again, Esau, as the first-born of Isaac, held the birth-right to the same promise, yet not appreciating it rightly, sold it to Jacob for a mess of pottage, and then strove to retain it unjustly to himself, and was angry with the one who did rightly value it.

The Apostle points out to us (Gal. 4:22-31) that these things were allegories or pictures, written aforetime for our admonition and instruction, that we through these illustrations might gather the thought that God foreknew and designed that in bringing in the true seed (Christ Jesus, the Head, and the church, his body) there should be just such an experience as was pictured in these three illustrations. The first seed of promise was Moses and his house, fleshly Israel. These were represented in Cain and Ishmael and Esau—not that there were no exceptions in the nation of fleshly Israel, but that the nation as a whole was thus typified.

Israel, like Cain, considered itself as the first-born and heir of the divine promise, and it brought to the Lord an offering of works under its Law Covenant, represented in Cain's offering of the fruits of the ground, the labor of his hands; but God did not accept the imperfect works of Israel as satisfying unto justification. Israel, like Ishmael, was for years recognized as the heir to the Abrahamic promises, and felt arrogant in connection therewith; yet never was the real seed of Abraham meant by Jehovah when he made the promise that Abraham's seed should be great and should bless all the families of the earth. Nevertheless Israel, like Ishmael, mocked at the spiritual Israel, the true heir of the divine favors, and persecuted those that were born (begotten) after the spirit. Israel, like Esau, had indeed a title to the blessing, as being the first-born, and had they appreciated that blessing they might indeed have been the heirs of the promise; but failing rightly to appreciate it they had more respect and love for earthly comforts and advantages than for the spiritual, and sacrificed the latter for the former, even as Esau sold his birth-right for the mess of pottage. Nevertheless, while not highly esteeming the divine favors represented in the promise made to Abraham, the natural Israelite at the close of the Jewish age was disposed to claim that promise, and to resent the thought that it should pass by them and be given to spiritual Israel, represented by Jacob, the second-born. And as Esau's anger was so fierce that Jacob was obliged to flee for his life, even so spiritual Israel was put in jeopardy of life by natural Israel. The Isaac-class was persecuted by the Ishmael class, and the Abel class was slain by the Cain class.

It at first seems strange that God's favored ones should thus appear to be worsted in every instance, and be obliged to flee from, or be killed by those whom God rejected. But herein is a great spiritual lesson, for we perceive that as the natural Israel was represented by Moses and his house, so the spiritual

Israel is represented by Christ and his house; and we see that the very method by which Christ and his followers are to gain the victory in this present time is through obedience unto God "even unto death"—and that thus being obedient unto death, Christ and his church, which is his body, and which the apostle assures us is to fill up that which is behind of his afflictions (Col. 1:24), become the heirs of the world, the inheritors of the promises. Why? Because there can be no crushing of the evil one and his power until first of all the *sacrifice for sin*, the *ransom-price for the sinner*, shall be paid; even as there can be no blessing of all the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham until, first of all, that Seed of Abraham shall have redeemed all the families of the earth by offering the sacrifice for sins which God has all along indicated must first be paid, and must include a sacrifice of life —for "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins."

Here, then, we may see not only in the plain declarations of the New Testament, but in all the shadowy pictures which prophesied the same in the Old Testament, that it must needs be that Christ (Head and body) shall suffer and be raised from the dead before these great and precious promises of the Almighty to mother Eve and to father Abraham can have their fulfilment.

The position we have here taken will not be disputed by any Christian well versed in the Word of God, except, perhaps, that some not having studied the subject from this standpoint, may at first be unable to see how the church of Christ shares with him in all these pictures, and in the great sacrifice, as well as in the glorious work to follow. However, careful study of the Lord's Word from this standpoint will assuredly prove its correctness; and now we offer in further corroboration, the testimony of the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians. In chapter 3:16 he points out Christ as the promised seed of Abraham, and in verses 27-29 he explains to us that all who come into Christ during this age and become members of his body, are thus members of the seed of Abraham, and heirs with Christ of the promises of God made to Abraham.

Also in Galatians 4:22-31 the Apostle explains in detail how Ishmael represented Israel after the flesh, born of the Law Covenant, represented by Hagar, and how, as such, they could not be heirs of the Abrahamic Covenant. He then shows Christ, the son of the free woman, the Abrahamic Covenant, represented by Sarah, and he not only represents the Lord Jesus as being the Isaac seed of promise, but in so many words declares that the elect church of Christ in this Gospel age is also of this Isaac seed, and heirs with Jesus, and, through his merit, to all the promises made to Abraham—that they should be God's agency in bringing blessing to all the families of the earth. The Apostle's words are, "So, then brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman [the Law Covenant] but of the free [Abrahamic covenant, typified by Sarah.]" "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."

While these pictures and lessons relate chiefly to the church as a whole, rather than to each member of it as an individual, nevertheless, individual lessons may be gleaned from them also, for altho Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, represented particularly natural Israel and spiritual Israel, we may, nevertheless, find similar characters and similar individual conditions today, in the "tares" and "wheat" of the Gospel church. The tares, like Cain, have the spirit of the wicked one, the spirit of ambition and of pride, and as a rule they occupy very leading positions in nominal churchianity. They bring to the Lord offerings, and not without a certain form of godliness, yet their hearts are far from the attitude which would be pleasing to the Lord, for the offerings which they present are of their own works—they come not to the Lord solely in the name and merit of the great sacrifice for sins finished at Calvary, and God cannot accept their offerings.

The wheat class of this Gospel age, corresponding to Abel, come before the Lord in greater humility; not trusting in any righteousness or works of their own for their acceptance with him, they present to him, according to his own appointment, the sacrifice of blood—Christ's sacrifice, and these are accepted and God's favor is manifested to them; but so far from this awakening in the tare-class a spirit of contrition, and a desire to learn the way of the Lord more perfectly, it seems to awaken in them hatred, animosity, chagrin, that they, worldly-wise and of worldly influence and fame, should be rivalled and outdone in divine favor and acceptance by those that are nought in their estimation and from the worldly standpoint. And the wheat-class, represented in Abel, must be ready to lay down their lives as the price of their fidelity to the Lord. To these the Lord speaks individually, saying, "Be thou faithful unto *death*, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) Their faithfulness is sure to lead to consecration to death, which ultimately finishes in literal death; for only by thus proving their faithfulness and following the footsteps of their Master to the end of the way can they be accepted of the Lord to joint-heirship with him.

The persecution of Isaac by Ishmael finds a parallel also in the opposition of the tares to the wheat; there is a rivalry between the church nominal, which holds the place of influence and power, and which ridicules and mocks and persecutes the Isaac class. This persecution may not in every instance go so far as persecution to death, as in the case of our Lord and many of the apostles, and yet it will extend to every member of the Isaac class in some manner, even if it be not a more severe opposition than that of mocking and speaking evil of them. But all these things must be endured, and that with patience; yea, they may be endured with joy, if we can but have the Spirit of our Head, and realize the meaning of these oppositions which come to us as they came to him, and of which he said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, *therefore* the world hateth you." And again, as the Apostle declares, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."—John 15:18, 19; 1 John 3:1.

In all of these illustrations it is well that we note the differences of spirit or disposition, that the haughty, the proud, the ambitious and self-confident spirit is the one which leads to disappointment, and is not of the Lord; and that the humble, teachable, obedient spirit or disposition is that which is recognized by the Lord; and in proportion as we are seeking, therefore, to make our calling and election sure to membership in this spiritual Seed of Abraham, represented in Isaac, represented in Jacob, and represented in Abel, let us seek to bring to the Lord such sacrifices as he is pleased to receive (Heb. 13:16), and to be exercised by such a spirit of faith, of trust and of obedience as was manifested by the Head of this body, the Lord Jesus. He is our perfect Pattern; he walked this way successfully, and has not only opened it for us through the merit of his sacrifice, and accepted us as his followers in it, but also he has promised us his grace and help through the Word and by his Spirit and by his providence all the journey through; assuring us that having begun a good work in us he is both able and willing to complete it. Let us then, like him, bring unto the Father the acceptable sacrifices of our consecrated lives, made acceptable to the Lord's altar through the atonement sacrifice which our dear Redeemer gave on our behalf. Thus we shall at once and always be accepted in the Beloved.—Rom. 12:1; 5:1, 2.

JESUS BETRAYED AND FORSAKEN

JOHN 18:1-14.—MARCH 3.

"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

Nothing connected with the Gospel narrative appeals to human judgment more forcibly than does its simplicity. The fact that the weaknesses and failures and stumblings of the apostles themselves are faithfully narrated, and that without apologies or excuses or attempts to gloss over the defects, shows a sincerity, a truthfulness of intention, very rarely found in other writings. Nowhere is this more conspicuous than in the present lesson, which records the shameless perfidy of Judas, and the weakness of the remaining eleven, who, in our Lord's darkest hour, all forsook him, seeking personal safety,—one of them subsequently denying him. The writers of the Gospels would have been excusable had they interjected explanations and excuses for their course; but the narrative is really stronger as it stands, and we are, perhaps, inclined to furnish excuses for them which we might have been loath to receive had they offered them for themselves.

We note that two of them had swords, and that by our Lord's permission, if not direction (Luke 22:35-38), that it might be manifest that he was not overpowered by the high priest's servants, but that he merely yielded himself to arrest. The Apostle Peter probably reasoned that if the Lord had directed the bringing of the swords they were for use and not ornament, and with commendable courage he drew his sword in defense of his Lord against the first of the party who attempted to lay hold upon him. The blow was evidently intended for the head, but perhaps was providentially warded off so as to injure merely the ear. But what consternation it must have brought to Peter and to the others, when the Master objected to their using the swords, objected to their defending him, and even healed the servant who was smitten! Confronted with such conditions, we can readily see that the faithful eleven could do nothing but one of two things—either stay with the Master, and, like him, submit to arrest, or flee, and thus secure their personal liberty and safety, which the Master evidently did not wish to secure on his own behalf.

We can readily imagine that eleven strong men, as they were, in the prime of life, even if they had but two swords amongst them, could have done considerable damage to the band that came to arrest our Lord; but while the excitement and activities of a battle inspire courage, to be compelled to stand idle and not be permitted to lift a hand in self-defense in the presence of an armed enemy, is most discouraging to anyone. And the natural tendency of all under such circumstances, to flee, was in this instance assisted and accentuated by the Master's own suggestion, "Let these go their way." Under full consideration of the circumstances, therefore, we must acquit the apostles of anything like cowardice, and must say that under similar circumstances to theirs few of the Lord's people would know how to do otherwise than flee, as they did.

The band of men whom Judas led out for our Lord's arrest were not Roman soldiers, but merely under-officers and servants from the high priest's household, armed with such weapons as they could command, sticks and swords, etc. The Roman military authority, represented in Pilate, took no cognizance of Jesus and his work until the next day, when the priests, chief rulers, and a multitude of incited servants and people, brought him to the tribunal and demanded his execution.

St. John's account does not mention the miserable act of betrayal by which Judas indicated which one of the twelve was Jesus—the betraying kiss, nor our Lord's words of reproof: "Friend, wherefore art thou come? Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" Judas evidently advanced beyond the band to give the salutation, according to prearrangement, that he should thus indicate the one they sought.

It is difficult for any noble-minded person to read the account of Judas' course without feeling a deep sense of righteous indignation—a sense of the baseness of character which could thus betray, for thirty pieces of silver, the one whom he recognized as the noblest of men, whether or not he was sure that he was the Messiah. It may not be amiss that we notice here that Judas did not reach this depth of iniquity suddenly, but rather that the disposition had grown upon him during the three years of his intercourse with the Master, when the reverse disposition should have had control. At the time when he was chosen to be an apostle he evidently was a good man, so far as outward appearance at least was concerned; and his name, which signifies "Praise," would seem to indicate that his parents had been of a religious cast of mind, and had wished, and, so to speak, prophesied of him, that he would be a messenger of God to sound forth his praise. And what a privilege and opportunity he enjoyed in this direction!

From the meager mentionings of the Gospel records, we may reasonably infer that the beginning of his downfall was the harboring of a love of money. Instead of rebuking this wrong spirit, curbing it, and seeking, on the contrary, to cultivate generosity and love and benevolence, he permitted selfishness to have more or less control in his heart and life. We may surmise that he *chose* the office of treasurer for the little company; whereas, had he been sufficiently alive to his own condition his proper course would have been to have refused it, realizing that already he had too much love of money, and that the handling of the funds might prove a temptation to him. But, on the contrary, he sought the office, obtained it, carried the bag, and the money that was put therein, and the Apostle John tells us that he was a thief. (John 12:6) This passion for money, like all others of the abnormal propensities of our fallen nature, grew stronger and stronger as it was encouraged and cultivated, until finally it knew no bounds, and he was ready to sell his loving Master, Messiah, for thirty pieces of silver.

But while hating such a character, loathing it, despising it, and seeking to go as far as possible in an opposite direction in our own characters, we are not to overlook the fact that there are many amongst the Lord's disciples who, in a less degree, commit a crime very similar to that of Judas—they sell the Lord, they betray him, while professing to love him. True, this cannot be done in the same personal and literal way today; but the spirit of it may be seen occasionally, we regret to say; we find some who really believe in Jesus, some who have consecrated their lives to be his followers, some who have been engaged in the ministry of his truth, as Judas was there, who are willing to sell the Lord for a mess of pottage—for good things of this present life—for a salary, for social position, for honor amongst men, for popularity, and titles—who are willing to sell even their lips, as Judas did, so that, while professing to honor and to serve the Lord, they are willing to join with those who misrepresent his character, his plan, his Word—willing to rejoice with those who seek to assassinate the Lord. Ah, how well it is that each one ask himself the question raised upon the night of the Supper, "Lord, is it I?" and let none be too ready to excuse himself, but let each search earnestly his own heart and life and conduct, to see that he is not sacrificing in any way the truth and the life for any consideration whatsoever.

OUR WARFARE NOT WITH CARNAL WEAPONS

In telling Peter to put up his sword our Lord inculcates a lesson which many of his well-meaning followers since have utterly failed to learn. On the contrary, all through the dark ages the sword—military power—was invoked and used on behalf of one party and then another of professed followers of Christ; sometimes against unbelievers, but very frequently against fellow-professors. The sword has left a bloody mark in the church nominal, and has become a cause of offence even to some in the world who see how different is such a course from that which our dear Redeemer prescribed for his followers. Never was this lesson more needed by nominal Christendom than today, when a militant spirit seems to pervade all parties and denominations. It is the soldiers of professedly Christian nations that today are amongst the poor heathen of China, *"avenging"* the death of Christian missionaries and others. It is these same representatives of these so-called Christian nations that are setting such immoral examples before the heathen people that by their evil conduct they glorify the soldiers of heathen Japan, whose mercy and moderation and self-control are universally admitted.

True, blame for what these soldiers may do cannot be properly charged upon the cause of Christ. We deny that they are Christian nations, and we deny that they are Christian soldiers. We claim that the soldiers are "children of this world," and that they are fighting as representatives of the "kingdoms of this world," under the "prince of this world." Nevertheless, as we come still closer to the question we find, upon apparently good authority, that the government of the United States has been appealed to by Christian ministers and missionaries to take vengeance upon the Chinese. From the accounts in the public press we may infer that the majority of the appeals for mercy and moderation have come from nominally worldly people, and that a majority of the appeals for vigorous measures have come from those who *nominally* are ministers, servants, representatives of Jesus, who said to Peter, "Put up thy sword into its sheath."

But here again we must draw the line, and surmise that as in olden times the Apostle said, "They are not all Israel who are of Israel," so now they are not all true Christians who are of Christendom. We must suppose that the Apostle's words are still true, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." We must suppose that in proportion as the spirit of love and gentleness and meekness is lacking it is a good evidence that the person, whatever may be his professions, is not a minister of Christ, not a minister of the true Gospel, but merely a minister of some human denomination and some false gospel, which contradicts the truth.

It may not be inappropriate here to notice the general spread of a fiery spirit, bitter, vindictive, merciless, amongst people professing godliness, and of whom we might reasonably expect better things. An evidence of this bitter and fiery spirit is seen in the greater prevalence of lynch law in this enlightened country, where all the laws are in the hands of the majority, and where, therefore, there is no excuse. Accounts of these lynchings seem to indicate that there is, deep down in the hearts of many people who are apparently moderate and well intentioned, a fierce, brutal, savage instinct, which has never been transformed by the renewing of their minds by the power of the holy spirit. Just what this may lead to in the future, it is difficult to say; but it is part of the spirit of anarchy, which the Scriptures assure us will before long spread throughout all Christendom, and result in the great time of trouble, so long foretold, in which everything of law and order will go down before the angry passions of humanity.

The same intemperance as to thought and feeling is manifest sometimes merely in words, but it is, nevertheless, a piece of the same article, and reprehensible. As an illustration of this tendency toward immoderate thought and expression, we call attention to the extreme and unjustifiable utterance of a Methodist bishop, quoted from the *New York Sun* as follows:

"Shall we have Bryan elected? No; a thousand times no! I'd rather go to sea with a boat of stone, with sails of lead, with oars of iron, with the wrath of God as a gale, and hell as a port."

We should not forget, in defence of the bishop, that this language was used during the heat of a political campaign; and yet the palliating circumstances are quite insufficient. No circumstance, no condition imaginable, should lead any minister of the Gospel of Christ to use any such language; and we point it out now merely as an indication of the trend of our times, as being of a piece with the lynching and torturing of fellow-creatures, as an indication of the wild ferocity of thought which is leading on rapidly and preparing Christendom for anarchy, lawlessness, immoderation in all things. Let all of Christ's true disciples more and more remember the command of the Master, "Put up thy sword!" "Love your enemies." "Do good unto those who despitefully use you and persecute you."

THE CUP WHICH THE FATHER POURS

Our Golden Text is the cream of this whole lesson. It expresses most beautifully, most concisely, most forcefully, the principles which underlay our Master's obedience to the heavenly Father, and which enabled him in all things to come off conqueror and "overcomer;" and all who are seeking to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, to be his disciples in deed, will do well to ponder the thought expressed in these words: "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" The thought is clear: It is that he recognized the circumstances and conditions in which he found himself, as being not of those of his own making, nor yet those made for him by his enemies. He recognized the divine supervision of all of his affairs, and knew that nothing could possibly come upon him except as the Father would permit; and because the Father had so arranged it, had poured out this cup for him, therefore it was his duty on his part to drink it.

We would not undertake to say that the Lord's people should never look for ways of escape from impending trials and difficulties; for we have the Lord's promise to this effect, that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are *able* to endure, but will with the temptation provide a way of escape from those features of it which would be beyond the possibility of endurance. When, therefore, we feel that our submission to evil has about reached its climax, where succor must come or we must utterly fall, that is the time for us to look about us to see what way of *escape* the Lord is opening for us. But we are to be sure that the way of escape which we take is not of our own, but of the Lord's provision; for if we should run away from duty and trial and testing in one place, it would merely be to fall into other trials and testings, perhaps severer, in another quarter. We are to know in advance that trials, difficulties, persecutions, slanders, are all a part of the portion which the Father has poured out, not only for the Head of the body, but also for all the members. We are therefore to be prepared to endure hardness as good soldiers; not fleeing, but courageously accepting as of the Lord's providence whatever he may permit to come to us, unless we shall see a reasonable, proper, honorable way of escaping from it, which will not be in violation of our covenant, nor in violation of any law of righteousness.

No other lesson, perhaps, is more needed by the Lord's followers than the one of willingness to drink the cup which the Father pours—a recognition that the Father is guiding and directing in our affairs because we are his, as members of the body of the Anointed One. In these respects the consecrated children of God occupy a very different position from the world, with whom the Father is not dealing as sons, who are not on trial for glory, honor and immortality, and for whom, consequently, he is not now pouring cups of trial, testing, endurance, etc. "The cup which we drink, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?"—a share in his sufferings? "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him; if we be dead with him we believe that we shall also live with him."

LONGING FOR HOME

As pants the hart for water brooks,
So pants my soul for thee!
O, when shall I behold thy face,
When wilt thou call for me?

How oft at night I turn my eyes
Toward my heavenly home,
And long for that blest time when thou,
My Lord, shalt bid me, "Come!"

And yet I know that only those
Thy blessed face shall see,
Whose hearts from every stain of sin
Are purified and free.

And O, my Master and my Lord,
I know I'm far from meet
With all thy blessed saints in light
To hold communion sweet.

I know that those who share thy throne
Must in thy likeness be,
And all the Spirit's precious fruits
In them the Father see.

Lord, grant me grace more patiently
To strive with my poor heart,
And bide thy time to be with thee,
And see thee as thou art!

—G. W. SEIBERT.

"YE HAVE CONDEMNED THE JUST ONE"

MATT. 26:57-68.—MARCH 10.

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. 16:16.

Caiaphas filled the office of high priest at the time of our Lord's condemnation. It was he who had already expressed himself to the effect that it was "expedient that one man should die for the nation, that the whole people should not perish" (John 11:50; 18-14), thus illustrating how God may at times use the thoughts and intentions of wicked men to express prophetically profound truths. It was indeed expedient not only for the Jews, but also for the whole world, that a *ransom* should be given for Adam and his race, to the intent that they might be released from divine condemnation and ultimately be granted an opportunity for return to divine favor and life everlasting.

But so far as Caiaphas was concerned, he was probably thinking only of human expediency. He perceived the growing interest of the multitudes in Jesus of Nazareth. He realized that even the most learned of the scribes and Pharisees were no match for Jesus in doctrine and logic, and that the teachings of Jesus were so opposed to his own and the general traditions of Judaism that their acceptance must mean a religious revolution. This, he reasoned, would mean the loss of the prestige of the nation with the Romans, and the abrogation of all the rights and privileges accorded to them. So far as Caiaphas was concerned, his mind, his judgment, was already made up in respect to Jesus, and he merely sought opportunity to carry it into effect—to kill him. But being outwardly and nominally a religious man and a representative of justice, he felt constrained, so far as possible, to put the murder of Jesus, which he felt to be a necessity for the public good, in the light of an act of justice.

Caiaphas evidently was the ringleader in the conspiracy against Jesus. It was he and his associates who bargained with Judas; it was the underpriests and under-officers of his court and household and his servants who had been sent with Judas to arrest our Lord in the night, when he would be away from the multitudes; and we may presume that it was by his orders that our Lord was taken first to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, a man of great influence amongst the Jews, who had previously been high priest, and whose term of office had not yet expired, according to Jewish custom, altho their conquerors had forced a change in this respect, and had appointed Caiaphas chief priest instead of Annas. The sending of Jesus to Annas was evidently intended to secure his sanction to his arrest and trial, and the influence which that would imply.

When the band appeared before Annas he questioned Jesus respecting his teachings, etc., but he did not attempt a trial of the case, not having the authority. When our Lord refused to answer the questions, and referred Annas to those that had heard him, he was merely following the judicial course, and suggesting to Annas the propriety of not departing from the law in the examination of a prisoner. Annas signified his assent to the arrest by not reproving it or demanding his release, but sending the prisoner *bound* to Caiaphas,—thus saying by implication, I agree in your course that this man should be arrested and should be tried as a dangerous character,—dangerous to our theories and institutions.

Caiaphas had already the sympathetic cooperation of many of the leading Jews, especially of the priests, some of whom were in the "band." We may presume that the time during which the prisoner was taken to the house of Annas was occupied in despatching other messengers in various directions, to notify the members of the Council—the Sanhedrin—that the disturber of their peace had been arrested, and to assemble for his trial. It was probably about two o'clock in the morning that Jesus was brought before Caiaphas. The Jewish law forbids the trial of a prisoner between sunset and sunrise, and any verdict secured during the unlawful hours would have been invalid, illegal. Nevertheless, the chief priest was anxious to have his case well in hand by sunrise, and to hasten as much as possible the death of the prisoner, which he had already determined upon. The matter of the trial was a mere farce anyway, but he would see what evidence he could lay before the Sanhedrin at sunrise, and hence he immediately and illegally began the examination of Jesus, calling for witnesses.

No doubt it had been freely stated that Jesus had announced his Messiahship, altho we know that this was not the case so far as the Gospel narratives show. He had been very guarded in his remarks in public, and even amongst his chosen twelve disciples he had not announced himself freely, but had first drawn from Peter the declaration of our Golden Text, "Thou art the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the living God." Jesus merely acknowledged that Peter had stated the truth, and that he had been guided in the statement by the holy spirit. When, therefore, Caiaphas sought witnesses even on this point he found none capable of giving satisfactory testimony. One witness who thought he had something of importance gave a somewhat garbled account of our Lord's words respecting the Temple; but when they sought a second witness to corroborate this they could not find one who would testify exactly the same, and the Jewish Law required at least two witnesses in any such trial.

Exasperated at his poor success in securing testimony, Caiaphas determined to try a different plan, and an illegal one —to excite his prisoner so that he would make some incriminating confession. Therefore he rose up, and with a manifestation of indignation, and to give the effect that very damaging testimony had been given, he asked the prisoner if he had not heard the testimony against him, and if he had nothing to say in self-defence. Our Lord made no response; he was not there to defend himself, and if he had been there was no need of defence. There was nothing criminal in what he had said respecting the Temple, even if it had been testified by a dozen witnesses. Caiaphas was foiled, but being a shrewd man he quickly changed his tactics, and affecting to wonder if indeed the claims of Messiah might be true he put Jesus under oath, saying, "I adjure thee [I put thee under oath] in the name of the living God; tell us whether thou be the Messiah, the Son of God."

Our Lord was not bound to answer this question, which he well knew would be used to incriminate him as a blasphemer. Nevertheless, he was not seeking to avoid death, but had already determined that the cup which the Father had given him was to be drunk, and hence he answered saying, according to John, "Thou hast said"—you have stated the truth; or, according to Mark, "Jesus said, I am"—the Messiah, the Son of God. He followed this with a declaration that those who there witnessed his humiliation and mock trial should in due time recognize him as the honored of God, sitting down at the right hand of the majesty on high, and to be revealed in the clouds of heaven as the great Judge, the Messiah.

Caiaphas could not hope to have a clearer expression, nor anything that would come nearer justifying his predetermined verdict of guilty of blasphemy, and hence with a mock expression of righteous indignation he tore his "simla" or upper garment, exclaiming, Blasphemy! We have heard blasphemy! Then, appealing to the members of the Council present, who were already in sympathy with the murderous procedure, he enquired whether or not they were satisfied with the evidence, and, as pre-arranged, they agreed that this was a clear case of blasphemy, and that Jesus was worthy of death.

Dr. C. H. Plumptre has well said: "No other words in the whole Gospel records are more decisive against the views of those who would fain see in our Lord only a great moral teacher, like Socrates or Sakya Mouni. At the very crisis of his history, when denial would have saved his life, he asserts his claim to be more than this, to be all that the most devout Christians have ever believed him to be." The *most devout* Christians are those who believe our Lord's own words without distorting them,—that he was with the Father before the world was; that the Father had sent him into the world to be its Redeemer; that "never man spake like this man;" and that he was different from all other men, in that "he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners"—that the life of the man Christ Jesus was unblemished and from above. But the most devout Christians in all ages have avoided claiming for Jesus what some of the less devout Christians have claimed for him, but what he never claimed for himself; viz., that he was his own Father, Jehovah.

The most devout Christians have believed the words of Jesus, whom he said, "The Father is greater than I;" and, "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you." They recognize the oneness between the Father and the Son as being, not a oneness of person, but a oneness of heart, of mind, of purpose, according to our Lord's own declaration in his prayer for his people, when he said, " I pray for them . . . . that they may be one, *as we are* [one]." (John 17:11) The most devout Christians acknowledge that the only one, "the man Christ Jesus," was the perfect representation of the Heavenly Father, so that he who saw the Son (who was the express image of the Father's person) saw the Father also,—in the only way in which it would be possible for mankind to see "the *invisible God*," "whom no man hath seen nor can see," but whom the Only Begotten of the Father hath revealed to men perfectly. —John 1:18.

Thoughtful and *intelligently devout* Christians, when they examine the words of our Lord in this connection, can see nothing in them whatever to the effect that our Lord Jesus here contradicted the other plain statements of his testimony, but rather they find it in full conformity. Nor did the Jews for one moment think that our Lord meant that he was the heavenly Father. This was not the question asked: they had no expectation that Messiah would be Jehovah, but Jehovah's representative, and agent, the Son of God, "The Messenger [servant] of the Covenant, whom ye delight in." (Mal. 3:1) The charge of blasphemy against our Lord was based upon his claim of being a Son of God—not the Father himself. The charge was made on a previous occasion (John 10:29-36), when the accusers expressly declared his crime was that of calling himself a son of God;—that thus he was placing himself on a parity with God, as being of the same kind or nature. On that occasion Jesus answered their quibble by quoting them from the Psalms, where all of the Lord's consecrated people, the Gospel church, are called "sons of God," and he pointed out to them that he merely claimed the same title that was there freely given to those who would come into that relationship, through justification of faith, whereas he himself had always been a Son of God in full harmony with the Father.*

When this session of the Sanhedrin, or court, broke up it was to wait until sunrise, when the formal meeting took place, and the verdict of blasphemy would be reaffirmed, and thus have the semblance of legality. (Matt. 27:1) Meantime our Lord stood bound in the high priest's palace court for probably three hours, and it was during this interim that the high priest's servants, etc., took occasion to show their sympathy with the great ones by abusing the prisoner. Some spat upon him; others smote him with their hands and with sticks, and in general displayed their littleness and meanness. A favorite diversion with them seems to have been, after blindfolding him, to smite him and enquire whether or not he were prophet enough to name his tormentor. All these things our Lord endured, so far as the record shows, without a murmur. He accepted this all as a part of the cup which the Father had prepared for him; and the Apostle, evidently referring partly to these experiences, says, "Consider him who endured such contradictions of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood." (Heb. 12:3, 4) If we refuse the cup the Father prepares for us it will only return to us later perhaps with a more bitter draught: and if avoided entirely we cannot have share with our Lord in the glory, honor and immortality for which the trying experiences now permitted are our preparation.

The servant is not above his Lord, and if they have smitten and spit upon and buffeted the Master, none of the servants should be surprised or complain if they should have somewhat similar experiences. And when such things come to them while in the line of duty they are to esteem them as our Lord did, part of the cup which the Father has prepared, and they are to endure them without murmuring; on the contrary, as the Apostle suggests, they may give thanks that they are counted worthy to suffer some of the reproaches of Christ.—Col. 1:24; 2 Tim. 1:18; 2:3; Jas. 5:11.

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* For a treatise of this subject, and of the expression, "Son of Man," see MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V., Chap. 6.

But the Apostle urges, "Let none of you suffer as an evildoer nor as a busybody in other men's matters." If suffering should come upon us justly for our faults, we could not glory in it, but rather be ashamed; but if any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed—if he suffer for the truth's sake, for righteousness' sake. It may be urged by some that sufferings cannot come now, in our enlightened day, and when the name of Jesus is popular; but, we answer: Yes; it is still true, as the Apostle said, "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Many now claim the name of Jesus who know not Jesus nor the Father, and who have not his Spirit, just as many at that time delighted in the name of Moses, and sat in his seat as doctors of the Law, yet knew not, appreciated not, the law of Moses and the law of God.—1 Pet. 4:15, 16; 2 Tim. 3:12.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Question.—I see it is your view that the 144,000 sealed (Rev. 7) are Spiritual Israel, "the true Israel of God," foreknown to him from the beginning, the predestinated "Abraham's Seed" which shall in due time bless the world. (Gal. 3:29) I see too that you view it as a literal *number*, claiming that all the *numbers* of Revelation are literal. But let me inquire, Would not such a view overthrow the hopes of those who live today? Could we suppose that the entire Gospel age, with its reputed millions of martyrs, has not secured the 144,000 long ago?

Answer.—It would be a great mistake to suppose that the millions of martyrs, Catholic and Protestant, were all "overcomers,"—"saints" in the Scriptural sense. In a vast majority of cases the principle fought for, and suffered for, was chiefly *liberty*. Politics, too, lay at the foundation of much of the butchery. Note in another column how a bishop became so excited in our own day as to declare himself willing rather to go to hell than see a political opponent elected. Many, too, would go to death from pride;—rather than yield after having taken their stand.

When we think of the fact that a membership in this "royal priesthood" implies a full, living *self-sacrifice* to the Lord and his cause, and the attainment, while sacrificing, of the fruits of the spirit—meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly kindness,—Love, we rather wonder that so many as 144,000 could be found in the past nearly nineteen centuries. And it is of those who cultivate these graces, and attain them in their *hearts* (even if they cannot always exercise them as fully as they could desire in their *flesh*) that the Apostle declares: "If ye do *these things* ye shall never fall, but so [doing] an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 1:5-11.

Our confidence is in God,—that he knew exactly how long this Gospel age should be to gather the "elect" class; and that he will get the exact number of "jewels," the "little flock," within the appointed time, before "the times of the Gentiles" run out.—See also our issue of April 1, 1899, page 67.

Question.—We are all making considerable effort, through the volunteer work and otherwise, to present the truth to others, and through the WATCH TOWER we learn that the numbers of interested ones are continually increasing, and the intimation is that still further increase may be expected. Now, the question is, How does this harmonize with the presentations of MILLENNIAL DAWN to the effect that the general call has ceased since 1881, and that altho the door to the high calling is not yet closed, it could not be entered except by those whom the Lord will admit to take the place of some who have failed to comply with the terms of their covenant—to make their calling and election sure.

Answer.—We understand that in 1881 a considerable number of justified persons had made a consecration to the Lord, but had not yet been proven—how many, of course, we cannot judge. Suppose, for instance, that the number were 50,000, and suppose that only one-half of that number would eventually be of the overcoming class: it would mean that gradually 25,000 would have their names blotted out of the Lamb's book of life, and the crowns once apportioned to them no longer counted as theirs. In order to give all of these consecrated ones a full opportunity it might be a number of years before any considerable number of them would be thus rejected, and the admission of others to take their places would be correspondingly gradual. We are to remember, too, that of those who enter to take their places probably not more than one-half would be overcomers—which would make 12,500 more to be admitted, and of these probably not more than one-half would be overcomers, which would mean that more than 6000 additional ones must be brought in; and so on. We think it not unreasonable that a considerable time has been left for many of the consecrated ones to note the tendency of the nominal church and her fallen condition spiritually, and to be tested thereby as respects their love for righteousness and their hatred of iniquity—their devotion to the Lord and to the principles of his Word, and their opposition to injustice, untruth, unrighteousness. Meantime, the truth, under the Lord's providence, has been going hither and thither throughout the civilized world, coming in contact with nearly all the consecrated, we may presume, and becoming more or less of a test to them. Some have gradually accepted it; others consecrated are, no doubt, still weighing the matter. Still others have probably sided against what they know to be the truth, because of love for the world or popularity or other selfish considerations. The testing of these cannot be expected to continue long. The light is growing so strong on the one side, and the darkness so strong on the other, that any who are unable to make up their minds respecting their proper position would thereby be showing themselves to be unworthy to be classed as "overcomers" and joint-heirs with Christ in the kingdom. We may reasonably expect, therefore, that quite a good many places in the Lamb's book of life will be declared vacant and new names be written therein to complete the elect number. To our understanding the ones thus favored of the Lord will be persons fully consecrated to him, and we would esteem it probable that such would early be brought in contact with present truth for their ripening as wheat for the garner, and the hearty acceptance of present truth by such as are fully consecrated to the Lord and to lay down their lives in his service would, we esteem, be in the nature of an evidence of their acceptance to the high calling. We would not understand that a knowledge of the truth without consecration would be an evidence in this direction, believing that many can see much that is reasonable in restitution, etc., who have never made a covenant with the Lord. We would believe, however, that none can appreciate deep things of God except by the holy Spirit.—1 Cor. 2:9, 10, 14.

Question.—What is the Christian's robe, of which the Apostle says that it should be kept "without blemish?"—Eph. 5:27?

Answer.—We understand it to be the wedding garment mentioned by our Lord in one of his parables. It represents the righteousness of Christ imputed to his consecrated followers who are invited to suffer with him, and also to reign with him. Otherwise it is called justification by faith—our imputed or reckoned righteousness in Christ, through which we have a standing and acceptance with the Father, and are permitted to enter into covenant relationship with him and thus to become "heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him."—Rom. 8:17.

In the representation of the bride-class in Psalm 45, the church, as the King's daughter, is represented as presented at the marriage in this clean linen robe, richly embroidered—the embroidery, we believe, representing the development of character on the part of all the faithful. The robe is the basis of any good works that we can perform, and even then before we can accomplish anything we must have and must follow the pattern given us by our Lord.

This garment, if it would be a wedding garment, must be spotless, clean and white—"without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." (Eph. 5:27) In James 1:27, the Apostle urges us to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, which implies a possibility of having our robe of Christ's righteousness spotted. This does not signify that anything we could do could destroy the work of Christ, or make of none effect his sacrifice for sins, nor blemish *it*. The robe signifies that share of Christ's merit which has been freely appropriated to us by him with the Father's consent. If, through receiving of the spirit of the world, we blemish or sully this wedding garment we shall be unfit to be of the bride class, and be rejected; and yet we might say that in our present imperfect condition and many unfavorable surroundings and besetments it would be a miracle if we should never come so closely in contact with evil as to spot our garment or wrinkle it.—Compare Jude 23; Rev. 3:4; 16:15.

However, we find that God's gracious provision in Christ is not only that our Lord Jesus' sacrifice was a sufficient one for all of our imperfections of the past, prior to our acceptance with the Lord, but that it is a sufficient one also for any unintentional blemish or weakness or misstep that may come to us through our own imperfections or the weaknesses of others, after we become the Lord's children. In other words, we are not only provided with the robe covering all the past, but provided also in the same sacrifice of Christ with a spot-remover, and any who through weakness or temptation stumble by the way and soil their garments are to be restored by the brethren "in a spirit of meekness, remembering themselves also, lest they should be tempted." To restore means to help them to see the spot, and by faith to apply the provided cleansing, through penitence and prayer. All who are in the right attitude of heart, appreciating the purity of the robe, appreciating the Bridegroom and his favor, appreciating the great King and appreciating the honor of being called to the marriage, will be very careful indeed to guard against spots and wrinkles, and very careful also that if any should get upon their robes they should be as quickly as possible removed. This work of mutual helpfulness on the part of the Lord's consecrated people is represented as "the bride making herself ready."

Those not thus faithful are in a wrong condition, and spot after spot, wrinkle after wrinkle, coming to their robes, they become more or less careless, and especially as they see so many others in a similar condition. These are brought to our attention in Rev. 7:13-16. We are there shown that they will not come to the position of being members of spiritual Israel, the 144,000, filling up the elect number named after the twelve tribes. We are shown, however, that their unreadiness to be of the elect class was because of the spots upon their robes and the carelessness which this manifested. But the Lord does not reject them because, passing through manifold temptations, they have not been properly careful, for in wearing the robe they are still confessing their trust in him, in the merit of his sacrifice. He therefore provides for them an experience which will demonstrate to which party they really belong. He causes them to go through a great time of trouble in which, if they love sin and unrighteousness, they will succumb; but if they love the Lord and love righteousness they will come off victors eventually through the Lord's grace, and be permitted to cleanse their robes with tears and efforts, etc., as they should have done voluntarily before, spot by spot, as any blemish was noticed. They do not become members of the bride class, even when cleansed; they do not sit with Christ in his throne as will the bride; they do not constitute the temple, but, on the contrary, they will serve God in his temple (the church). They will serve *before* the throne; they will have palm branches, indicating final victory; but they will not have crowns, because they were not overcomers, in the sense demanded of all who will be joint-heirs with Christ.

Question.—I read in the Tower of March 1, 1900, under the caption, "The Consecrated Home Honored," your suggestion respecting responsibilities of a husband and father as the head of his household. In that article you intimate that those who do not exercise the office of head of their families have reason to question whether or not they are overcomers, etc. The question seems to me a very important one, in view of the fact that I know a great many of the brethren who seem to have comparatively little influence or control in their own homes. I therefore inquire, To what extent is it reasonable for us to expect our households to be all consecrated?

Answer.—You have only partly grasped our thought, which is not that all the members of the family should be consecrated to the Lord, but that the home and its conditions should be of the consecrated kind if the head of that home is consecrated, and is exercising the duties and prerogatives of the head of the house. Even if every member of the family were out of Christ, and out of sympathy with the religious views of the husband and father of the family, his kind and loving, but positive conduct of his house along Scriptural lines should secure to him such respect from every member of his family that they would not only not oppose his wishes, but, on the contrary, would take pleasure in co-operating with them. Thus, if the Lord himself or one of the brethren, his representatives, were to pass that way, and the husband and father of the family thought to entertain him, the properly ordered household, being under the control of his consecrated mind, would be one in which all whom he chose to invite would be made most welcome and heartily entertained. And even if some dissatisfaction were felt, it would be a crime against the divine institution of the family to manifest opposition, for the husband and father is the head of the family, as Christ to the church, says the Apostle.—Eph. 5:23, 24, 29, 33.

Nothing in this would mean arbitrariness on the part of the husband and father, but rather that he would wish to consider, as far as possible, the interests of his home, and to contribute to the happiness of each member of it. But it would be his duty, as a child of God, to place the wishes of the Lord paramount to those of his family, so that he would be prompt to invite the Lord or his brethren into his home, as a tribute of his respect and love for the Lord. And in requesting his family's co-operation in this matter, he would know that he was bringing a blessing to them, whether they appreciated it or not; and that any failure to follow this course would be giving his family and their wishes precedence to the Lord and his wishes, a matter not to be considered for a moment by any "overcomer." Nevertheless, everything should be done, not from the standpoint of force and demand, etc., if possible, but rather from the standpoint of love. Let the family see your love manifested in all ways, and also know your firmness in character on every point where principle or loyalty to the Lord are involved.

Nor do we mean that the wife and family should be imposed upon and overworked for the sake of visitors; on the contrary, their care and comfort are the first care of the husband. The head of the family must be watchful of the interests of all under his care to such an extent that he should sacrifice himself, his own comfort and convenience, for their proper care. But to purchase peace in the home at the expense of his own manhood would be wrong, and would encourage a wrong spirit in those he seeks to guide in the right way.

However, where the right way has not been seen and the wrong way has become habitual, it would be the part of wisdom not to approach the *right* too ruthlessly, but very gently; praying for and seeking to exercise humility, patience, gentleness—to let love, and love only, hold the reins of control.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

NATIONAL PREPARATIONS FOR WAR

We clip the following from a Pittsburgh daily, which shows that the Hague Peace Conference of 1899 is not taken very seriously by any of the nations:—

"To carry out the various programmes of naval construction, as framed by the nations of the world, will require an outlay of five billion dollars. England set the pace several years ago, and now many of her great ships are out of date and out-classed.

"The United States government arranged to spend $60,000,000, of which $20,000,000 will be expended in 1901. The cost of the tools and places to repair ships is almost as expensive as the ships themselves. The value of ships is ephemeral, owing to the constant changes in types.

"England has under construction 17 battleships, 24 cruisers, 8 sloops of war and 25 torpedo destroyers, at a total cost of $133,000,000. This will not complete the fleet, but moves them forward and completes those ordered under a former appropriation.

"France has provided for a naval construction reaching to 1907, in which a total of 220 vessels are to be built, the outlay of 1901 being figured at $124,000,000.

"The plans of Germany cover 34 battleships, 32 cruisers and 80 torpedo boats. The appropriation for 1901 is $100,000,000. Russia's expenditures in 1901 is placed at $46,000,000 for the beginning of the work on new ships and completing those under way.

"Poverty-stricken Italy will expend $30,000,000 on her navy in 1901. Japan's budget for naval equipment in 1901 is $23,000,000. Austria, Sweden, Holland and Denmark are preparing to double their naval expenditures. Verily, the wings of the angel of peace are not to be spread over the ocean during the early years of the new century."

CHRISTENDOM'S FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Because the great time of anarchistic trouble for which the Scriptures teach us to look in the near future is to be the agency through which the "present evil world [age]" will collapse, and prepare the way for the Millennial kingdom, therefore our interest in the financial situation as related to prophetic fulfilment.

"Money-making," the accumulation of vast wealth, cannot under present conditions come from day-labor in cultivating the soil or otherwise. It comes from the use of machinery, which today is so complete and abundant in civilized lands that each nation is able to much more than supply its own demands and must compete for outside business. This is the meaning of the Chinese trouble—she has hundreds of millions of people, and Christendom wants their patronage, and in the name of Civilization will insist on having it—even tho it costs blood and treasure it must be had for the future still more than for the present.

Truth to tell, the present era of prosperity would have collapsed a year ago had it not been for the wars, which came just in time to prolong the momentum. The Spanish, Philippine, Boer and Chinese wars have taken men from the ranks of labor and helped in that way; and have drawn money from the treasuries of the nations and put it into circulation among the people as the price of services, provisions, armaments, etc., etc.,—bonds taking the place of money as "collateral." Note the above naval expenditures alone, and consider how the $500,000,000 to be spent this year is already giving employment to miners, coke workers, steel workers, railroad employes, ship-builders, boiler and engine-builders and gun-makers.

And this is but one item of the world's war expense. For instance, in the United States Senate one of its most careful and responsible members declared, "The military budget of this republic for the coming year will be nearly $400,000,000. It will be nearly twice what any European power is spending." Of this amount only *one-twentieth* is for the navy, as shown above.

If present wars continue, or others break out and necessitate further expenditures and more bonds, the "good times" will last a while longer, until something occurs to cause distrust; then a panic will ensue, which, because of present conditions, will grind the masses as none other ever did;—and then will come the collapse which we expect will spread to everybody and everything in "Christendom." Money is now pushing the lever forward and keeping the people busy, because it is more than proportionately profited; and when the time comes, as it must come, when national bonds will no longer be in demand, it will be the money-power that will take fright and reverse the lever and arrest the world's machinery with a jolt that will shake the social structure.

Already both Great Britain and Germany have found it expedient to place their bonds in the United States rather than at home. Already there are premonitory signs of financial trouble in Germany—as the result of "over-production," competition, inability to find a market for her products. Already British manufacturers are suffering from competition; and the manufacturers of the United States could do nearly double their present business if they had the demand for their goods.

We clip the following from the *Boston Herald*:—

"Germany is feeling sharply similar conditions. The Berlin correspondent of a London newspaper says the German mortgage banks are in a bad way, which, indeed, is not news, since it has been known for some time. The important point is that the situation does not improve. The electrical industries, the iron trade and the wool-spinning industry are extremely dull, the latter being reported almost ruined. The cities are full of unemployed people, and the paternal government is busily devising public works and charitable arrangements for their relief. There has been in late years an enormous industrial development in Germany, bolstered up, to some extent, by artificial means. Naturally this has been accompanied by an enormous speculative movement. Should it collapse, the consequence would be a period of hard times, the duration of which cannot be predicted with any confidence. Germany has been, as it were, intoxicated by glory and hope. All classes of the population are puffed up with a sense of national destiny. They have appeared to think that nothing could withstand their progress to the supremacy of the world. Any rude shattering of their dreams would result in corresponding rejection when its significance was fully realized. According to all accounts having semblance of truthfulness, the present prospect is dark and threatening."

Concerning the condition of things in Russia, the *Industrial World*, Odessa, says:—

"It is no ordinary, temporary, fleeting or passing financial and industrial crisis which Russia faces. Her staple industries for some time have steadily languished, from causes various and deep-rooted, which it is the government's duty to investigate. Money is daily becoming scarcer. No year in forty has opened under blacker auspices. The country is within measureable distance, all around, of an economic collapse."

If it is thus in the face of such immense national expenditures, how will it be when these and other great enterprises are forced to stop by a great panic? When it will come, no one can tell; but the Lord's people who order their affairs more for the accumulation of heavenly than of earthly wealth will be in the more favorable condition (both of head and heart) to take their share of whatever may be permitted of their heavenly Father, and to profit by it. In view of the foregoing, we would not be surprised if wars would continue or increase, and thus prolong the present "good times" for a while, and thus financially weaken the nations for their fall. But we make no predictions. The Master's advice is always in order, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

THE SPIRIT OF LAWLESSNESS PREVALENT

The tendency away from peace toward lawlessness and war continues to be evidenced on every hand. The passion for blood and destruction still strives, however, to justify itself in some "righteous cause;" but the appetite, once whetted, will some day be careless respecting any claims of justification; and then some "*good people*" will be sorry that they did not balance their justice more evenly; that they helped unchain the tiger, that lies dormant, but not dead, in every fallen human being.

The war against the Boers—to compel them to give the elective franchise to a few hundred foreigners, "uitlanders," has not only cost thousands of lives and millions of money, but has given thousands a taste of blood and fire, of recklessness of life and property which will prepare them for the coming scenes of anarchy at home. The same is true of the American soldiers in the Philippines, and the soldiers of all "Christendom" in China.

The same spirit has manifested itself in nearly every nation of Europe against the Jews, and in Turkey against Christians. And it is a part of the spirit that has made possible horrible lynchings in this country; and which backs the present saloon-smashing now in vogue in Kansas. In all these cases those taking law into their own hands and practicing violence, would urge that *right* was on their side. Doubtless to some extent this is often true: what we point out is the spirit of *lawlessness*, anarchy, which is growing, and which will bear a "whirlwind" harvest ere long.

TRUSTS AS VIEWED BY JUSTICE BROWN

"Justice Brown, one of the ablest members of the Supreme Court of the United States, in his John Marshall address at Parkersburg, W. Va., made some remarks pertinent to the trust question in speaking of the future of the judiciary of this country. 'The problems to be solved in the future,' he said, 'were those of combinations of capital and monopoly. . . . Society must adapt itself to the new conditions and do all it can to minimize the evils. It will not be the judges and the lawyers of the twentieth century who will have to face these problems, but the statesmen. *There will be a struggle fought out with the desperation of hunger and possibly with bloodshed*, but society will have to readjust itself on the basis of justice and equity.' "—*Pittsburgh Post.*

* * *

We endorse the above. We do not say that trusts and combinations are unmitigated evils—that serve no good purpose; but admitting that such great combinations of capital serve a great purpose in economy of management and cheapening the *cost* of life's necessities—just as socialism would propose—we see nevertheless the impossibility of this reduced cost reaching and benefiting the public. We see that selfishness will maintain or raise prices and perhaps reduce wages to increase the stock dividends, even tho the process grind the masses into the dust. Those who forget that selfishness is the motive power of "the present evil world" will err in all their calculations.

Socialists err on the other side of the question;—in supposing that people in general would work either their hands or their brains vigorously, if the incentives of gain, selfishness, wealth, were removed by legislation or otherwise. Not until the strong hand of the kingdom of God, backed by the strong love of the glorified Christ Head and body—(Rom. 8:17) takes control of earth's affairs can socialistic programs hope for success.

THE POPE CRAVES POWER TO SUPPRESS PROTESTANTISM

The Pope gave a hint respecting one cause of his anxiety to recover temporal power in Rome, when, addressing the Duke of Norfolk and accompanying English Catholics, recently, he said:

"Under our eyes, in this holy city, which should be the inviolate center of Catholism, it is permitted to associations for religious propagation to take advantage of the sad economic conditions of the country to corrupt the faith of our children in the name of the specious doctrine of judgment, which pretends to leave each the right of interpreting in his own fashion the doctrine of Christ. You are right in protesting against this state of things, which enables you better to understand the grievous circumstances in which we have lived during the twenty-five years of our Pontificate."

Commenting on this, the London *Spectator* truly remarks: "In other words, temporal power is needed to prevent liberty of worship and of conscience in Rome, and to cleanse Rome from the defilements of Protestant teaching. Yet the Pope praises the British nation because it allows full liberty of conscience. Fortunately there is little fear of Papacy recovering the temporal power. And, in truth, all good Roman Catholics should rejoice that this is so. Nothing could result therefrom but spiritual injury."

IMPORTANT CONCESSIONS BY THE PORTE

"We are enabled to announce an important concession respecting the right of Jews to hold property in Palestine, which has been obtained from the Porte by M. Isaac Fernandez, President of the Comite Regional of the Alliance Israelite in Constantinople. For several years past Jews of all nationalities, even Ottoman subjects born in Palestine, have been forbidden to buy landed property in Palestine. M. Fernandez has now secured for Jews who have been settled in the Holy Land for a considerable time, whether subjects of Turkey or of foreign powers, the right to buy 'Miri' (agricultural land) and to have the property inscribed in their own names. The special importance of this concession lies in the fact that while 'Mulk' (town land) is owned by private individuals, 'Miri'' is the property of the Sultan.

"M. Fernandez has rendered an immense service not only to his co-religionists, but to the entire population of Palestine. The Imperial Treasury will be among the first to derive material benefit from the measure mentioned above. The government of the Sultan has thereby given a fresh proof of the religion toleration which is a tradition in its annals."—*Jewish Chronicle.*

* * *

"We are in a position to state that according to our latest information from Constantinople the views expressed in authoritative Turkish circles are favorable towards political Zionism, and the advantages the Ottoman Empire will derive from it. We can further state that we are now in the midst of negotiations of far greater importance than the mere annulling of the prohibition of immigration would signify."—*Report of Zionist Committee in Die Welt.*

"I FIND NO FAULT IN THIS MAN"

Luke 23:13-26.—March 17.

Having gone through the form of a trial, a mockery of justice—the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees, with a multitude of their retainers and servants, a clamoring mob, led Jesus to Pilate, while it was still early in the morning. (John 18:28) But they remained in the court-yard while Jesus was led alone to the judgment hall, probably by a court attendant or a sentry, the Jews declining to enter, because so doing would make them ceremonially unclean, and hinder their observance of the Passover feast, which would begin that same night. What a curious blending this shows us of cleanness and uncleanness! How exact they were to a jot and tittle about matters of minor importance, and how utterly lost to all sense of heart-purity and love, the real essence of the divine law! We who are of spiritual Israel need to be on guard against such a development of outward religious ceremony and formalism, carefulness and purity, which might be accompanied by a blackness of heart and utter absence of holiness and love for righteousness. As a matter of fact, these chief religionists among the Jews were murderers at heart, from the divine standpoint, while careful of the outward ceremonies of their religion. Let us not be like unto them.

It was an unusual thing to accuse one of their countrymen before a Roman governor. It was customary, on the contrary, for them to seek to hide their faults and to secure acquittal, or at least as much leniency as possible. Therefore, these prominent men of the nation had no question but that Pilate would immediately assent to their demand, and crucify Jesus. They seem to have been surprised that he should inquire respecting the facts of the case, or show an interest in giving justice—especially in protecting a Jew from the wrath of his countrymen, particularly the leaders of his nation. When, therefore, Pilate inquired, "What accusation bring ye against this man?" they answered him, "If he were not a malefactor we would not have delivered him up unto thee." Pilate then dismissed the matter as one of Jew against Jew, and not of Jew against Cæsar, saying: "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law." (John 18:29, 31) But the Jews replied, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." The Roman government had taken away from the Jewish Sanhedrin the power of capital punishment, and nothing short of Jesus' death was in their minds.

They had failed to have Pilate's speedy endorsement of their condemnation, regardless of justice, and now they must put their plea upon another ground—they must formulate a charge, and it must be such a charge as would appeal to the Roman governor. They well knew that their condemnation of Jesus for having said that he was a Son of God would be nothing in the estimation of Pilate; hence, after condemning Jesus unjustly for blasphemy, they made before Pilate a new charge, of three counts: (1) Sedition—disturbing the peace; (2) that he interfered with the collection of the Roman taxes; (3) that he himself claimed to be a king, and was thus an antagonist of Cæsar.

Pilate quickly saw the true state of the case; *viz.*, that "through envy the chief priests had delivered Jesus" and condemned him, and not through any new-found love for Caesar and his government; and leaving the multitude of accusers in the court, Pilate went into the judgment hall, where Jesus stood, and questioned him, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" (John 18:33) The whole matter must have seemed very ridiculous to Pilate, who we must remember, was neither Christian nor Jew, but a heathen man, in whose judgment all the hopes of Israel respecting Messiah would be absurdities on a plane with the chimerical hopes of the various nations the world over. He perceived that the person before him was a remarkable one, and the answer of Jesus led only to greater perplexity, for he told him that his kingdom was not of the present time and order, but a future one, and that he had come to bear witness to this truth. Pilate found himself getting only deeper into problems which he could not comprehend, and suddenly broke off the conversation with the question: "What is truth?"—without waiting for or expecting an answer, as tho he would say, Yes, yes; we hear of truth, justice and equity, but what is it, and where is it to be found? Who shall determine what is the right? Are you right, or am I, here the representative of Rome, in the right, and authority, or are those Jews who are clamoring for your death in the right? What is truth? It is too perplexing a question for us to discuss further.

Pilate, however, had made up his mind definitely that there was no danger whatever to the Roman Empire from the meek and lowly person whom he had interviewed—he was surely not an anarchist, not an insurrectionist of any kind. He could do no harm in the world, and even if his teachings respecting his own heavenly origin and kingship were baseless and the product of an unbalanced mind, nevertheless the individual himself was no menace to Rome. And thus he expressed himself in the words of our Golden Text: "I find no fault in this man." (Luke 23:4) And Pilate's decision has been the decision of all honorable, fair-minded people throughout the world from his day to the present, irrespective of religious prejudices. Whatever fault has been found has been against those professed followers who have taken his name—in vain: those who have claimed to be his followers, but who have not followed him, but have rather gone contrary to his teachings in many ways. These have brought dishonor often upon the sacred name, but as for Jesus, the world today declares with Pilate, "We find no fault in this man." Yea, the world loves to quote many of his blessed sayings, and many wish for a government built upon the principles of righteousness which he enunciated, even tho many who thus proclaim are unwilling to be guided by his precepts.

The Jewish leaders were chagrined with Pilate's decision, and began to argue the points and to attempt to prove that the teachings of Jesus were calculated to arouse a revolution amongst the people; that already in Galilee it had great influence, and now he was coming to Jerusalem, etc. True, the Lord's teachings were revolutionary as respected religious matters; but the charge was not true in the sense they wished Pilate to understand, that he was a breeder of a political revolution. And this is a good point for all of the Lord's followers to note: we, like our Lord, stand committed to a revolution amongst God's people on the lines of true religious worship, heart-obedience to the Lord, etc., but we, like our Lord, have nothing whatever to do with political revolutions. We know that such are coming in the Lord's own time and way, but we battle not with carnal weapons, as he did not; but as he did, so do we, wait for the kingdom which God will establish in his own time and way—we wait for the expiration of "the times of the Gentiles," when, as God has foreordained and forearranged, the kingdoms of this world will give place to, and be superseded by the kingdom of God, in which, by the Lord's grace, we trust to have a part.

The mention of Galilee suggested to Pilate's mind a way of escape from his dilemma, without either doing an injustice toward Jesus or unduly arousing the enmity of the Jewish leaders; he would solve the difficulty by referring the case to Herod, who was then in Jerusalem. This was the same Herod who beheaded John the Baptist (the son of Herod the great, who slew the infants at the time of our Lord's birth), the same one who, hearing of Jesus, speculated that possibly he was John the Baptist risen from the dead. We read that "When Herod saw Jesus he was exceedingly glad, for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him." (Luke 23:8) Herod questioned Jesus with many words, but got no reply. Our Lord was not there in self-defense, nor to plead his cause, nor to seek to escape the penalty for our sins, but the reverse. His silence under all the circumstances was the wisest and most dignified course. Herod sought for amusement as from a sleight-of-hand performer, and was undoubtedly surprised and disappointed that his kingly curiosity and questions were ignored. However, he and his court would have some amusement, so the soldiers were given the opportunity to mock the kingly aspirations of Jesus, doing mock homage, and then insulting him. Herod returned Jesus to Pilate for judgment.

SELFISHNESS THE BASIS OF SIN

The Jewish notables and the rabble, clamoring for justice and the vindication of Roman law in the death of Jesus, again filled the court of Pilate's palace, and Pilate came forth and addressed them in the words of our lesson, declaring Jesus innocent of any criminal conduct, but announcing that in view of the commotion and clamor raised against him he would cause him to be scourged, and that this should be considered a settlement of his case. Evidently the scourging of Jesus was an act of mercy on Pilate's part, by which he hoped to satisfy the bloodthirsty clamor of the accusers, yet it was unavailing, and merely caused our Lord additional suffering. The multitude cried out the more, "Crucify him!" Pilate's next subterfuge was to propose that since it was his custom to release one prisoner at this season of the year he would release Jesus at this time, and thus satisfy them in a double sense of the word; first, by considering him guilty, and secondly, by his release. But murder was in the hearts of those professedly religious people. They were blinded to justice as well as to mercy by the selfishness of their own hearts, for their enmity to Jesus was based simply and purely upon the fact that he and his teachings were discounting them and their teachings before the people.

It is well that we should note that selfishness lies at the foundation of every sin and every crime, that is and ever has been committed. Let us, as the Lord's people, be specially on guard against this insidious evil, which is ours by heredity, and which needs to be destroyed, eradicated, and to be supplanted with love, as the governing impulse of our hearts and lives—love, which thinketh no evil, which is not puffed up, which seeketh not her own advantage at the expense of justice to the interest of others. We are not, however, to think of these Pharisees, scribes and priests as wilfully, knowingly, intentionally, crucifying the Son of God. They would not have been so bold! On the contrary, the Apostle assures us that it was in ignorance that they did it; (Acts 3:17; 1 Cor. 2:8) an inexcusable ignorance, we may say, or at least, an only partly excusable ignorance, because it was the result of prejudice, which in turn was the fruit of selfishness.

The priests, etc., felt that matters were getting desperate, and they must bring to bear upon Pilate every influence they could; hence their intimation that if he would not crucify Jesus they would report him to Cæsar at Rome as being a friend of traitors against Roman authority—an enemy of the Emperor. This was a forceful argument, and Pilate realized it. Were such a report to be sent to Rome, signed by the leading officials of the Jewish nation, it would not be without weight, and the authorities there would wonder, at least, why the life of any poor, obscure individual would be spared to the alienation of the leading men of the nation and at the risk of an insurrection. Pilate decided that the only reasonable and proper course for him to pursue would be to let the Jews have their way; and taking a pitcher of water, he washed his hands in their sight, as a symbol of his own disagreement with the death-decree which they were compelling him to render. His words were, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be upon us and upon our children."—Matt. 27:24.

Remembering that Pilate was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but a heathen man, we cannot condemn him as others have done. Rather, indeed, we must commend him as being a man who loved justice and sought to mete it out, and who yielded to injustice only after he had made every effort to stem the tide of contrary influences when it would have been easy for him to have curried favor with the officials by quickly assenting to the death of a person of no political influence. It is to be noticed, too, that the apostles do not implicate either Pilate or the civil authorities, but hold responsible the Jews and their leaders (Acts 2:23), and that God has held that people responsible is evident from the history of the past eighteen centuries, in which their prayer has been answered: his blood has been upon them and their children. Thank God, his Word does not imply that divine wrath, even against these guilty persons, will be manifested and exercised through an eternity of torture by devils, but rather, as the Apostle intimates, God's wrath came upon them to the uttermost in the troubles which befell them as a nation and people. (1 Thess. 2:16) Soon the wrath is to be turned away and the commission of the Prophet already is due to begin, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people: speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem. Cry unto her that her appointed time is accomplished, for she hath received at the Lord's hands double for all her sins." —Isa. 40:1, 2, margin.

Jesus was now delivered over to Pilate's soldiers, to be made ready for crucifixion, and they, heartless and brutal, as we might expect, made sport of the Master's adversities. Putting upon him a cast-off royal robe and a crown of thorns, they jeered him upon his claim to kingship, without a surmise, of course, of who he really was, and how he is yet to be a King upon the holy hill Zion, to whose sceptre every knee shall bow and to whom every tongue must confess. It will be a surprised awakening to them some day, when they amongst others shall come forth from the dead to find Messiah's kingdom established, and to realize that he exercised mercy toward his enemies, and that his death prepared the way for the blessing of themselves and all the families of the earth with an opportunity to come to a knowledge of God and of his righteous requirements, and thus, if obedient, unto life everlasting.

THE GROUND OF THE CHURCH'S CONFIDENCE

It was probably about this time that Pilate's wife sent word to him respecting the dream she had, about Jesus, and admonishing him to have nothing to do with his condemnation. And so Pilate, as a last resort, brought Jesus forth, clothed in the purple robe of mock royalty, and with the crown of thorns, and presented him to the people with the words, "Behold the Man!" As tho he would say: Is it possible that you Jews are seeking the death of this innocent man, the noblest and best specimen of your race, indeed of the entire human race? Would not a final look at him appeal to your hearts and melt them? If I, a Roman, ignorant of your religion and regardless in general of all religion, have a pity and a sympathy and a sense of justice, is it possible that you are so unmerciful, while claiming to be the most religious people on earth? Behold the Man! Do you still insist that he be crucified? Then the priests cried out, not only that he ought to die because of being an enemy to the Roman Empire, but because he had taught that he was the Son of God—thus appealing to the Jews that he was a blasphemer, one whom God commanded them in the Law to destroy.

Pilate was the more afraid when he heard that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, and again sought an interview with him; but Jesus' answer was, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above" —permitted of the Father. Pilate could do no more; even Jesus himself assented, and claimed that it was in the divine order that he should die. Pilate signed the death sentence. —John 19:4-11.

There is a lesson for us in these words of our Lord, respecting the *Father's permission* of all that happened to him. We who are members of his body are counted in with him as under divine supervision, so that in all of our affairs all things are guaranteed to work together for our good while walking in his footsteps. This is the ground of our confidence in all the various trying circumstances of life. This it is that gives the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts, not only subduing self and enabling us to submit ourselves to the will of God, but permitting us even to rejoice in tribulation, *knowing* that under divine providence, and that rightly received, it will work out for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. 4:17.

THE ATONING SACRIFICE COMPLETED

LUKE 23:35-53.—MARCH 24.

"Christ died for our sons, according to the Scriptures."—1 Cor. 15:3.

"And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him." (Mark 15:20) Jesus was now in charge of the centurion, and with the two bandits or highwaymen who were to be excuted that day, was led to execution, each of the three prisoners being under the guard of four Roman soldiers, with a centurion in command, sixteen persons in all. It was about nine o'clock in the morning, and our Lord having been incessantly harrassed by his enemies from the midnight previous, without food or rest, buffeted, scourged, tormented, was, according to tradition, weak and faint under the heavy load of his own cross, which, according to custom, he bore. The Gospel narrative seems to confirm this incidentally, by telling us that Simon, a Cyrenian, was compelled by the soldiers to bear the cross for Jesus. Some, however, claim that Luke's reading respecting this matter, that he "bore the cross after Jesus," signifies that he walked behind Jesus and merely assisted in the bearing of the cross.

Whichever way it was, Simon had a most enviable opportunity of serving the Master—an opportunity which would be eagerly seized by some of the Lord's people today, who would be glad to share, not only the Master's burden, but his ignominy. And, strange to say, the opportunity is with us now, and whosoever will of the Lord's disciples is privileged to take up the cross and follow after him; for the offense of the cross has not ceased. True, the cross has become fashionable, and is worn by many as an ornament with little thought of the original cross and what it signified, and with little desire to bear any of its shame or ignominy or weight. But there are still some who have the Master's spirit, to whom the Apostle appeals, saying, "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him;" for "we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren," and to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake which is the church."—Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; 1 John 3:16; Col. 1:24.

Altho the man Christ Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners—perfect—nevertheless he was neither a giant in stature nor in physical strength. This indicates to us that the perfect man was not a giant physically, nor in brute force preëminent; for all that the perfect man was, our Lord Jesus must have been, in order to be his ransom price, his substitute. The coarseness and brute strength which we find in many men is to be esteemed a degeneration, as truly as is the weakness and effeminancy of others—only that the degeneracy has manifested itself in another form. Great brute force and coarseness of organism is rarely accompanied by a proportionate strength and efficiency of brain power, and of the finer sentiments of the mind. The completion of the restitution work, therefore, must not be expected to bring coarseness and giant strength; but fineness and symmetry, physical as well as mental. Additionally, we are not to forget that for three and a half years our Lord's ministry had been a constant drain upon his vital forces, not merely in connection with his public preaching, but specially in connection with the miracles which he wrought at the expense of his own vitality; as it is written, "Virtue [vitality] went out of him and healed them all."—Luke 6:19.

The journey to Calvary was a sorrowful spectacle. It is to their credit that some of those who followed in the procession were weeping, and this credit for tenderness and sympathy falls to the women, to whom Jesus turning said, "Weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children." Apparently the Savior's thought was not centered wholly upon himself: he was thinking rather how this injustice would shortly react upon this nation, whose representatives had said before God and men, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." No doubt our Lord had in mind the descriptions of the trouble that would come upon Jerusalem, as given particularly in the prophecies of Daniel and Jeremiah. (Daniel 9:24-27; Jer. 6) We realize how literally our Lord's suggestion was fulfilled when we remember the story of the siege of Jerusalem, and how the women and children especially suffered in the horrors of that time. It is a sign of greatness of mind when one is able under such trying circumstances to think less of himself and more of others.

Arrived at Calvary the crucifixion took place. It is probable that the victim was nailed to the cross while it was lying on the ground, and that then the four sturdy soldiers lifted it and set it into a socket in the earth, the pain from the wound being intensified by the jolting of putting the cross in an upright position, and then terribly augmented by the hanging weight of the body. Crucifixion is probably the most cruel form of death, and even by the Romans as we understand it, was practiced only upon culprits—usually outlaws, brigands and seditionists. Thus our Lord was, in harmony with the statement of the prophet, "numbered with the transgressors."—Isa. 53:12.

On our Lord's cross, above his head, written in three languages, was a statement of his crime—the charge upon which he was convicted and sentenced, in the words, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." It was written in Latin, the language of the Romans, representative of authority and power; in Greek, the language of culture and learning; and in Hebrew, the language of the professedly God-fearing people. It was a title of shame and contempt, a brand of blasphemy to those who read it; and the multitude, going and coming to and from the city jested him upon his title, and the miserable failure of the fraud he had attempted to perpetuate in claiming for himself such high honors and dignities. The priests and rulers, of course, followed to see their victim surely dead; and any qualms of conscience they may have had respecting the injustice of their course seem to have been stifled by the apparent confirmation of their verdict in their success in accomplishing his death, and in his apparent powerlessness to save himself from his calamity. The soldiers, too, especially those who had him in charge, seem to have felt that this was an exposure of another fraud, the ignominious termination of another one who had asserted himself against the power of Cæsar.

The records show that Jesus' mother was there and her sister, and John the disciple, and his mother, and Mary Magdalene and Mary the wife of Cleophas. (John 19:25; Matt. 27:56) They were all sorrowful; many of them weeping. They could not deny the assertion of the rulers and the multitude, that apparently the claims of our Lord had been fraudulent; they could not understand how he who had such power, and in whom they had such confidence, could be so helpless in the hands of his enemies. It was incomprehensible when they remembered how even the winds and the waves of Galilee obeyed him, and how many unclean spirits, being unable to resist the command of his word, had been cast out of the afflicted. But altho they could not make any reply, under the circumstances, to the jibes of those who railed at the Lord, they nevertheless loved him; for they knew, that regardless of his power and his titles, and whether or not he had overstated his relationship to the heavenly Father, nevertheless, "never man spake like this man," and never had they known any who could compare with him amongst the sons of men for purity and nobility of soul. They could do naught else but love him and trust him, and wait for some indication of the seeming inconsistencies which they then beheld. And so it is at times with the Lord's followers since. Occasionally things occur in respect to the Lord's Word and what he permits his people to suffer, and the power he permits their adversaries to exercise, which are incomprehensible, and his followers may at such times be obliged simply to hold their peace; but those who know the Lord through intimate communion and fellowship of heart, who have fed upon "the deep things of God," who have drunk of his spirit—altho unable to explain the difficulties, are fully able to trust in him and to hope and to wait for such expressions as are sure to come, in vindication of his every act and word and providence, in due time.

Whilst the others were reviling our Lord and calling upon him to manifest his Messiahship and to come down from the cross, one of the thieves joined in the ribald assault; but the other, realizing that death was near, and admitting his own guilt, seemed to recognize in Jesus a person of an entirely different order and character from that of himself. He alone, so far as we are informed, raised his voice in protest against the slurs, and in defense of the meek and lowly one, who said nothing in his own defense, and who thus set us a most wonderful example in patient endurance and suffering for well doing. Had he demonstrated his power, as they "dared" him to, he would have been wrecking the hopes, not only of those who maligned him, crucified him, but also the hopes of the whole world of mankind. O, how we rejoice in his faithfulness unto death—even the death of the cross! How we praise him that he did not exercise his power, and "call for more than twelve legions of angels" to deliver him, but on the contrary sacrified himself, laying down his own life as a ransom for Adam and his race.

The contrite thief knew little respecting Jesus, except what he saw before him of his patient endurance, suffering for righteousness' sake; but this "living epistle" made a marked impression upon him, just as sometimes the conduct of the Lord's followers, patient in tribulation, is the strongest and best lesson that can be given to some, "without God and having no hope in the world." There is nothing to indicate that this thief became a saint in the few moments of his acquaintance with the Lord; there is nothing to indicate that he had or could develop a *character* in that time which would constitute him an overcomer, a joint-heir with Christ in the kingdom. Everything is to the contrary of such thoughts. He merely realized that he himself was guilty and worthy of death, according to the law, that Jesus was innocent, and that there was a bare possibility of there being something in the claims of this wonderful man in respect to a future kingdom. He would at least speak a word in his defense, and then he would appeal to Jesus, that if he had a kingdom, as had been intimated, he would graciously remember his words of defense and do a kind deed for him when his kingdom should come.

PARADISE PROMISED

Jesus replied, "Verily, verily [so be it, so be it], I say unto thee this day, Thou shalt be with me in Paradise." It should be as the thief had requested, not otherwise. When Jesus' kingdom should come the effect or result of that kingdom would be the restoration of the Paradise lost when sin entered into the world as a part of its penalty,—redeemed by the sacrifice which he was then finishing at Calvary. When he should come into his kingdom at his second advent he would, as the thief requested, remember him there and then, and undoubtedly the thief will have an abundant reward for the words of comfort spoken to our dear Redeemer in his hour of trial; but that reward will surely not be a place in the throne, in the kingdom, as a member of the body of Christ; for this position amongst the elect is to be given only to those who shall attain the character-likeness to God's dear Son. (Rom. 8:29) Besides, none can attain this position without being begotten of the holy Spirit, and the holy Spirit, the begetting power of the new nature, was not yet given, until after Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension, when at Pentecost it came upon those who waited to be adopted from the house of servants into the house of sons.—John 1:12; 7:39.

The thief died too soon to have any part in this kingdom, had he been ever so well developed in character,—even as John the Baptist died too soon. Of the latter our Lord said, that altho there was not a greater prophet than he, "the least one in the kingdom of heaven [the Spirit-begotten church, joint-heirs with Christ in the kingdom] is greater than he." (Matt. 11:11) When the kingdom shall come, and Paradise shall be restored, not only the penitent thief will be there, but also the impenitent one, and those Roman soldiers, and those bloodthirsty scribes and Pharisees and priests—all will be in Paradise,—not for any worthiness of their own, but by reason of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, which paid their penalty and insures their having a full opportunity in the Millennial Paradise to come to a knowledge of God and through obedience then to life everlasting, if they will.

How forceful the expression, "I say unto thee *today*,"—notwithstanding all this seeming weakness on my part and seeming triumph of my enemies—I tell thee today, that thy prayer shall be answered; and that when I come into my kingdom, Paradise shall be restored and thou shalt be there to be blessed, as I shall be there to be the King and Priest to give the blessings promised in the divine plan.* The garden of Eden was the Paradise lost, and on a larger and grander scale it shall in due time be restored by him whose sacrifice purchased it as well as mankind.—Eph. 1:14; Rev. 2:7.

It was probably during the early part of the crucifixion, that the four soldiers who had Jesus in charge divided his clothing amongst them; but the seamless robe which he wore, a fine and expensive garment, being desired by them all, for it they cast lots. That robe properly and beautifully represents Christ's righteousness, the wedding garment, which is a great value, and which, during this present age, is granted to the most favored ones as furnishing the opportunity for their attainment with Christ of joint-heirship in the kingdom, if they will suffer with him. The lot or privilege to have this garment of Christ's imputed righteousness has fallen chiefly to us of civilized lands, to whom the light of the knowledge of God's gracious plan in Christ has been granted. How thankful we are that the lot or privilege of possessing the favors represented by this robe is ours. Those who appreciate it will show their appreciation in the affairs of their daily lives, seeking to keep their garment unspotted from the world, and that it may be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, and that it may be embroidered with all the graces of the Lord's character; that under the grace which it implies they may be accepted in the Beloved One.—Psa. 45:14; Jas. 1:27.

The darkness which came over the scene of the crucifixion at noon, and lasted until three o'clock, after our Lord's death, was evidently a very remarkable one, and made a deep impression. A newly found version of the Gospel, known as "The Gospel by Peter," is represented to say of this darkness, "Many went about with lamps, supposing it was night," and that the darkness lasted until Jesus was taken from the cross, when the earthquake took place. "Then the sun shone out, and it was found to be the ninth hour."

The rendering of the Temple vail apparently took place at the same time as this earthquake—the moment of our Lord's death. This was not the trifling matter it might appear from the word "vail," for this vail was an extremely large and extremely heavy curtain, the tearing of which would be no small matter, but would have required superhuman strength. Edersheim describes this curtain as being sixty feet long and thirty feet wide, and five inches thick; made of seventy-two squares joined together. We have seen (*Tabernacle Shadows*) that this vail was symbolical;—that it represented the completion of our Lord's sacrifice by which he opened up for us a new way of life beyond the vail, through the sacrifice of his flesh. In a figure, therefore, the Lord God, by the rendering of the vail, declared that the death of Jesus made possible the way into the Most Holy, even heaven itself, and the fact that the vail was rent from top to the bottom implied that the work was God's and not one having its start and accomplishment in human design and effort.

"FATHER, INTO THY HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT"

Our Lord's words commending his spirit, his life, to the Father, reminds us of the words of Stephen. (Acts 7:59) Stephen, however, had little to surrender, like us all; his Adamic life, the spirit of life, received from Adam, was already forfeited, and the only life which Stephen, therefore, could commend to God was the *reckoned life* received by faith through Jesus, the Life-giver. In the case of our Lord the matter was different. He had life rights which had never been forfeited through sin, and was committing these to the Father as the ransom price for Adam and his forfeited spirit of life: nevertheless, our Lord was firmly trusting in the Father's promise to raise him up from the dead by his own power, and his trust was in God that the restoration of life which he had promised he was abundantly able and willing to perform, and raise him from the state of death perfect, in the divine nature, with its glory, honor and immortality. Thus our Lord gave up the "ghost" (an old English term)—gave up his spirit of life—he died, and remained dead until the Father raised him from the dead on the third day by his own power.*

The closing scenes of the drama evidently were very awe-inspiring, not only to our Lord's friends, but also to his enemies, and a general hush and feeling of grief spread about. The taunts of his enemies ceased as the darkness came down, and many were willing at last to admit that the occurrences were remarkable, and corroborated to some extent the Master's claims, saying, "Truly, this man was the Son of God."—Mark. 15:39.

The solemnity of our Lord's dying moments seems to have given greater courage to some of his friends, two of whom, Joseph and Nicodemus, were members of the Sanhedrin, which had condemned him, these two being either absent or voting against the condemnation. They had been too careful of their reputations to avow their interest in Jesus previously, "for fear of the Jews," but now they had the courage to own the Lord as their friend, and to arrange the details of his burial. (John 19:39) The dilatory acknowledgment of Jesus on the part of these wealthy and influential men reminds us of the peculiar difficulties which hinder all persons of wealth and influence in connection with a proper acknowledgment of the way, the truth and the life. True, there are many rich men today, and many of influence, who, because of popularity of churchianity, take a prominent part in its service; but churchianity must not be confounded with "the body of Christ," the true church, which, like the Lord, is comparatively without influence, power or wealth, as viewed from a worldly standpoint. When the great drama of this atonement day is completed, the last member of the body of Christ has finished his sacrifice, there will doubtless be many of the rich and influential to come forward then, to honor the humble ones and to garnish their sepulchres. Much more to their credit and to their advantage and assistance in making their own calling and election sure would it be for these to come boldly forward in the time of sacrifice and bind their own sacrifices to the horns of the altar.—Psa. 118:27.

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* The comma should be after and not before "today" in order to permit harmony with the facts here before us, and agreement with other Scriptures. The *original* Scriptures are not punctuated—punctuation being a comparatively modern invention.

* See tract, *What is the Soul?* Sample copy free.

THE ATONEMENT

Various are the theories advanced in the name of Christianity and the Scriptures, respecting the at-one-ment between God and man; some acknowledging that the work which our Lord "finished" in his death on Calvary is the basis of all human hopes respecting the life everlasting, and at-one-ment with the heavenly Father; others persistently seeking to deny this, advancing theories to the effect that the at-one-ment between God and man never was broken off, that no ransom sacrifice was necessary to a reconciliation, that no fall took place, and that hence no restitution back to primary conditions is necessary or desirable or was secured by the Lord Jesus' death. Many of these theories which deny the redemptive value of our Lord's death affect to do him greater honor by claiming that his work for humanity was solely that of a great teacher, and in no sense that of a redeemer or purchaser. These false theories which ignore the ransom are becoming more numerous, more persistent and more seductive day by day to those who are not well rooted and grounded in the divine Word and plan of the ages. It is appropriate, therefore, that we here call special attention to the fact that according to the Scriptures the entire plan of salvation is pivoted upon the great transaction of our Lord's *sacrifice*, which, beginning with his consecration at Jordan, was finished with his expiring breath at Calvary. Whoever believes this and accepts it is justified thereby, obtaining his share in the merit of that sacrifice. Whoever rejects it rejects the only name and the only faith by which he can ever be reconciled to God and attain to life everlasting.

We are not in this suggesting that men are saved by a theory, but we are suggesting that since all who come into harmony with God during this Gospel age must come to him through *faith* in the precious blood of Christ, it follows that he cannot have a reasonable faith without a more or less clear theory; and that any theory which ignores the death of Christ as the basis of justification and reconciliation is an unscriptural one, and hence of no value whatever. Hence all who claim relationship with God upon any other basis of faith, any other theory, are deluding themselves—they are neither reconciled to the Father nor to the Son, nor justified from their sin, nor members of the church which is the body of Christ.

We do not mean by this to say that only such as have a clear conception of the *philosophy* of the atonement are justified; on the contrary, it is our belief that many of God's dear people during the dark ages, and since, have lived and died without a clear conception of the philosophy of this subject as it is now possible for it to be seen and appreciated. But while failing to see the *philosophy*, all of God's true people have recognized the *fact* that it was the death of Christ which effected our reconciliation to the Father, and upon which all hopes of life eternal are based. See Millennial Dawn, Vol. v., *The At-one-ment.*

To those who prefer the inspired words of an Apostle to the uninspired conjectures of their own and other minds, the Golden Text is an all-sufficient answer to all no-ransom theories. One of these, Christian Science, declares: "There is no sin,"—hence nothing to deserve punishment; and "There is no death,"—hence Christ did not die. But the Apostle affirms, in harmony with both reason and Scripture, that both were facts, and that Christ's death was *for* (as a means to our recovery from) our sins. Let us stand firmly in the inspired "faith once delivered to the saints."—Jude 3.

"DESPISED AND REJECTED OF MEN"

Isa. 52:13-53:3, 12.—March 31.

This is the Review lesson and requires little comment. The Golden Text serves us as a caption, and is itself a summary of the quarter's lessons. Evidently to be despised and rejected of men did not signify that our Lord was worthy of such treatment, but rather that those to whom he offered himself were so degraded and blinded by sin as to be unable to appreciate the glorious qualities of his character. Nevertheless, as the Apostle declares, "To us who believe he is precious;" and again, "To as many as received him to them gave the privilege to become sons of God." How thankful we are, and deserve to be, that the eyes of our understanding were permitted to see our dear Redeemer in somewhat of his true light of grandeur and holiness; and we rejoice also that seeing his glory we have been led step by step to transformation and renewing of our minds, and that we are being changed from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord even now in our hearts. "We have the mind of Christ." Moreover, we have the good hope, built upon the divine promises, that if we follow on in his footsteps in the narrow way we shall ere long be with him and like him and share his kingdom and glory.

"As he was so are we in the world."—1 John 4:17.

If the Master of the house was called Beelzebub and seditious and an enemy of law and order, against Caesar's government, etc., etc., by the false religionists of his day, so it should not surprise us, but should rather be expected, that all the way down through this Gospel age his followers, the members of his body, would be similarly misrepresented, slandered, maligned, despised and rejected by the popular religionists of Christendom. As a matter of fact, this is what the Scriptures teach us is to be expected; what history tells has thus far been true; and what we are convinced from the Word of God will continue to be true until the last member of the body of Christ has finished his course. These oppositions from the world, the flesh and the devil (generally operating through some nominally Christian channel), are a part of the chiseling and polishing, a part of the testing and proving of the Lord's people which must determine whether or not they are worthy a share in the kingdom—whether or not they esteem most the approval of men or the praise of God,—the honors and emoluments of this present life or the glorious but unseen things which God hath in reservation for them that love him. We cannot pass these tests in companies or groups, however small and select,—each must be tried, tested, individually, in order to prove him an overcomer, and before he can attain the promised prize. Each should remember the necessity for *faith* in what God has promised his people or he will be overwhelmed and defeated, and miss both the mark and the prize. "This is the victory that overcometh the world—even your faith." "Greater is he that is on our part than all they that are against us."

"THEY THAT REVERENCED THE LORD SPAKE OFTEN TOGETHER"

Dear Brother Russell:—I am glad to be able to write and tell you that I have about recovered from my illness. I am not quite as strong as I should like to be, but have no doubt I shall fully regain my strength in a little while. I went to Scotland last Friday for Brother Burkholder's funeral and was entertained by Brother Lehman. Altho the funeral was not until Saturday morning, by request I went over to see Brother Burkholder's family on Friday evening. There were several friends of the family present, and as the conversation turned upon Biblical matters we had a splendid opportunity for serving present truth, and they all showed much interest, and many good questions were asked. On account of the family's sympathy with the truth, the trustees of the church building refused to allow the funeral services to be held in that place. This action is significant, from the fact that it is a "union church," or rather (supposed to be) non-sectarian, and was built by the people of the neighborhood, with the understanding that it was for the use of any Christians.

However, a large number of people assembled at the house for the service. Therefore, there was a good opportunity to witness for the truth. The greater part of the people who attended the funeral were "Mennonites" (that being a Mennonite settlement) so in accordance with the custom of that people most of them returned to the house of mourning and spent several hours there. Of course there was a good deal of comment on the address, so the whole afternoon was occupied in discussing Bible questions, and the truth as usual proved itself powerful, and we hope that many were impressed by its beauty and simplicity. Brother Herr, from Pottsville, was present and assisted in the service, and also in upholding the truth afterwards.

Brother Faunce wrote you of the experience we had at the United Brethren church here, a week ago last Sunday. Well, as a sequel, last Sunday evening the pastor undertook to show the unscripturalness of MILLENNIAL DAWN, and by invitation several of the friends, including myself, were present to hear what this very blind shepherd had to say. Needless to say he had a very thin argument, and succeeded in making himself ridiculous.

His ignorance of God's word was simply amazing, and must have been apparent to every thinking person present. On the whole, I think he (unwittingly) helped the truth rather than hindered it, for he read some excellent extracts from the DAWN. Some of them I should have chosen myself had I been debating the points with him. He also read the extract from Atlanta *Constitution* from the back of a missionary envelope which he had. Whilst he had to admit that hades meant the grave, he also said that it meant more than that; to use his own words—"Hades is a place divided into two compartments, one where the bad spirits go to, and the other Paradise, where Jesus went." All of his "scriptural" proofs were "home spun," and unfortunately (for him) could not be warranted not to shrink. Of course, the Morehead tract was in evidence, and so were about 200 of No. 41, Old Theology tracts. All that was done by the friends to uphold the truth was done in the spirit of love and with becoming dignity.

I'm sure you will be pleased to know that the friends here show much zeal for the truth, and are growing apace. We have now started a mid-week meeting, which promises to be a success.

The Volunteer work will also be taken up; the arrangements for it are to be made next Sunday.

I am hardly able to go fully into my colporteur work yet, but hope to do so soon; in the meantime, shall endeavor to do a little canvassing here, and altho this place was worked last year I hope to be able to reach some and dispose of some DAWNS.

Please pray for me that I may have strength and courage to walk the narrow way.

With Christian love to yourself and the Bible House family, I remain your brother in Christ,

ERNEST D. SEXTON,—*Pennsylvania.*

PASTOR C. T. RUSSELL,

MY DEAR SIR:—After services on the first Lord's day of this year, I found in my study a parcel of books with no name. I was leaving the next day for a 400-mile voyage, and took with me 3 vols. of MILLENNIAL DAWN, which I perused with growing interest in the intervals of services as we sailed from island to island. I wish to subscribe to the WATCH TOWER, and to have tracts sent me (as per list); for this I enclose $2.50, which I hope will cover expenses of postage, etc. I am yours faithfully,

DANIEL WILSHERE,—*West Indies.*

Bahama Baptist Union—Supt. of Missions.

MR. EDITOR:—I cannot tell you how thankful I am to you for sending us a sample copy of your paper. Oh, the good, glad tidings! How many wretched, awful days it would have saved me had I known it long ago. I believe you implicitly in all you say. It seems so much more like God ought to be. Oh, my words are too crude and I am too ignorant to express what I feel, but I am so glad. For years I have been a Presbyterian, and a doubter all the time, and only those who have gone through it know what that means. I will distribute any tracts you may send me, and be glad to do so.

MRS. FRANK CAREY,—*Pennsylvania.*

DEAR BROTHER C. T. RUSSELL:—Grace and peace! Your very kind favor of the 4th inst. to hand. Had an injury received to my right hand about a week ago. Am getting out on the road now in my business as an architect, and the Lord is blessing the efforts put forth in spreading the truth. Had another experience of his wonderful grace tonight here in town. I was planning and thinking how I could take along a lot of DAWNS, that I could sell in large numbers in single vols. After having depleted my stock in the grip to two vols., and taking orders for three sets and coming here after 6 p. m., I went out to inquire about business. Finding a hardware store (where I usually inquire in every town) and finding no news, I showed the DAWN, but being a perfect stranger, I did not for a moment think they would part with the cash simply on my face and the name in my order book, etc. I sold five sets in that store, and two in another, spot cash, making 51 vols. for today. To God be all the glory. To say I was astonished is putting it lightly. I cannot get out of here until tomorrow at 3 p. m., so can possibly sell some more in the same way. Glad to see names on the lists where the Lord used me to hand them the truth. These blessings should make me run the race with much joy. Enclosed please find P. O. order for money, and order for books to be sent to various parties. Pray that I may be kept humble, as I desire and require much more humility and love for the sacrifice than I possess, so it will not be a duty love to feed the little ones and spread the truth, but so the zeal of the Lord may burn me up. Hope to see more names on the TOWER lists some day in the paths of our DAWN work.

I feel very happy over this new phase of the work, as it seems it ought to be very fruitful.

February 17th.—Grace and peace! Just home from a week's trip on business in the country, and the most blessed of trips so far as DAWN sales are concerned that I know of. Sold 239 vols. in a week. Just returned from Jackson, Minn. Knew of a TOWER reader there and looked for him. I found the restaurant where he takes his meals, and supposed he had sold DAWNS there, but when I found he had not I tried, and sold a set. This started the ball rolling in Jackson, where I am quite well acquainted, and received orders for 75 vols. before leaving. Then I had to be careful not to sell to the Presbyterians, as I was after their church. Hope to sell a volley to them later.

If I had used my opportunities the last two years on the road with the success I now receive, it's hard to estimate how many DAWNS could have been sold. This is a new venture to get cash in advance for books. To the Lord be all the glory. May we do continually with our might what our hands find to do. Praying God's richest blessing and love to you and all the dear ones in the Bible House, I remain your fellow-soldier of the cross.

M. P. THORI,—*Minnesota.*

[Our dear Brother Thori is one of the leading architects of Minnesota, and in going about attending to this business he takes the DAWNS along, and is daily becoming more expert in reaching hearing ears. He usually sells five volumes at a time, and collects in advance, the books being delivered by mail. He has a letter from us showing his authority to do this. His success of late is phenomenal. He has sold over 4,400 volumes in the past five years. The Lord is blessing his zeal with both still increasing wisdom and grace.]

VOL. XXII ALLEGHENY, PA., APRIL 1, 1901 No. 7

PATIENCE AS AN ELEMENT OF CHARACTER

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth."—Rev. 3:10.

We will not here discuss this verse from the standpoint of its application to the Philadelphia epoch of the church's history, but will content ourselves with examining the principles implied in its statement, believing, as we do, that the Lord's dealings with his church throughout this Gospel age follow the same lines, are in harmony with the same principles. Whatever condition, therefore, would be acceptable and pleasing to the Lord as respected the Philadelphia epoch of the church's history would be acceptable and pleasing to him in respect to ourselves and all others of his people during this age.

Special stress, we see, is laid upon patience—"the word of my patience," or, the patience which my word inculcates. Examining the word critically we find that two quite distinct words in the Greek are translated by our English word patience in the New Testament; the one is *makrothunia* (Heb. 6:12; James 5:10; Acts 26:3): this is the word which in a general way corresponds to the common thought of patience, as we speak of it connected with every-day affairs of our lives; it means merely long-suffering, and indeed, *makrothunia* is generally so translated throughout the New Testament. (Rom. 2:4; 9:22; Eph. 4:2; Col. 1:11; 3:12; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2

Pet. 3:15 ,etc.) But this is not the word used in our text, nor the word generally translated *patience* throughout the New Testament, *viz., hupomonee.*

This word, *hupomonee,* has a much deeper and fuller significance than attaches to our English word patience. It signifies rather *constancy,*—the thought being an endurance of evil in a cheerful, willing, patient manner. It represents, therefore, *an element of character*, and not merely a temporary condition or restraint of feeling or action. For instance, a worldly man might have a great deal of patience in connection with the prosecution of his business;—he might be very attentive to his customers, very obliging, very painstaking, and show no dissatisfaction in connection with the inconsiderateness of his customers; and *"patience,"* in its ordinary sense, might be ascribed to his conduct. But the word in our text rendered *patience* signifies such a development of heart and character as manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full acquiescence in the divine wisdom and love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised to overthrow them in God's due time. We believe it will be profitable for us to examine carefully this element of Christian character, of which our Lord speaks in such high commendation, that recognizing it clearly, we, as his followers, may attain to it more completely, and thus have his more abundant approval.

Since our text mentions this patient endurance as being the Lord's "word" or teaching, let us glance backward to the Gospel narrative, and note the Lord's use of the word in his teaching. Twice it is recorded as a part of his utterance. In Luke 8:15, in the parable of the sower, we read: "That [sown] on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with *patience* [with cheerful endurance, constancy]." The thought here is that in order to be of the fruit-bearing class which the Lord will approve and accept to his kingdom, it is necessary to do more than to receive the word of his testimony. even though we receive it with joy—for that class in the parable is represented by the stony ground, which at first gave evidence of great fruitfulness and vigor, but which, when the sun of persecution arose, withered, because of lack of depth of soil. That stony, shallow soil represents, the Lord explains, a class of hearers who rejoice greatly in the truth, but do not *endure,* such as cannot withstand persecution or opposition, but wither under it, become discouraged. Such cannot be of the kingdom class, all of whom must be overcomers.

In this parable our Lord shows us that *patient endurance, constancy,* is the final test, following after the readiness of preparation to receive the seed; following after the seed has been received and has sprouted; following after love and hope and joy and faith have caused it to spring forth and to give fruitage. *Patient endurance,* then, is necessary, in order that the grain may be developed and thoroughly ripened, and made fit for the garner. Ah! how important *patient endurance* seems to be, in the light of this our Lord's word—cheerful endurance; for we cannot suppose that he who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with his children, even if he saw them *enduring* much for his sake, if they endured in an impatient or dissatisfied or unhappy frame of mind. They would not, in that event, be copies of God's dear Son, our Lord, whose sentiment is expressed in the words, "I *delight* to do thy will, O God!" All of the Royal Priesthood are sacrificers, as was the Chief Priest, our Redeemer and example, who offered up himself: we, as the under priests, have also presented our bodies living sacrifices, and are to lay down our lives for the brethren—in the service of the truth. And God, who accepts these sacrifices through the merit of Christ, informs us that he appreciates or loves the *cheerful* giver, those who perform their sacrifices of a willing heart, cheerfully. And this thought, be it noted, is in the Greek word we are considering. It is cheerful endurance, patient endurance, that is commended.

The other instance in which our Lord used the word during his ministry is recorded in Luke 21:19. He had just been telling his followers what they must expect as the result of being his disciples during the present time, when sin abounds, and when Satan is the prince of this world—they must expect tribulation, opposition from various quarters; but he assures them that they would nevertheless be fully and completely under divine care and protection, even though the persecutions would be permitted to reach and to affect them. Then follow the words, "In your patience [*patient endurance, cheerful constancy*] possess ye your souls."

Our faith and trust in the Lord and his gracious promises for the future life are to be so strong that they will more than counter-balance the oppositions of the world, of false brethren, and of Satan's blinded servants;—so much so that these persecutions will be recognized and rejoiced in as the agencies of divine providence in chiseling, shaping and polishing us as the living stones for the glorious Temple which God is constructing. And viewing our trials from this standpoint we can indeed possess our souls, our lives, and enjoy them, even amidst tribulation, with *cheerful endurance*, constancy. Yea, we may realize that the soul, the real being, to which God has given the exceeding great and precious promise of the future, cannot be injured by the persecutions of the flesh, nor by anything that men can do to us, so long as we are faithful to the Lord, accepting the persecutions with cheerful constancy, as the ministrations permitted of his providence for our ultimate good.

THE NECESSITY FOR PATIENT ENDURANCE

Here the question properly arises, Why is this so? In what sense is such endurance necessary? We answer that it is one of the conditions which God has attached to the call to joint-heirship in the kingdom, and the wisdom of this is manifest when we consider the work to which we are called—the work of blessing all the families of the earth, as God's Millennial kingdom, under and in joint-heirship with our Lord. That will be a great work, and it is eminently proper that the Lord should demand that those whom he would account worthy of it shall not only appreciate his goodness and his character, and prefer these to sin and iniquity, but that they should demonstrate their thorough loyalty to these principles to the extent of a joyful willingness to suffer on behalf of right, to endure patiently. A transitory endurance of one or two or three brief trials would not prove the person to have established character for righteousness; but a patient, cheerful endurance even unto death, would prove and demonstrate such a character.

We might illustrate this with the diamond. Suppose that we were able to make diamonds out of some plastic material, so that they would have the full diamond measure of brilliancy; and suppose that they became hard, but not so intensely hard as the diamond, would they have the value of the diamond? By no means. And so with the Christian; if we should suppose him possessed of every grace of character that could possibly belong to the sons of God except this one of firmness, of endurance, he would not be fit to be numbered amongst the Lord's jewels. Hence the Lord's demand is that the quality of firmness, cheerful endurance of whatever his providence may permit, shall be a characteristic of all those who will be fit for the kingdom.

This importance of endurance in the Christian character is fully borne out by the Apostle Paul's use of the word; for on more than one occasion he ranks it as above and beyond love, which we have seen is the "mark" of character for which we are to run,—the mark of the prize. For instance, in writing to Titus (2:2), enumerating the characteristics of the advanced Christian, the Apostle uses the following order: "Vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity [love], in *patience* [patient, cheerful endurance]." Though we have all the other qualities, this final test of patient, cheerful endurance must be passed before we could be accepted of the Lord as members of the "very elect."

Again, in writing to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:10) respecting himself, the Apostle again puts this quality of *patient endurance* in the place beyond love saying, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, *patient endurance.*"

It may be asked, How can this quality rank higher than love, if love is the fulfiling of the Law, and the mark of the prize of our high calling? We reply, that patient endurance does not merely come in at the close of our race, but is requisite all the way along the race course. We need this cheerful endurance of the earliest trials in the Christian way. and as we speed along in our race for the mark the spirit of cheerful endurance should be growing stronger and stronger at every step of the journey. It is with us at the first quarter mark, and at the second quarter mark, and at the third quarter mark, and still with us at the fourth quarter mark, the mark of the prize, perfect love. And when we have reached this mark of the race in which we love not only our friends. but our enemies, it is required of us that we shall stand up to the mark faithfully, cheerfully, *patiently enduring* the tests which the Lord will even then see proper to let come upon us. Hence it is that the Apostle exhorts us, "Having done all, *"stand"—endure.* Having reached the "mark," "Let *patient endurance* have her perfect work," or "perfect her work." Let *patient endurance* demonstrate, not only that you have the character, the qualifications of love, demanded in the race for the prize, but also that you have it as an element of character, deep-rooted, immutable, so that you can endure oppositions cheerfully.

Ah yes! we can see now a reason for the Lord's arrangement that we should have our trial as the Master had his, under an evil environment—that we might not only have the qualities of character, but have them rooted, grounded, established. and that all this should be demonstrated and proven by our *cheerful endurance* of whatever divine providence shall see best to permit to befall us.

INSPIRED APPLICATIONS OF PATIENT ENDURANCE

Everything that will enable us to see the importance of this quality of patient, cheerful *endurance* will be helpful to us. Therefore let us notice some other instances in which this word is used in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul says, "But ye have need of *patience* [cheerful endurance, constancy] that *after* ye have done the will of God [reached the mark] ye might receive the promise." (Heb. 10:36) Here, again, we see that it is not merely to do the will of God that is the test, but, that after having attained to that point, that mark of character in our hearts, in our wills (if only partially in the flesh) we should, by *patient endurance*, establish God's righteous will as the law of our hearts, the rule of life under all circumstances and conditions. Then, and not till then, will we be in the heart condition of fitness for the kingdom. The Apostle James (1:3) says: "The trying of your faith worketh patience [*patient endurance*];" that is to say, if our faith stands the trial it will work this character of patient endurance; of course, on the other hand, if we do not attain to patient endurance, it will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactory, that we are not fit for the kingdom.

Thus we see clearly that a great mistake has been made amongst Christian people in general in supposing that religion is merely *a thing* that is to be gotten as an answer to prayer, or by going to a mourners' bench, or standing up for prayer, or in response to some human or divine appeal—as one would get a dollar and put it into his pocket. On the contrary, repentance of sin and acceptance of Christ, in faith unto justification, is only the beginning and not the end of the Christian way. The next step is consecration, and this, also, is far from the end; it is merely starting in the school of Christ, having our names enrolled as those who desire to be pupils, and to be taught of God to cultivate the fruits and graces of the spirit. All these things are necessary, but much more is necessary; we must go on and on, not only to the attainment of the faith and the love, but also to the demonstration of character as expressed in his word, *patient endurance.*

The Apostle Paul exhorts, "Let us run with patience [cheerful constancy patient endurance] the race set before us in the Gospel." (Heb. 12:1) As already observed, the race must be run with this constancy if we would reach the "mark," and after reaching the mark the position can only be maintained by the grace of constancy, patient endurance, that having done all, we may stand.

THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION ABOUT TO COME UPON THE WHOLE WORLD

We are not to understand our Lord's words to mean that he kept those of his people designated as the church at Philadelphia from all trials and temptations: quite to the contrary, we may be sure that trials and temptations have been the portion of the Lord's people throughout the entire age. As the Apostle Peter said to some in his day, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trials which shall try you, as though some strange [new] thing happened unto you." (1 Pet. 4:12) Trials must be the portion of all who would be "overcomers." How else could they overcome if they had no trials to overcome? The church represented as belonging to the Philadelphia period had these common or general trials; but the Lord proposed to spare them from certain special trials that were about to come upon the whole world. We are not of the Philadelphia epoch, but of the Laodicean epoch, which goes into these trials, and to our understanding this "hour of temptation," which is to try all people of the world, is already here, we are already in it, and it forms part of the testing of our endurance.

But though our Lord does not preserve the Laodicean stage of his saints from going into the trouble, we may be sure that those who *keep the word of his patience* now will have his keeping power, as promised to the Laodicean saints: "I stand at the door and knock; whoever hears my voice and opens to me I will come in and sup with him and he with me." This is the special reward of those who are running the race with *patient endurance* in the present time, in the Laodicean period; while it was not our privilege to escape the hour of temptation, it is our privilege to have a counter-balancing special blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's *parousia* (presence). We may have his fellowship, his instruction, his dispensing of spiritual food which is now "meat in due season," in a manner and to a degree which none of the faithful of past periods enjoyed these. But as we might expect, this greatest favor is correspondingly offset by the subtilty and severity of the trials of this hour of temptation coming upon the whole world.

If ever *patient endurance* was necessary it is necessary now; if ever it was true, "In patience possess ye your souls," it is so now. Those running the race acceptably, and possessing this *patient endurance*, will be able "to stand in this evil day," and no others will be able to stand; for, as the Apostle says, the fiery trials of this day shall try every man's work of what sort it is.—1 Cor. 3:13.

The hour of temptation seems to bear specially upon and test this point of *patient endurance*, and throughout the civilized world we find this quality of *patient endurance* becoming more and more scarce. Whether we can compare conditions of today with those of fifty years ago, or forty, or thirty, or twenty, or ten years ago, according to our experience in the matter, we will see that willingness to endure at all is growing more and more scarce. Nobody wishes to endure anything—for righteousness' sake, for Christ's sake or for anybody else's sake, and if endurance even be necessary it is generally with very much of impatience, very much more of complaint, etc., than formerly. And this general tendency of the civilized world to non-endurance and impatience, necessarily has its bearing and influence upon all who are seeking to walk in the narrow way, going against the current of public sentiment and custom; the stronger that current the greater their difficulty, and only by divine grace can progress be made.

This necessary divine grace is granted to us through a knowledge of the divine plan, and is withheld from those who are not walking close to the Lord in the footsteps of Jesus. It is for this reason that we see a growing disposition toward impatience, non-endurance, amongst the professed followers of Christ. It is at the bottom of the mob violence which in Europe is kept down by military force, but which in this country is manifesting itself in repeated instances of lynching, etc., which proclaims with loud voice *impatience* as the growing sentiment. The same wrong condition is illustrated in the recently inaugurated attack upon illegal liquor selling in the state of Kansas, in which those who love righteousness and hate iniquity have participated, not discerning the instruction of the Lord's Word respecting *patient endurance* of evil, until his time shall come for the rectification of the same;—by the establishment of the kingdom, the binding of Satan, and the subjugation of all evil.

Indeed, we may expect the growth of this spirit in Christendom—the feeling that in the past they have been too patient, not sufficiently aggressive—the feeling that if they had taken matters into their own hands long ago the world might have been converted ere this. But those who have kept the Lord's word of *patient endurance*, and who have sought from him the needed wisdom from on high, that is first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good works, and *patient endurance*, have learned that he has a due time in which his purposes shall all be accomplished; and learning this has assisted them in cultivating *patient endurance* as their Lord endured the opposition of evil, its malignity, its spite, its falsehoods, its persecution—enduring all this cheerfully, patiently, as unto the Lord—realizing that it is the program which the Lord has not only permitted but permitted for wise purposes in connection with the call and preparation of the "little flock" who shall be joint-heirs with Christ, their Lord, in the kingdom.

The Apostle counsels us respecting this hour of temptation into which we have just entered. Its besetments and trials will be various, and some of them will be subtle; so deceptive that all who are not thoroughly rooted and grounded in the truth will be carried away from the sure foundation (the ransom) by the false arguments and sophistries of those whom Satan is now permitted to use as his agents in trying all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. Amongst these, no testing seems much more subtle than that of Christian Science, which, backed by the adversary's power, is enabled to promise its perverts that if they will affirm an untruth and stick to it they shall have the reward of relief from certain pains and ailments, and those who have not learned to patiently *endure* whatever the Lord's providence shall permit, will be ready to accept almost any relief which the adversary may bring to their attention. And as they learn to *deceive themselves* in respect to pain and sickness and gradually to pervert words from their real meaning, they finally become so confused in their minds that truth appears to them to be falsehood, and falsehood appears to them to be shining truth, on every subject involved.

They are led into this partly through curiosity. It seems so strange to hear anyone say, "There is no death, all is life! there is no pain, all is health! there is no evil, all is good!" They say to themselves, Altho we know that these are inconsistent statements yet we are curious to know how people reason them out,—what is their philosophy? This is just what the adversary desires—to attract their attention, that step by step he may then lead them from one falsity to another, until the whole brain and conscience are subverted; rewarding them with physical relief—small recompense! They have accepted darkness for light, and light thereafter will appear to them darkness. Why? How? Because, first they are unwilling to *patiently endure*, and because, secondly, they would not receive the truth, so far as they saw it, with a proper *constancy*. They would not receive the truth in the love of it, and hence were ready to exchange that which they valued too lightly, either in the quest of curious information, or for the sake of physical healing of troubles which, if endured joyfully, might have worked for them great blessing.

The hour of trial is not coming alike upon all; for all Christendom is not upon the same plane of development, mental, moral, physical, spiritual. The trial, as it is coming upon Christendom in general, is pictured by the Apostle in his letter to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:1-5). He here delineates certain characteristics of this hour of temptation, otherwise called the great "time of trouble" coming upon the world; and from his prophetic delineation we see that selfishness will be at the bottom of the matter, and that *impatience* will be its weapon. The Apostle says, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; men shall be lovers of their own selves; covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers [enticers to strife], incontinent [not under restraint, impetuous], fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors [cannot be trusted, would sell out their best friends for selfish considerations], heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, *having a form of godliness*, but denying the power thereof."

In his letter to the Thessalonians (2 Thess. 2:9-12) the Apostle gives some further intimations respecting the peculiar trials of this hour of temptation, which has come upon the whole world, but which has not yet reached its intensity, and which probably will not reach that intensity in all respects for some years, but which is already working, and sifting, separating,—because the judgment begins with the house of God. He says, speaking of Satan as the prime mover in the evils of this present time, and especially active in this hour of temptation with which this age shall close, that his effort will be "with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." Then he explains to us the reason why it will be so, saying, "Because they received not *the truth* in the *love of it*, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

God's promise is the foundation upon which all that we hope for, either of character or coming glory, is built. Let us prize this truth so that we will not compromise it in any sense or in any degree; let us not only hold the truth in the letter but in the spirit;—in the love of it, because it is true, as well as because it is beautiful and grand. Holding *it* thus we will be careful that no one shall twist it for us or pervert it, and equally careful that we do not handle the Word of God deceitfully ourselves, to the blinding of our own eyes of understanding, and thus to our own hindrance. And let us ever remember the importance of *patient endurance*, that we may not only cultivate the Christian graces, and practice them, but that we may take joyfully the trials, persecutions or difficulties which our Lord may see proper to permit to come upon us for our testing and for the development of this character which he explains to us is of paramount importance, and without which perfect love could neither be attained nor maintained.

SPECIAL TRIALS OF THE PASSOVER SEASON

Years ago we called attention to the fact that as the Passover season brought to our dear Lord the sorrows and trials of Gethsemane and Calvary, and was a time of sifting and testing for Judas and Peter and all the Lord's followers, it would appear to be a time even yet in which our adversary, Satan, is granted special license to test and prove the Lord's people. And as we get farther and farther into "the hour of temptation which shall try all them that dwell upon the earth," we expect these testings to be specially upon "the house of God"—the consecrated.

Through the mails we learn of the struggles and tears and prayers of many,—some because of their own weaknesses and frailties, and some because of the frailties of others, and some because of earthly burdens which they can neither overcome nor cast fully upon the Lord. But while sympathizing with these and counselling them as best we can, we remember the Master's words, "Blessed are those who weep now, for they shall rejoice," and our heart is specially solicitous for those whose letters give evidence that they are in temptation, but realize it not;—those who are being swallowed up of ambition or business or other "cares of this life and deceitfulness of riches"—spiritual or temporal; and with those specially, whose love for the truth seems to grow cooler instead of hotter each year, and who see less and feel less than they did years ago. We say to ourself, These are like the apostles,—sleeping while they should be watching and praying, and the hour of trial will find them unprepared; while some who are weeping and striving are more like our Savior at Gethsemane, and like him will be *strengthened* for the hour of trial.

Nor can we pray the Lord not to permit these trials of faith and patient endurance; for we recognize that the "very elect" must be a tried people, because of the very object of their election,—that they may be joint-heirs with Christ in the long-promised kingdom that is to judge and bless the world during the Millennium. As the Apostle says, these "fiery trials *must* try you." It is a matter of *must*, of necessity, as respects all who would be graduated from the present school of Christ to a share in his glorious kingdom,—that they must pass the examination.

Ah, if we could but keep this thought before us continually, how it would serve us to will and to do the Lord's good pleasure—enduring faithfully and cheerfully whatever our loving Master sees best to permit, *knowing* that thus he is working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. From this standpoint

"How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning day!

"Then peace, my heart! and hush my tongue!
Be calm, my troubled breast!
Each passing hour prepares thee more
For everlasting rest."

Let us each, dear brethren, be very solicitous for ourselves and for each other; and counting the prize set before us in the Gospel as superior to all else, as the Apostle says, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Let us so love all the Lord's children that their welfare will be our chief concern, and this will mean our own spiritual health. Yet we must not permit our love even for the brethren to hinder our confidence in the Lord's love and wisdom in respect to his terms in the choice of his bride;—even tho the siftings should take from us some, whose fellowship we dearly cherish.

How wise are God's commands!
How sure his precepts are!
We cast our burdens on the Lord,
And trust his constant care.

Beneath his watchful eye
His saints securely dwell;
The hand which bears all nature up
Doth guard his children well.

"Why should an anxious load
Press down thy weary mind?
Haste to thy heavenly Father's throne
And sweet refreshment find."

His goodness stands approved,
Unchanged from day to day.
We'll drop our burdens at his feet.
And bear a song away.

"SO AS BY FIRE"

"I sometimes feel so passionate a yearning
For spiritual perfection here below,
This vigorous frame with healthful fervor burning,
Seems my determined foe.

"So actively it makes a stern resistence,
So cruelly it sometimes wages war
Against the higher spiritual existence,
Which I am striving for.

"It interrupts my soul's intense devotions;
Some hope it strangles at its very birth
With a swift rush of violent emotions
Which link me to the earth.

"It is as if two mortal foes contended
Within my bosom in a deadly strife;
One for the loftier aims Jesus intended,
One for the 'Mammon' life.

"And yet I know this very war within me,
Which brings out all my will-power and control;
This very conflict yet through Christ shall win me
The loved and longed-for goal.

"And when in the immortal ranks enlisted,
Sometimes I wonder if we shall not find
That not for deeds alone, but also what's resisted,
Our places were assigned." —*Selected.*

"HE THAT LIVETH AND WAS DEAD"

LUKE 24:1-12.—APRIL 7.

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."—1 Cor. 15:20.

On no Christian doctrine does there seem to be a greater confusion in all denominations than on the subject of this lesson—the resurrection of the dead—the resurrection of our Lord. Nevertheless, as with one voice, all Christendom unites in declaring that our Lord's resurrection was an indispensable necessity to our salvation, in this agreeing perfectly with the plain statement of the Apostle, "If Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; . . . . ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (1 Cor. 15:13-18) How strange that a subject of so vast importance as this should be so obscure! How strange that, recognizing its importance, thinking minds should treat it so lightly, and be willing to accept theories respecting it, the absurdity of which are manifest to all upon the mere statement of them!

For instance, it is the generally accepted theory that only the body dies—that the soul, the real, intelligent person or being, does not die, but merely is liberated to a higher condition of life the moment the body dies. Now, if we apply this theory to our Lord's death and resurrection how absurd it appears, and how absurd all the various theories would be that are built upon it: (1) If merely our Lord's body died, and if our Lord himself were released thereby and became instantly more alive than ever before, wherein would be the consistency of the claim that without his resurrection he had perished, and all hopes built upon him and his work had perished? It would be unreasonable to make such statements if the premises assumed were correct. (2) It is the claim of the majority of Christian people that our Lord Jesus *was* the Heavenly Father, Jehovah, and that he merely assumed to be, and took the title of the Son when in reality he was as much the Father as he was the Son—that he was really both.

Those who hold this view are forced thereby to suppose that the Lord himself never died else the universe would have been without a Master for a time; and to be consistent this same error must needs claim that the whole work of Christ Jesus was a farce, a pretence, that Jesus really was the heavenly Father all the time, and wore a body of flesh just as we do a suit of clothes; that he caused this body of flesh to pretend to pray to himself, and pretend to agonize with strong cryings and tears to the Father, really himself; that he let the body of flesh go on to the cross and pretend its groans and its crying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" that he let the body be buried, and pretended for the time to be unconscious, while really he was experiencing none of these things that appeared, but was as omniscient and omnipotent as ever: that by and by he revived the body and took up the flesh and bones, etc., into heaven as an everlasting evidence of the deception he had performed upon mankind: taking a body of flesh into spiritual conditions, where it would be totally out of place and inappropriate to the environment.

All this theorizing, so common amongst Christian people, is absurd in the extreme, totally contrary to the teachings of our Lord's Word, as well as repugnant to reason and common sense. This illogical theory is built upon and made necessary by two fundamental errors, first, a failure to see the sense in which the Father and the Son are one—that they are not one in person, but is harmony, in spirit, in will, as the glorified church also must eventually be *one* with the Father and with the Son, as our Lord's own lips declared, "That they all might be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Secondly, the theory that the dead are not dead, but more alive than ever before. Can any one dispute that if the dead are not dead there are no dead ones, and to speak of a resurrection of dead ones would be an absurdity?

But when we take the Scriptural account the whole subject becomes clear and plain. Jesus was the honored Son of God—"the only begotten of the Father"—"the beginning of the creation of God." To him had been given, while he was in glory with the Father, the privilege of becoming man's Redeemer, and he had accepted the service gladly, "for the joy that was set before him," he left the condition of glory, was made flesh, endured the cross, despising the shame, and ultimately received the exaltation to the divine nature, and joint-heirship through his resurrection. The taking of human nature was necessary, because it was a man that had sinned, and as by a man came death, by a man also must the resurrection of the dead be secured. (1 Cor. 15:21) Only the sacrifice of a perfect life could redeem the original sinner, Adam, and his children, who shared his penalty. This was the necessity for our Lord's earthly existence and for his death, as the Apostle explains.—Heb. 2:14.

HE POURED OUT HIS SOUL UNTO DEATH

ISAIAH 53:12.

Those who claim that our Lord himself did not die, but that merely his flesh died, are totally unable to answer or harmonize the Scriptural declarations on this subject, which are most pointedly to the effect that "he poured out his *soul* unto death;" "he made his *soul* an offering for sin." It was Adam's soul (being, existence) that came under the sentence of death through disobedience. It was not merely a sin of his body, but, as the Scriptures declare, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." It was Adam's soul that needed to be redeemed, and not merely his body, because if the soul were redeemed God could give it a new body as it pleased him. God's proposition is not to give back, atom for atom, the same bodies that moulder into dust. On the contrary, it matters little what becomes of these mortal bodies, for it was not these that were redeemed, nor these that are to be restored. It was the soul that needed redemption; it was the soul that was redeemed; it was the soul of our Lord Jesus that was given as a ransom price for the soul of Adam; and the result is that the souls of Adam and his posterity are all guaranteed a resurrection.

This central thought of the resurrection is wholly overlooked by Christian people in general, who leave the *soul* out of the question,—out of redemption and out of the resurrection, whereas it is the all-important. It is because the Apostle Paul recognized this matter so clearly that he stated himself so positively on this subject in his great chapter on the resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15. He recognized that it was Christ's soul that died—that his very existence had ceased in death; that not merely his body, but himself, was absolutely dead three days, and this is our Lord's own statement, "I am he that liveth and was dead." He does not say, I am he who lived always and who never died, but whose body died for the brief space of a few hours. It was because Christ's soul (being) was dead that the Apostle could declare that unless his soul, being, were made alive again by a resurrection there could be no hope in him as a Savior and a Lifegiver—there could be no hope of his ever exalting his church to joint-heirship with him in his kingdom nor of his and their blessing all the families of the earth during a Millennial reign of righteousness—if he were dead, extinct, if he had not risen from the dead.

The Apostle Peter also marks this point well, that it was the soul of Christ that was dead—that went to *hades*, the grave, the state or condition of death. Note how the Apostle Peter, on the day of Pentecost, quoted from the inspired Prophet David, the words, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [Heb. *sheol*, Gr., *hades*, English, the state or condition of death]." Peter informs us that the prophet spoke not of his own soul, but of Christ's soul, that it was not left in hades—that, on the contrary, it was raised up from the dead on the third day. (Acts 2:27, 30-33) Whoever sees that it was our Lord's soul that went into the state of death can see abundant evidence for all the stress which the apostles in their writings lay upon the fact of his resurrection. If Christ be risen it is an evidence of divine favor, and divine favor is an evidence of his perfection—that he did the work of sacrifice which he undertook, and in a manner acceptable to the Father; and these things being true, it follows that his exaltation to the Father's right hand of power means that we have in this a full assurance of faith that all the exceeding great and precious promises of God to the world and to the church, centered in him, shall have a fulfillment in due time.

As an illustration of the confusion which generally prevails on this subject by reason of false premises above criticised, note the following statement by a leading commentator, discussing this subject, and published widely in comments on this lesson. He says: "The resurrection of Jesus is the crowning proof that he is the Son of God. *If he could not conquer death and come back from heaven he could not prove that at first he came from heaven!*" Such is the ridiculous position into which ordinarily intelligent men are led through building upon false theories.

The Scriptures nowhere intimate that our Lord Jesus did or could raise himself from the dead. If it were merely his body that had died, and if he were more alive than ever, of course he could just as easily quicken his own body that had died as he could quicken the body of Lazarus, and it be no more of a miracle, and no more of a proof. But if, as the Scriptures declare, it was *his soul that died* then he was wholly dead, and could have no power whatever to resuscitate himself. To this the Scriptures agree, declaring in so many words that "God the Father raised him from the dead." (Gal. 1:1) Nor is this an exceptional statement of the matter. It is the united testimony of the Scriptures, in proof of which note the following: Acts 2:24, 32, 3:15; 4:10; 10:40; 13:30, 34; 17:31; Rom. 4:24; 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:15; 2 Cor. 4:14; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 1:21.

Our Lord's figurative statement, "Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up," is not to be understood as in conflict with the above literal testimony. "He spake of the temple of his body"—"which temple ye are"—the church. (John 2:21; 1 Cor. 3:16) Our Lord was living in the end of the fifth (thousand year) day, and on the seventh (thousand-year) day "early in the morning," the church, which is his body, is to be delivered by him from the power of death, and thus be made sharer in "his resurrection"—the first resurrection.—Phil. 3:10; Rev. 20:4, 5.

Neither are we to understand our Lord's words, "I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again" (John 10:18), as meaning that he could have any power whatever during the interim of death. Rather, we are to understand this in harmony with the many plain statements of the apostles under the inspiration of the holy Spirit, to mean that our Lord had authority or commission from the Father to make the declaration that tho he would lay down his life he would *receive it* again—this authority, assurance to this effect, I have received it from my Father. So understood, the whole matter is clear. So understood, the doctrine of the resurrection becomes next in importance to the doctrine of the ransom, and really a part and parcel of it; for as we have already seen, for our Lord to have died and not to have risen from the dead would have meant no hope for those whom he had promised to deliver, and whom the Father had promised he should have authority to deliver from the power of death by a resurrection through judgments.—John 5:28-30.

"IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE THAT HE SHOULD BE HOLDEN OF DEATH"—ACTS 2:24

It was not possible, because he had kept the divine law perfectly, and thus, according to divine arrangement and promise, he had accomplished two things: (1) The giving of the ransom price for the human family; (2) the attestation of his own fidelity and his worthiness of high exaltation to the divine nature and glory—"that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." (John 5:23) The same justice which had operated for four thousand years against Adam and his race because of transgression was now operative on behalf of Jesus for his deliverance from death, into which he had voluntarily gone as man's redemption price. When we come to see matters from the divine standpoint and arrangement we can well rejoice that the Father's character is unchangeable, and our Lord's resurrection becomes an evidence, or, as the Apostle says, an "assurance," of the carrying out of every feature of the divine plan, all of which centered in him and was made dependent upon his faithfulness even unto death, even the death of the cross. (Acts 17:31) Now we know that he is the antitypical seed of Abraham, approved of God, through whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed. Now we know that the church of this Gospel age is called to be the bride, the Lamb's wife, just as Rebecca was called to be the wife of the typical Isaac, and to be his joint-heir in the kingdom and joint-participator with him in the carrying out of the promises and oath of God made to Abraham. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise"—that in this seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.—Gal. 3:29.

Coming to the narrative of our Lord's resurrection from the standpoint above set forth, realizing that all of our hopes of life eternal are dependent upon it, we come to it with much more and much deeper interest than we could approach it from any other standpoint or theory. And we are to remember that the disciples and followers of Jesus were Jews, and that the heathen philosophies had not yet made great inroads upon the people, to mislead them into thinking that the dead were not dead. As a people they believed the dead were dead, and placed their hopes in a resurrection. Thus it was when Jesus comforted Martha and Mary respecting their brother; he said not to them, Your brother is alive, but, "Thy brother shall rise again," clearly implying that he was not alive then in any sense of the word. Their answer was in accord with this: "I know that he shall rise again at the last day"—in the end of this age, in the great Millennial age of resurrection, lasting a thousand years. But Jesus, being the one who possesses the resurrection power, even then suspended temporarily the power of death, restoring Lazarus again, and thus illustrating the resurrection power which will be used in much fuller measure and degree, and generally, when the due time shall come, and "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth."

Similar were the views on this subject held by the apostles and others. They believed that whether or not Jesus was the Messiah, as they previously supposed, but as had seemed to be disproved by his ignominious death at the hands of his enemies, nevertheless he was a holy man, and they trusted that in due time under the divine arrangement, according to the promise to Abraham, he, as well as all the dead, would rise again. Great must have been their surprise when they learned through the angel messenger who sat at the tomb that the Lord was risen, was no longer dead.

The women, whose office it was to complete the work of embalming the body of Jesus, went very early in the morning of the first day of the week, "while it was yet dark," to perform their loving service. Our Lord was crucified on Friday, the sixth day of the week, and buried probably about four o'clock. This left no opportunity to complete the embalming arrangements, because, as Jews under the law, they were obliged to keep the seventh day (Saturday) as a rest day, and in it do no work of any kind: but the seventh day closed at sundown, and we may presume that immediately the preparation of spices began, and that all arrangements were completed, and that they were on their way to the sepulchre as early as possible. We may assume that it was not the custom to embalm all the dead. Evidently Lazarus had not been so embalmed in death. (John 11:30) And since the embalming process was only partly perfected on the evening of the burial, the women were in haste, as soon as the Sabbath was over, to complete their service, not realizing how unnecessary were their labors—not thinking for a moment of the Lord's resurrection. No doubt it was in order to better inculcate this lesson, and to prepare them for seeing Jesus, that the angels appeared and drew their attention to the fact that Jesus had foretold his crucifixion, and also his resurrection on the third day.

Infidelity has objected that the accounts of our Lord's resurrection given by the four Evangelists are not exactly alike; but we answer that this is another evidence that there was no collusion amongst the apostles in respect to their statements of the Lord's words and doings, and these subsequent scenes. Their testimony, therefore, should be considered really stronger than if they had word for word declared the same thing. The fact is that each tells the story from his own standpoint, and, like any matter, it may be viewed from different standpoints, and the facts, related in somewhat different language and order, need not be understood to conflict. Rather, we are to understand that all the various things declared took place, and to do our best to find the order in which they occurred.

Nor is it unusual to find differences of opinion respecting many things in the testimonies of unimpeachable witnesses; for instance, there is a dispute to this day as to what hour the battle of Waterloo occurred, altho tens of thousands of men took part in it. "Two armies beheld the battle of Waterloo, but who can tell when it began? At ten o'clock, said the Duke of Wellington. At half past eleven, said General Alava, who rode beside him. At twelve, according to Napoleon and Druet; and at one, according to General Ney." We do not think of impeaching the credibility of any of these witnesses. Rather, we are to suppose that they all may have been correct in that the battle began in some places sooner than in others. Some would regard the battle as beginning with the first skirmish, and others probably ignore those skirmishes and speak of the time when the armies fully met in the clash of battle. We are to use similar reasonable judgment in considering the testimony of such unimpeachable witnesses as were the apostles—men who not only hazarded their lives, but sacrificed all of their earthly interests in the service of him whom they declare to us arose from the dead on the third day.

We might remark incidentally that the terms, "on the third day," and three days and nights, according to Jewish usage, would properly be applied to portions of three twenty-four-hour periods, and did not imply three full days and three nights. That the Apostles so understood their own words is evident, for they made no effort to harmonize the statements, as they surely would have done had there been any conflict between them. Some earnest people failing to realize this fully, have written books endeavoring to prove that our Lord was crucified on Thursday afternoon, but they seemingly overlook the fact that even then they could not count three full days and three full nights, and that unless they accepted the view that a part of three days is what is meant they would be forced to suppose that our Lord was crucified on Wednesday afternoon, in order to have the three full days, and in that event it would not be true that our Lord arose "on the third day," but on the fourth day. Furthermore, unless it be conceded that our Lord was crucified on Friday, the sixth day, too late to complete the emblaming, which would be hindered by the seventh day, no excuse could be found for the women coming early on the first day of the week with the spices to complete the embalming. If our Lord had been crucified on Thursday afternoon there would have been all day Friday in which they could have completed the work of embalming.

Dr. Abbott points out that the Christian observance of Sunday is of itself a strong testimony in support of our Lord's resurrection. He says: "A singular and significant testimony to the truth of the resurrection is afforded by the change in the Sabbath day. It was changed, not by any express command in the New Testament, but by the almost universal consent of the church, which could not endure to observe as a day of joy and gladness that on which Christ lay in the tomb, nor forbear to mark as a weekly festival that on which he arose."

"THE FIRST-FRUITS OF THEM THAT SLEPT"

Our Golden Text calls attention to the fact that our Lord in his resurrection became the first-fruits of them that slept—the first-born from the dead. After God gave the promise to Abraham that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, it was the custom of Israelites to speak of their dead as not dead, not extinct, but as asleep—waiting for resuscitation, resurrection. They realized that such a resurrection was unquestionably implied, tho not actually stated, in the promise made to Abraham. For how could all the families of the earth be blessed until the ransom price was paid, a resurrection provided for, that the curse of death might be rolled back from off the race? Again, as our Lord declares, the intention of God to resurrect the dead was shown in his declaration to Moses at the bush, that he was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, etc., for if they were dead, extinct, without hope of a resurrection, God would never speak of them in this manner. (Mark 12:26, 27) Israel in general, therefore, had come to speak of the dead as asleep, waiting for Messiah and the work that he should do, which would culminate in resurrection, hence the common use of the words sleep and slept in the Old Testament when referring to the deceased. The Apostle informs us that some endured torture for their faithfulness to the Lord, in hope of a *better resurrection*—a more favorable condition, when the resurrection time should come.—Heb. 11:35.

Our Lord also used this expression "sleep," in respect to the dead, declaring that Lazarus slept, and that he went to awaken him out of sleep. (John 11:11) Practically the whole world of mankind has gone down into this sleep, and it is called a sleep, instead of being called death, extinction, because in the divine plan, through the redemption, a provision has been made that "all that are in their graves shall come forth" at the word of their Redeemer, in the morning of the Millennial age. The "little flock" of "overcomers" who pass their judgment or trial now satisfactorily, come forth to life and joint-heirship in the kingdom; the great mass of mankind, blinded by the adversary, to a greater or less extent, will come forth, subsequently, to enlightenment—when Satan shall be bound, to deceive them no more,—that they may have an opportunity of coming into harmony with God and forming characters in accord with the laws of his kingdom, and so doing that they may have life everlasting.

Our Lord was the first-fruits of them that slept—none preceded him; hence the awakening of Lazarus and of the daughter of Jairus and the son of the widow of Nain were not full and complete resurrections Had they been such our Lord's resurrection would not have been the first—he would not have been "the first-born from the dead." His being born from the dead signifies that he was lifted fully and *completely out of death conditions* to the perfection of life, which was not the case with the others—they were merely awakened and left in the dead state with the remainder of the human family. The church of Christ, his body, is to share with him in "*his* resurrection," "the *first* resurrection," a complete and instantaneous lifting out of the state of death into the perfection and completeness of glory, honor and immortality, which God has provided for them who follow in the footsteps of Jesus, his joint-heirs. These are all called the "*first-fruits* unto God of his creatures." (James 1:18) The after-fruits of God's great plan will be developed during the Millennial age, yet there shall not enter into the approved condition any who will not use the means then within their grasp.

"BEHOLD, I AM ALIVE FOREVERMORE"

JOHN 20:11-18.—APRIL 14.

Not only was it necessary that Christ should rise from the dead and become alive forevermore in order to accomplish the great work planned of God and foretold in the prophets, and secured by his own sacrifice, but it was necessary also that indubitable proofs of his resurrection should be given to his disciples, for themselves and for us through them. The necessity for this lay in the fact that in the divine plan this Gospel age was marked out to be a faith age—for the selection of a special little flock, able, like father Abraham, to walk by faith and not by sight. But faith, in order to be faith, and not merely credulity, must needs have some reasonable foundation upon which to build its superstructure; and it was to provide this foundation for faith that our Lord remained with his followers for forty days after his resurrection, before ascending to the Father—as the Evangelist declares, "He showed himself alive after his passion by many *infallible proofs*, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."—Acts 1:3.

The disciples realized that great events were transpiring, tho how great and momentous was their character, they but slightly comprehended. They knew that their hopes as respects an earthly kingdom, and their Master as an earthly Lord, had failed. They had vague, indefinite hope that all that he had said to them would in some manner have a fulfilment, but how or when or where, was beyond their conception. They knew not that a change of dispensation was occurring;—that the rejection of Israel after the flesh, and the calling of a new Israel after the spirit, was commenced; and that they themselves were amongst the first thus privileged to pass from the relationship of *servants* of God to that of *sons*.—John 1:12:

As yet they knew nothing about spiritual things, not having been begotten of the holy Spirit to sonship and the knowledge of things to come, Jesus not yet having been glorified, and it being impossible for the holy *Spirit of adoption* to come upon them until after his sacrifice for sins had been presented in the Most Holy, and accepted of the Father. They knew not that the new kingdom was to be a spiritual one, and that Christ, its Head, must pass from fleshly conditions to spiritual conditions in this resurrection, even as he had foretold, saying, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." They had much to learn, but they had a great Teacher, and, as we shall see, his arrangements for their instruction were specially adapted to their conditions as natural men, to give them such foundation of knowledge and experience as would subsequently be helpful to them when they should be begotten of the holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The Apostle informs us that Christ was "put to death *in flesh* and quickened (made alive) *in spirit*" (we give a literal translation). The Apostle's words being true, those who declare that our Lord arose from the dead a fleshly being at the time of his ascension are grossly in error. Indeed, it is evident that they have misconceived the entire subject of the atonement, for if our Lord, as the *man* Christ Jesus, gave himself a ransom, he could not be restored to *manhood* in a resurrection, without annulling the ransom—taking back the price he had paid for our sins. The Scriptural thought is that as man had sinned, and been sentenced to death, it was necessary that the Redeemer should become a man and should give his manhood as the ransom price for Adam and his race, and the Scriptural declaration is not that this ransom price was taken back, but that God raised him from the dead a *new* creature of a new nature,—not in flesh, not in human nature, but in spirit, a spirit being.—1 Pet. 3:18.

The Apostle Paul agrees with Peter's testimony that Jesus was quickened in spirit, saying that Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God *with power*, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4); and again, the same Apostle, describing the first resurrection, in 1 Cor. 15:42-45, says: "Thus also is *the* resurrection of *the* dead: it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural [animal] body, it is raised a spiritual body." The Apostle elsewhere declares that the church's highest ambition is to be a partaker in this first resurrection, which he denominates "his resurrection," the Christ-resurrection, the resurrection to spirit conditions, which came first to our Lord Jesus, and in which all of his body, his bride, is to have a share.—Phil. 3:10; Rev. 20:6.

There can be no question that the Apostle, in this description of the first resurrection, means us to understand his words just as they read—whoever interpolates and adds to the Word of God, and declares that it was sown a natural (animal) body and raised a natural (animal) body, and subsequently changed to a spiritual body, wrests the Scriptures to his own injury, to the darkening of his own understanding of the divine plan. In the same connection the Apostle declares that that body which thou sowest is not quickened, but in the resurrection God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, to every seed his own body—*in* the resurrection, not after it. (1 Cor. 15:35-38) If the church belongs to the spiritual seed, to which is to be given the spiritual body in the resurrection, then unquestionably the Lord Jesus, the Head of the church, belongs to the same spiritual seed, and accordingly God gave him a spiritual body in his resurrection. Likewise, in a succeeding verse, the Apostle declares that our Lord at his resurrection became the second Adam, and then contrasting this second Adam with the first, he says, "The first man Adam was made a living soul [an animal or earthly being]; the last Adam was made a quickening [life-giving] *spirit* [being]."—1 Cor. 15:38-45.

The lesson to be learned by the Lord's immediate followers would necessarily be much more difficult to them than to us; because we have been begotten of the holy Spirit, and are thereby enabled to appreciate spiritual things. To meet the exigency it was necessary that our Lord, the spirit being, should be present with them for forty days,—invisible, as spirit beings are always invisible to men, unless through the operation of a miracle. It was necessary for them to know of his resurrection in order that they should have faith in his message, and act accordingly, as he desired; yet, had he appeared to them in the glory of his spirit being, opening their eyes to see the supernatural splendor as he showed himself in vision to John on the isle of Patmos, his face as lightning, his arms and his feet shining like molten brass in the furnace—the effect would have been to terrorize them, and their natural minds would have been unable to link such manifestations with their Lord, recently crucified; neither would he have had opportunity, under such conditions, to have given them instructions, for they could not have received them by reason of terror.

It was necessary, therefore, that our Lord, a spirit being, should manifest himself, as he had in the long past manifested himself to Abraham and Sarah, and as angels, under divine commission, had done on sundry occasions—*as a man.* (Gen. 18:1) He must lead their minds step by step, and their thoughts link by link, from the cross and the tomb to an appreciation of his present exaltation as a spirit being, respecting which he himself explained to them, contrasting it with his previous condition, "All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me." And this leading of their minds must be such as would gradually force upon them the conviction that he was *"changed,"* that he was no longer a man, and no longer subject to human conditions, as before his death. Having this thought in mind, we will have no difficulty whatever in seeing how our Lord inculcated these instructions during the forty days in his various interviews with his followers.

Mary Magdalene was honored in being the first to whom our Lord revealed himself. Scholars are generally coming to the opinion that it is a mistake to suppose that Mary Magdalene had ever been an unchaste woman—a mistake to identify her with the woman in Galilee in the house of the Pharisee, who washed our Lord's feet with her tears and dried them with her hair, and of whom the account says, "She was a sinner." The name Magdalene is now supposed to signify that this Mary was of or from Magdala, a town on the sea of Galilee. However, according to the Scriptural account, Mary Magdalene was a miracle of grace, for it is distinctly stated (Luke 8:2) that she had been obsessed of evil spirits, seven of them, whom the Lord cast out. Many think that she was a woman of wealth, and the evidences are that she greatly appreciated her benefactor, and esteemed it a privilege to follow him whithersoever he went. Not only had she come from Galilee to Judea, but she was near the cross at the time of his death, and the first at the tomb on the morning of the resurrection—"while it was yet dark." Such love and devotion commend themselves to every sincere heart, and are surely worthy of emulation on the part of those who receive at the Lord's hands spiritual favors, forgiveness, reconciliation, the spirit of a sound mind, new hopes and aspirations, etc.

To harmonize the various accounts we must suppose that the women charged with the work of embalming our Lord's body lived in various parts of the city, and did not all arrive at the same hour. Mary Magdalene arrived first, and finding the tomb empty hastened and first found Peter and afterward John, both of whom at once ran to the sepulchre, Mary probably returning more slowly to the same place, arriving there after they and the other women had gone. It was at this second visit that the Lord revealed himself to her. She had been weeping and then stooped down in order to see through the low doorway, as tho to reassure herself that it was empty, and then saw for the first time two angels in white, who inquired respecting her sorrow. The angels had doubtless been there when she was there before, but she had not seen them, because not of their choosing to "appear:" indeed, the Scriptures assure us, saying, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation"? And again, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

Doubtless holy angels had in charge not only our Lord's body, but also the interests of his bereaved followers; and now, and on other occasions, some of these *appeared*—appeared, because they could not be seen without appearing, without a miracle—appeared as "young men," tho they were not men, but angels; not flesh, but spirit beings—assuming fleshly bodies for a time, that they might render the service necessary. In Luke 24:4 these same angels appearing as men are said to have been clothed in shining garments—so that they might not be understood to be men, but might at once be recognized as heavenly messengers. On the contrary, when our risen Lord as a "quickening spirit" similarly *"appeared"* in the flesh, in order to come closer to his followers, he did not appear in shining garments, but in ordinary apparel, assumed for the purpose, and in order that he might have the better opportunity for giving the instructions which his followers needed.

The words of the angels to Mary would be calculated to assuage her grief, for they manifested no grief, and by their question implied that she had no ground for it. At this juncture something drew Mary's attention, and turning around she discovered another person near her, evidently in ordinary garments, whom she presumed to be a servant of Joseph of Arimathea, the owner of the garden—his gardener. She considered herself a trespasser to some extent, and assuming that our Lord's body was not wanted longer in the rich man's tomb she inquired where he had been taken, that she might take the proper steps to care for his reinterment. Then Jesus (for it was he who had "appeared" in the form of a gardener) spoke her name: "Mary!" At once she recognized the voice, and crying, "Master, Teacher!" she fell at his feet, grasping them as tho fearful that somehow, if she let go, she might never get the opportunity of touching his blessed person again. Our Lord's words to her "Touch me not, but go, tell my brethren," would more properly be translated, Cling not to me, etc.—for I have not yet ascended to my Father; I will be here a while yet, before I ascend, but your great opportunity for clinging to me and trusting in me will be after I have presented to the Father, and he has accepted, the great atonement for sins which I have just accomplished at Calvary. Mary's *touch* could do our Lord no harm, for others touched him subsequently, as the record shows, but our Lord would lead Mary's mind away from a mere clinging in the flesh,—to the higher relationship and intimacy of heart and of spirit, which would now be possible, not only for her, but for all his followers, not only then but ever since. In a spiritual way, the Lord's people may be exhorted not only to "look unto Jesus," the Author and Finisher of our faith, but also to "cling to Jesus," and by faith to place our hands in his that he may lead us all through our pilgrim journey, in the narow way until he shall bring us to himself, when we, like him, shall be changed, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye and be like him, spirit beings and see him *as he is;*—not as he was, before his resurrection, nor as he "appeared" during the forty days after it. —1 John 3:2.

Our Lord gave Mary a message, a service to perform, and so it is with all who love the Lord and seek him and find him: they are not to merely enjoy him selfishly, but are given a commission in his service for the brethren. This seems as true today as ever. And by the way, this is the second instance in which our Lord ever addressed his disciples as "brethren," with all that word implies of fellowship and of all being children of the one Father. (Matt. 12:48) Now he emphasized this relationship by referring to the Father as his Father, and their Father, his God and their God. How close this brings our Lord to us in fellowship and relationship, not by pulling him down, but by realizing him as highly exalted, far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named; it lifts us up, and by faith enables us to consider ourselves, as the Lord considers us, "brethren," prospective joint-heirs with him, who by and by shall be like him, our elder brother, sharing, through his grace and assistance, in his resurrection, and participating as joint-heirs in his "kingdom"—if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:17.

Mary departed with her glad message and was undoubtedly much happier in the delivery of it than if she had been permitted to remain clinging to the Lord; enjoying her knowledge somewhat selfishly. To find her Lord alive when she had supposed him dead meant to Mary a joy such as the Apostle Peter expressed when he said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." We may well suppose from our own experience in such matters, that every time Mary told the good tidings to others and made their hearts rejoice also, it brought her a fresh increase of joy. The Master similarly sends all who recognize him as "he that liveth and was dead, and is alive forevermore," to go forth and tell others of the glorious fact that we have a living Savior, whose love and interest extends to every interest and affair of our lives, and who not only is full of sympathy and compassion, but is able also to succor those who are tempted, who are in trial, who are in distress of any kind; —one who is able to bring us off conquerors, to give us strength to endure hardness, and who by and by will receive to himself all the faithful.

BISHOP RYLE'S MILLENNIAL CREED

"First. I believe that the world will never be completely converted to Christianity, by any existing agency, before the end of this dispensation. In spite of all that can be done by ministers, members and churches, the wheat and the tares will grow together until the harvest; and when the end comes, it will find the earth in much the same state that it was when the flood came in the days of Noah.—Matt. 13:24-30; Luke 17:20-36; Matt. 24:37-47.

"Second. I believe that the wide-spread unbelief, indifference, formalism and wickedness which are to be seen throughout Christendom, are only what we are taught to expect in God's Word. Troublous times, departures from the faith, evil men waxing worse and worse, love waxing cold, are things distinctly predicted. So far from making me doubt the truth of Christianity, they help to confirm my faith. Melancholy and sorrowful as the sight is, if I did not see it I should think the Bible was not true.—Matt. 24:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-6, 13.

"Third. I believe that the grand purpose of the present dispensation is to gather out of the world an elect people, and not to convert all mankind. It does not surprise me at all to hear that the heathen are not all converted when missionaries preach, and that believers are but a little flock in any congregation in my own land. It is precisely the state of things I expected to find. The Gospel is to be preached 'for a witness,' and then shall the end come. This is the dispensation of election, and not of universal conversion.—Acts 15:14-19; Matt. 24:14; Romans 8:20-24, 28, 29.

"Fourth. I believe that the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is the great event which will wind up the present dispensation, and for which we ought daily to long and pray. 'Thy kingdom come,' 'Come, Lord Jesus,' should be our daily prayer. We look backward, if we have faith, to Christ dying on the cross, and we ought to look forward, no less, if we have hope, to Christ coming again.—John 14:3; 2 Tim. 4:8; 2 Peter 3:12; Titus 2:13; 1 Cor. 11:26.

"Fifth. I believe that the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is to be a literal, personal coming: that as he went away in the clouds of heaven, before the eyes of his disciples, so, in like manner, will he return.—Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:14-18.

[As his going was known only to his faithful followers, so only such will have the eye of faith and that enlightenment which will permit them to discern the second *presence* of the Lord, while all others will continue about the ordinary vocations of life, ignorant of the fact that they are living "*in the days* of the Son of man,"—eating, drinking, planting, building, and *knowing not* of his *parousia*, his *presence.* Then, too, he went away quietly, unostentatiously, as well as unknown to the world, and the *manner* of his coming will be similar—he shall come in like manner. "Now the Lord is that *Spirit*," and tho we, the church, shall see him, it will be "*as he is*," and not as he was. At first we will see him with the eye of faith through the prophetic word of promise only, but the promise is that we also in due time shall be "changed"—to spirit beings. *Then* "we shall see him as he is; *for* we shall be like him." (1 John 3:2)—EDITOR.]

"Sixth. I believe that, after our Lord Jesus Christ comes again, the earth will be renewed and the curse removed; the devil shall be bound, the godly shall be rewarded, the wicked shall be punished, and that before he comes there shall be neither resurrection, judgment or Millennium; and that not till after he comes shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.—Acts 3:20-26; Isa. 25:6-9; Rev. 1:5-8; 20:1-6; Isa. 65:17 to end.

"Seventh. I believe that the Jews shall ultimately be regathered, as a separate nation, restored to their own land, and converted to the faith of Christ.—Jer 3:10, 11; 13:10; Rom. 11:25, 26; 2 Cor. 3:15, 16.

"Eighth. I believe that the literal sense of the Old Testament prophecies has been far too much neglected in the present day, and far too much neglected by the churches; and that, under the mistaken system of spiritualizing and accommodating Bible language, Christians have too often completely missed the meaning.—Luke 24:25, 26.

"I believe, finally, that it is for the safety, happiness and comfort of all true Christians to expect as little as possible from churches or governments under the present dispensation; to hold themselves ready for tremendous convulsions, and changes of all things established, and to expect their good things only from Christ's second advent."

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

MISAPPREHENSIONS CORRECTED

Some misunderstood an item in our March 1 View, namely, that we commended the course of the Boers and Filipinos and condemned Socialism. Nothing of the kind was meant.

(1) THE UNITED STATES AND THE FILIPINOS.

The Filipinos would have been much wiser to have thrown themselves upon the mercy and justice of the United States and, expressing thanks for deliverance from Spanish misrule, to have asked for civil and religious liberty under the protection of this great Republic. But their ignorant failure to take this course did not make it right to ignore their aspirations for liberty, and to treat them as enemies on this account. Rather they should have had from the very start distinct assurances and guarantees of as much liberty as they could show capacity for;—eventually full freedom. But the right policy was offset by land-hunger, commercialism and the spirit of empire building, willing to spend thousands of lives and millions of money for its gratification. This we condemn as being contrary to the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, and as sure to bring its own reward in due time.

(2) THE BRITISH AND THE BOERS.

Others thought that we commended the Boers, because we rebuked the British Ministry's lust for empire extension that would give British capitalists the control of Boer gold and diamond fields, at, however, a far greater cost of British lives and money than they expected. No one is deceived by the claim that the war was precipitated by Mr. Chamberlain's desire to free the Boer slaves and correct the Boer morals: everybody knows that he had plenty of room to work along those lines at home, where thousands of white *children* are still the wage-slaves of commercial selfishness, and need deliverance and schooling and moral training. Neither are sensible people deceived by the plea that the war was precipitated by *love of liberty* and the desire to give the ballot to the assorted white foreigners, called Uitlanders. This was the pretext by which the statesman who engineered the war for commercialism and empire deluded the British masses and got their support. Indeed, the claim that Britain forced the war by insistance, that her own sons, known as "Uitlanders," should be allowed to *expatriate* themselves as British and swear allegiance and support to the Boer republics, is laughable. The Boers well knew that such an oath to such men who openly avowed their hostility would be meaningless—that at the very time they were ready to take the oath of allegiance these men were conspiring for a revolution. In refusing the franchise under such circumstances to such persons, they did what every Briton would have done if in their stead.

We by no means commend the Boers! We deprecate their low ideas of civilization, their practice of slavery of the native blacks, and their lack of liberality;—their narrowness and selfishness. But two wrongs do not make one right; and in our opinion the Boers should have been permitted to possess their land, and *gradually* improve its government as their ideas enlarged. It is but very few years since Britain took the step of giving the ballot, even under limitations, to her own sons. We love and respect British character far more than that of the Boers; and we refuse to believe that the British masses would have sanctioned this land-stealing war in South Africa, had they not been blinded and deceived by their trusted political and financial leaders. Our appreciation of the Britons does not mean a love for their rulers, but for the people who more than once have shown their sturdy love of principle to the extent of *compelling their rulers* to adopt at home the very liberal government which they now enjoy as a consequence. But as the "god of this world" is using Doctors of Divinity to blind many to the divine plan and its justice and love, so he uses Doctors of Finance and Doctors of Politics to blind noble and liberty-loving nations to the rights and liberties of others. Thank God, the liberty of "the prince of this world" will soon be curtailed, that he shall "*Deceive* the peoples no more."—Rev. 20:3.

However, it is not and has never been our wish to dabble in worldly politics. We are citizens of another country, even a heavenly, and have our Lord's Word for it that none of the earthly kingdoms are his; but that they all are under the domination of "the prince of this world"—"the god of this world;" Satan, who will continue to blind and deceive the masses until our Master, according to promise, takes the kingdom and restrains Satan. (Rev. 20:3) Then the blinding influences being removed and the true light shining, all men shall see clearly, and all the worthy will rejoice.

Our object, in these occasional Views from the Tower, of Babylon's matters and affairs, is to have all those who belong to the "holy nation" (1 Pet. 2:9) see how widely astray are all the kingdoms of this world, even tho they call themselves "Christian nations"—"Christendom." We who are in harmony with the Lord and his righteousness *must* realize that the entire social structure is out of joint, else we could not so honestly and earnestly pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven,"—knowing that the coming of God's kingdom means the utter wreck of earthly kingdoms, in a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.

Whoever sees no fault in present arrangements and conditions, but approves them, is not very fit for the kingdom, nor to be made one of the rulers under the new regime. On the other hand, however, we do not understand it to be the duty of the Lord's consecrated people ("the saints") to tirade and fight against the world, but to *submit* to its ordinances, except when conscience would be violated (1 Pet. 2:13), waiting patiently for the Lord's promised kingdom as the *only hope*. Such are to realize that the worldly are *blinded*, and not to expect any to see the truth except such as have been specially blessed of the Lord and called to joint-heirship with Christ in the kingdom, on condition that now they shall suffer with him for righteousness' sake.

(3) SOCIALISTIC PRINCIPLES APPROVED

Some supposed us to be antagonistic to Socialism. Quite to the contrary; we are very sympathetic toward its aims, and merely object that they are wholly impracticable under present conditions. Unquestionably the new age will see many of the ideas of the Single-Taxers and Socialists, modified, in successful operation, under the auspices and backed by the power of the heavenly King and his kingdom, then in full control, and Satan bound.

But we warn any of the saints against building their hopes upon any relief which Socialism now promises. That anchor and its cable are of sand, and will crumble into direst anarchy as soon as put to the test. Our faith and anchor, on the contrary, are sure—faith in the promises of God. This faith anchorage fastened in the divine power will endure every strain. In proportion as any look to earthly sources for the deliverance of the "groaning creation" (Rom. 8:19-23) they are turning their backs on the heavenly Deliverer. And in proportion as we trust in the deliverance that is to be brought about by the second advent of Christ and the glorification of his elect "little flock," to be the kings and priests of God's kingdom, in that same degree we must rest all our confidence in it.

True, if all the princes of earth, including the financial, the "captains of industry," were to combine to establish Socialism, its temporary success would seem to be assured; but no sane man dreams of such conditions. And if established all will admit that it would be but an *experiment*, with the strong probabilities, all would admit (with the certainty, we would claim), that it would frequently contend with anarchy and have a continual fight. With the spirit of selfishness entrenched in the hearts of the individuals, could we suppose that the endeavor to live collectively on the opposite basis of love would be very successful?

Socialism can only succeed to a limited degree at present—to the extent that it benefits the intellectual and wealthy as well as the poor. Any attempt to carry it further will precipitate anarchy. Present aggregations of capital and industry are favorable to Socialism—government control, by the people and for the people. The masses seeing this will ere long attempt to grasp the throttle, expecting capitalists to submit to save their lives. But they are mistaken. Money and brains and selfishness are a strong combination, self-confident, resourceful, powerful. The result, as the Scriptures foretell, will not be Socialism but anarchy, humbling to the pride of the rich and the poor, the reformer and the demagogue. But that extremity will be the Lord's opportunity, and on the ashes of human avarice and pride and boastfulness and self-confidence will be erected the strong equitable government of Messiah for which we watch and pray, "Thy kingdom come."

We commend to the interested a fresh reading of MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV., *The Day of Vengeance*, in which we discuss this subject at considerable length.

JEWS LOOKING TOWARDS CHRISTIANITY

We have published several articles of late showing that Jewish teachers are gradually turning from a hatred of Jesus (as the originator of what they consider a false religious system) to an admiration of him as one of their race, whose teachings have benefited the world and influenced it for justice and mercy more than any other. Below, however, we give a few of the words of a prominent German Jew, B. Levita, recently published in the *Preussische Jahrbuecher* (Berlin), in which he advocates (merely nominal) Christianity as the only real relief for the Jews from the social ostracism under which they grieve.

After recounting that the Jew is now refused admission to many clubs and associations and rejected from offices in the Prussian army, he proceeds to point out that Jews are neither more nor less religious and conscientious than these nominal Christians; because both are *formalists*, but the forms and ceremonies of the Jews are sad, doleful, and relate mostly to the remote past—the exodus from Egypt, etc., and are national rather than personal,—while the nominal Christians practice rites and ceremonies which, however little they really believe them, are consoling or happifying; personal and cheering, rather than saddening. For instance, infant christening (for males and females) is a bright, sunny occasion, the reverse of the bloody circumcision of Jewish male infants; and nominal Christian marriage and death services and social functions are all bright and attractive and consoling as compared to Jewish customs. He argues that it is these links between Israel and the past that hinder his social progress, and that as people of little belief or no belief can and do associate under the name Christian, so may the Jew, who may equally maintain his unbelief or partial belief, become a Christian and share the amenities of life without prejudice. A free translation of the conclusion of his plea may be summarized as follows:—

"It is our religion alone that keeps us apart from the rest of the German people; yet we reject reform upon a Christian basis. We may say that we are no longer Jews,—yet we can not become Christians. We can not believe in the divinity of Christ. But do the progressive German Protestants, with their higher criticism, believe in it? No; yet they hold fast to the old forms. The same ministers who teach from the pulpit an undogmatic Christianity are compelled to pray to the Holy Trinity before the altar and confess their faith in the 'Son of God.' This cast-iron 'I believe' is still there, and we can not, will not, pronounce the formula, for we can not believe. A mere formula, a piece of paper, divides us from our most enlightened Christian German brothers.

"But what shall we do? Are we to found a new Jewish-Christian sect in which Christ is recognized as man only? That would only separate us again, and we are tired, so very tired, of separation. Back into Jewdom we will not go; into the German nation we can not go. The terrible cry of our forefathers is still fulfilled in us: 'His blood be upon us and our children.'

"Our children! Why should we transmit the curse to them? Why should they suffer for a cause which is no longer anything to us? I have it! If we find in Christianity the true religion with the exception of a single doctrine that has lost its force, then we must not educate our children as Jews. The piece of paper which hinders us does not exist for our children. Let them take part in the great spiritual battle which is being fought out in the ranks of Christianity. Ours was the prophet who destroyed the law and taught eternal love. Let the wandering Jew die. *Let our children become Christians.*"

* * *

How evident it is that when, shortly now, God shall turn away Israel's blindness they will be in as ready a condition to receive the truth as nominal Christendom will be;—yes, more ready. But not yet. The idea of worshiping Jew Jesus as *Jehovah*, is preposterous to him, and so arouses his contempt that he is unready to even listen to the truth—esteeming that this is the very basis of all Christianity. Hence the above suggestion of Levita is merely that, for the sake of their children's social future, they join the masses in mere outward profession of things they could not conscientiously consider for a moment.

The "great gulf fixed" still remains, and will remain unbridged until the special work of this Gospel age (to which Israel as a nation was blinded by divine decree) has been accomplished;—until spiritual Israel, the elect bride of Christ, has been "sealed" and "garnered." Then the individual blessings of the new age (the Millennium) will begin, and Israel will be first to receive the blessing of the "latter rain." "I will pour upon the house of David the spirit of grace and supplication [in the midst of "Jacob's trouble"] and they shall look [with the eye of faith, as we do now] upon him whom they have pierced. And they shall all mourn because of him, as one mourneth for his only son." Then and thus they shall all be saved from their blindness and be granted full opportunity of obtaining everlasting salvation through the Crucified One, then being installed as the King of Glory.—Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11:25-32.

Let us never lose sight of the fact that not until "the times of the Gentiles" expire, and not until "the fullness from the Gentiles" have come into the church and been glorified, can the *individual* blessings of the Millennium be expected; and then to the Jew first. Whatever of Millennial work precedes that time is general, pertaining to the nations and systems;—preparations for their overthrow and for the establishment of Messiah's kingdom upon the ruins of present-day systems.

COMMUNING WITH THE LORD

LUKE 24:13-35.—APRIL 21.

"Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way?"

"A little talk with Jesus, how it cheers our lonely way!" writes the poet, and who that is a Christian has failed of this experience? And fortunate are those who early learn, that while we should greatly appreciate our privilege of talking with the Lord, in prayer, we are to recognize that it is not this that brings the full blessing; but our attentive hearing, understanding and appreciating what he says to us;—the Word of Truth. Our hearts burn while *he talks* and we listen, more than when we talk even to him.

Toward evening of the day of our Lord's resurrection, two of his followers, one of them apparently Simon Peter (vs. 34), the other Cleopas, passed along the country road leading from Jerusalem to Emmaus, about eight miles distant, evidently the home of Cleopas who would entertain Peter, whose home was in Galilee. Like all the followers of Jesus they had been greatly exercised and perturbed by the remarkable events connected with our Lord's last visit, in connection with the Passover—his triumphal entry into Jerusalem; the cleansing of the Temple; the routing of his ecclesiastical foes in debate; his remarkable teachings during those few days; his arrest, trial and crucifixion. The excitement of their hearts made other business for the time impossible, and they spent the day in Jerusalem probably without knowing just why, except that they desired to be in touch with fellow believers. They shared with all the Lord's friends in the considerable excitement, resulting from the reports given by the sisters who went to embalm our Lord's body, that the tomb was empty and that they had seen angels who said that Jesus was alive again.

Full of the subject so close to their hearts, they were discussing in animated conversation the likelihood and unlikelihood of the reports they had heard, and in general the Messianic hopes of themselves and their nation, which they had trusted would have been amply fulfilled by Jesus, whose death seemed to throw all of their expectations into confusion. It was at this juncture that Jesus was drawing near them, disguised in a body of flesh and ordinary clothing—with a face different from what they had previously recognized, yet nevertheless gentle, soothing, sympathetic. He inquired the occasion of their discussion, which seemed to be respecting some sad subject. This kindly interest was not resented as an intrusion, but rather their burdened hearts rejoiced to find a sympathetic ear to which their perplexities could be related. How much of human nature there is in all this! How favorable is a time of adversity and perplexity in which to approach those whom we desire to assist; but how necessary it is that we should learn of the Master how to approach with such sympathy in word and act as to gain the hearts of those whom we would serve and bless. Love is the secret of gentleness, of sympathy, of all real heart-helpfulness. In order to be more useful in life, the Lord's people need to become more and more filled with his spirit of love;— copies of God's dear Son.

It was no deception on our Lord's part to inquire what things they were sad about, altho he knew everything better than they. It is sometimes the part of wisdom not to tell all that we know, if we can the better help others by inquiring of them. In this instance we can see the wisdom of our Lord's course, for the minds of the two travelers were lifted from any points of disputation and drawn to a general review of the circumstances of the preceding days, and this furnished the best foundation for our Lord's exposition of the meaning of and the reason for the things which perplexed them.

Jesus did not reply to their surprised expression that he must be a newcomer in the city not to have heard of the wonderful things that had recently transpired. He let them proceed to declare their faith in him and how they viewed the situation. The portion of their conversation recorded implies clearly that however much their confidence might have been shaken respecting our Lord's Messiahship, and their hopes, that it would have been he that would have redeemed (delivered) Israel from the Roman yoke and exalted her as God's agency, the seed of Abraham, for blessing all the families of the earth, they still believed in him as a great Teacher, a prophet—"mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." This was a good confession, all that could have been asked, and quite sufficient for our Lord to use in rebuilding their confidence in himself, in his Messiahship—on a surer, a better, a more positive foundation.

While it was expedient for him to start the matter by questioning them, it would not have been wisdom to have continued thus to any great length; for he had the message, they needed the instruction: we, as his followers, may learn a lesson from his course in this also. A soon as he had their minds in the channel to receive the lessons he would give them, he began to *open* unto them the Scriptures concerning himself—to expound them, to show their true meaning and fulfilment. We here see the proper course of the teacher illustrated by the great Teacher himself. As he went to the Scriptures and brought forth from them evidences of divine foreknowledge and prediction respecting the things that were transpiring before their eyes, so we, if we attempt to teach others, should not be content with offering our views, our opinions, our conjectures, but should search the Scriptures and be able, from that source to give to every man a reason for the hopes that are within us—that his hopes, as well as ours, may be built up, not upon the theories of men, but upon the inspired teachings of God's Word. Higher critics, Evolutionists, etc., never follow the method which our Lord Jesus here emphasized as the proper one: on the contrary, denying any special inspiration of Moses and the prophets, they ignore them, and offer instead, as of superior value, their own conjectures. Let us not only ignore such teachers as blind guides, attempting to mislead the Lord's flock, but let us also, to whatever extent we have opportunity to teach others, see that we follow not in their footsteps, but in those of our dear Redeemer. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word there is *no light* in them." (Isa. 8:20) And those who follow such teachers as have "no light" are sure to get further and further into darkness.

We are not informed what features of the law and the prophets our Lord enunciated; but we can surmise that he pointed out to them in Moses' writings various features of the law which pointed to himself as the paschal Lamb, whose death must take place before the first-born and all Israel could be delivered from the bondage of sin, and from the great task-master, pre-figured by Pharaoh, and be led ultimately into the Canaan of promise. We can surmise that he recalled to them Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, the typical seed of promise, and how this represented the actual death of Messiah, the antitypical seed, the Son of God. We may presume that he called their attention to various of the psalms, which prophetically spoke, not only of the glories of his reign, but also of his sufferings and his death, and his subsequent exaltation to the right hand of the majesty of God. No doubt he called their attention also to the utterances of Daniel the Prophet, respecting Messiah's being cut off in death, but not for himself. Undoubtedly he reminded them of the words of Isaiah, that Messiah should be led as a lamb to the slaughter, be despised and rejected of men, and how, nevertheless, in due time God would set him as his King upon his holy hill, Zion. Spellbound with this wonderful exposition of the divine Word, his listeners drank it in, realizing its truth by the manner in which it harmonized the various testimonies of God's Word—nor did they think for a moment of inquiring of their teacher whether or not he had an ordination from the scribes and Pharisees, with a license to preach. They perceived that he had a divine ordination, and this was fully attested by his ability to make clear to them what other teachers could not make clear.

The eight miles of the journey seemed all too short, as they reached their home, and they were loath to part with the wonderful teacher, whom they supposed they had fallen in with by accident, never dreaming to what extent divine providence was guiding their affairs. It was drawing toward evening, and the stranger was bidding them adieu, as tho intent upon a further journey; and indeed, he surely would have gone from them had they not been sufficiently appreciative of what they had already heard to constrain him earnestly to remain with them and partake of their hospitalities. So it is with all of us, as the Lord's disciples whom he is instructing, after we have been taught of him. If our hearts fail to burn with responsive love and zeal and appreciation, the blessing will pass from us and we will fail to reach the climax of joy in a full recognition of who our Teacher has been. While the Lord draws nigh to us with his grace and truth, without solicitation, he passes us by unless his message is appreciated so that we shall constrain him, urge him to abide with us, to continue the conversation—unless we shall proffer him in turn our hospitalities, our temporal things, in endeavoring to make some slight recompense for the spiritual favors showered upon us.

Our Lord accepted their urgent invitation and remained; supper was prepared, and recognizing their new acquaintance as a great teacher or prophet they requested that he should return thanks for their evening meal. It was while he was thus asking a blessing upon it and upon them that the eyes of their understanding were opened—it dawned upon them that their guest was no other than Jesus himself! Perhaps the language used in the blessing was such as they had heard him use before or perhaps in some other way their understanding was opened.

Having accomplished his purpose, our Lord vanished from their sight. Thus, in addition to the instruction impressed upon their minds, he showed them by this vanishing that he was no longer the *man* Christ Jesus—that he was "changed" —that the resurrected Jesus was a *spirit being*, who could come and go like the wind, as he had explained to Nicodemus (John 3:8), appearing and disappearing, as he had never done previously, but as angels had frequently done. Moreover, they realized from this illustration that our Lord could appear in any kind of a body, and with any kind of clothing, as might best serve his purposes. They did not know him by the marks in his hands and his feet, nor by the seamless robe; for he had not appeared to them in these, but in *another form*, as an ordinary traveler whose features they did not recognize. Had he borne the prints of the nails in his hands and his feet they surely would have noticed them during their long walk; just as Mary would surely have noticed them when she grasped our Lord by the feet. But they had an explanation of the whole matter now; they understood why this stranger had been able to present the divine word with such clearness and force and beauty as to cause their hearts to burn with fresh love and zeal and hope. They were glad.

Let us pause here to note some of the conditions which evidently led up to this blessing, that we may apply the same to ourselves, realizing that our Lord operates very generally along the lines of fixed principles, and that if we would be the recipients of his special favor and instruction, and have our hearts burn with the spirit of his truth, we should expect such experiences along somewhat similar lines to those observed in connection with the two who went to Emmaus. We remark, first, that this is an illustration of our Lord's promise that where two or three are together in his name—considering him, his word, his promises, his blessings—there he will be in the midst, and a blessing shall result. This may be in a country road, in the home circle, or in the more general gatherings of the Lord's people for worship, prayer and study of the truth. How this reminds us of the injunction, "Forget not the assembling of yourselves—and so much the more as ye see *the day* drawing on." Who has not noticed the blessing that comes to those who remember these promises of the Lord's Word, and who act upon them? Who has not noticed in his own experience, as well as in that of others, the danger of neglecting these admonitions—the danger of doubts, fears, indifference, coldness, worldliness? It is undoubtedly true today, as much as or more than ever, that we need such fellowship, and it is to such who seek it that the Lord reveals himself.

Let us mark again the word of the Prophet, "They that feared the Lord *spake often* together; and the Lord hearkened and heard it," and noted it in the book of remembrance. Let us remember, too, that it is declared of such, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day that I make up my jewels." (Mal. 3:16-18) We are not saying that others will not be the Lord's, nor does the Lord say so; but we may be well assured that those who have opportunities for meeting together, and speaking together, and who fail to use the opportunities, are manifesting a lack of interest in our great salvation; and that such are very likely to lose the remainder of their interest, and failing of the Lord's instruction given to such, that they may fail also to be amongst the "jewels" whom he will gather. If on the contrary one feels little interest in the heavenly things, little disposed to discuss the features of the divine plan and its promises, and happy only when conversing on worldly matters, business, etc., it is an unfavorable sign. The Lord is not likely to approach such and open their understanding respecting the Scriptures, as he surely is pleased to do to those who are hungering and thirsting after truth.

Many are so situated that they are unable to gratify the desires of their hearts in respect to assembling frequently with others of like precious faith, to talk over the good things of the Lord's Word of promise; but the isolated should not feel disappointed that the Lord's Word says that he will meet with the twos and threes, and does not promise the same to the solitary. They should rather look about them to see what provision the Lord has made whereby at least two can meet and discuss his Word together. We suggest, dear friends, that the Master has made special arrangements for all of his people in this respect in our day; for all, the world over, who so desire may have such a meeting at least twice a month, through the regular visits of the Watch Tower—and he that hath no money has the same opportunities as others (as will be seen by the terms on the second page of each issue). We believe this is a divine provision for the necessities of many, and we urge that all avail themselves of this as well as of every other privilege the Lord may grant for fellowship, for communion in spiritual things. The written message is not different from the spoken one.

The Editor of this journal, through its columns, is pleased to meet with those of the Lord's people who desire fellowship and communion respecting the Lord's Word; and the reading of expositions of the Scriptures in the Watch Tower differs nothing from hearing the utterance of the same words by any living person who might meet with you. We claim no infallibility for our presentations, nor do we simply offer our opinions and conjectures, after the maner of the scribes and Pharisees; but rather after the manner of the great Teacher, we seek to present to the minds of those interested the teachings of Moses and the prophets, and to voice the testimony of Jesus and the apostles, and to show the harmony of the Scriptures.

As soon as the Emmaus brethren recognized their guest, and he vanished, they understood well the meaning of the joy, the refreshment and the burning zeal in their hearts which his expositions of the truth had inspired. They had thus a confirmation of the words of the angels to the sisters in the morning, that Jesus was risen. The news was too good to be kept, even until the next morning. They must and did start immediately for the city, altho it was a journey of at least eight miles. How different their feelings as they set out in return from those when they left the brethren at Jerusalem, their hearts sad and their minds full of questionings! Now they were full of joy; for they saw that our Lord's crucifixion, so far from being the end of their hopes, was really the foundation for them; that as our Lord explained, "Thus it behooved Messiah to suffer before he would enter into his glory"—that unless he had suffered—died—the race would not have been purchased at the hands of Justice, and the condemnation of death would still rest upon it and make any permanent blessing impossible; but now, the redemption price having been paid, the way was open, first for the reconciliation of the royal priesthood who should be joint-heirs with Jesus as the seed of Abraham, and subsequently, in God's due time, would follow the times of restitution of all things, the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Some such thoughts as these engaged them as they returned to Jerusalem, and arriving at the upper room found the eleven (except Thomas—the term "eleven" being used in a general sense, and not a particular sense, as referring to the apostles in general and not the exact number) with others of the company assembled. Then there was general rejoicing in the information that Jesus had revealed himself to Peter, as they related their joyful experiences, and how the Lord had been known to them in the breaking of the bread and the asking of the blessing. Doubtless it was this experience that led subsequently to the custom of the disciples having a meal in common on every first day of the week, at which they again in imagination recognized the Lord present in their midst, blessing the bread and opening the eyes of their understanding. Thus each first day of the week they called to mind how he opened unto them the Scriptures and sought to keep the eyes of their understanding open and to grow in grace, in knowledge and in love.

AS SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE

JOHN 20:19-29.—APRIL 28.

"Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

As the news of our Lord's resurrection spread amongst his disciples it naturally drew them together seeking for fresh evidence respecting it. Then arose the fear that the spite of the priests, etc., which had seemingly been satisfied in the crucifixion of Jesus, would now extend to his disciples; and no doubt this thought was emphasized by the recollection that the Lord, speaking of his own sufferings and experiences, warned the disciples that they would be cast into prison and suffer persecution for his sake. No wonder, then, that when they met in the upper room that first Sunday night, the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, and we may safely conclude that this means that they were barred, bolted, locked in some manner.

Scarcely had the two from Emmaus finished their account of how Jesus had appeared to them on the way and at Emmaus, when suddenly they were all terrified at seeing a stranger standing in their midst. It was Jesus, and this was his third manifestation on this day of his resurrection (counting that of Matt. 28:9 and John 20:14 as the same; and that of Luke 24:15 and 34 as the same). He came into their midst, not by opening the doors, as some have suggested, but strictly as the narrative reads, *"the doors being shut."*. The security which was felt from having the doors fastened, caused the disciples to feel the more terror, when they beheld a stranger with them, but Jesus quickly assuaged their fears, saying, "Peace be unto you!" and then showed them his hands and his side, that they might note the marks of his crucifixion and the spear-wound, that thus they might identify him with the crucified one. This evidence, added to what they had already heard, was convincing to all who were present, and they were glad. No doubt our Lord's previous manifestations were intended to lead up to this general presentation. He had stimulated and cultivated the faith, not only of the ones to whom he had appeared, but also of the entire company, through them, by the method adopted.

Women seem to be able to exercise faith more readily than men; hence our Lord appeared first to Mary, and through her prepared the hearts of the others, as we have seen. It requires the masculine mind rather longer as a rule to reach the position of implicit faith; he calls for more evidences, more proofs, and our Lord was not unwilling to give these. However, had this appearance in the upper room in the evening been the first manifestation and information respecting our Lord's resurrection, we can readily suppose that it would not have produced the faith and joy it did produce. Wonder, astonishment and "reasoning" required the entire day for their exercise, and by the time our Lord showed his hands and his side this culmination of evidence was convincing.

After the disciples believed, Jesus again used the words, "Peace be unto you," but now as believers the words had to them a new meaning; they began indeed to find a peace for their troubled hearts which they had not known for some time. Since they realized their Master to be again alive they could afford to have peace, for they had learned to have confidence in him and in his love, and intuitively realized that all things would work together for good to them, under his care, tho as yet they knew not how. And so it is still. It is only those who realize in Jesus their Redeemer and Lord, who died and who rose on their behalf, and who have given themselves to him to be his disciples—only such can really receive of his peace—"the peace of God which passeth all understanding" ruling in their hearts. So today, as well as then, and even more abundantly under the holy Spirit's guidance, they can realize that they are not their own, and that all things are under divine supervision, working for their highest welfare.

"My peace I give unto you," were our Lord's words on the night of his betrayal, at the supper, and "Peace be unto you," were his words when he first met the disciples together after his resurrection. He is indeed the Prince of Peace, and the grace of peace which he gives to his faithful disciples is a blessing beyond all measure, such as the world can neither give nor take away; but this peace is based upon certain conditions of the heart: first, faith, trust in God; secondly, obedience, on our part, endeavoring to do those things which are pleasing in God's sight. To such and such only comes the heavenly peace, and in proportion as either the faith is lost or the disobedience lacking, the *peace* flies away. Whoever, therefore, believes himself to be a child of God, trusting in Jesus and consecrated to the Lord's service, and seeking to walk in his footsteps, should expect the Lord's peace to rule in his heart, giving him rest, no matter what his circumstances or condition in life; and if any of this class are without the peace let them look to it and repair the difficulty, for they are lacking either in faith or in obedience, and with the revival of these the dove of peace will surely return. Another lesson here is, that however much strife and contention his message, the truth, stirs up among men, our Lord himself was always peaceably disposed and a peacemaker as respects others; and so all of his disciples are to be. "Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called children of God." Whatever of strife may come in contact with the Lord's people it is not to be of their production or cultivation; and even when they speak the truth, which will necessarily cause strife, they are directed to "speak the truth in love," in meekness, in gentleness, and with long-suffering and patience, and not in strife.

Then, saying to his disciples, "As the Father commissioned me so I commission you," our Lord breathed upon them, adding, "Receive ye the holy Spirit." The Father's commission to the Christ, the Royal Priesthood, was all addressed to the Head, the Chief Priest, we having no standing with the Father except through him, and no other commission than his for our service. Our Lord's words imply that we as his disciples are to be engaged in the same work that he is engaged in. He did not finish the work completely, but merely finished one part of it—the part which he was to perform in the flesh, the redemption. Another great part of the work is to be accomplished at his second advent in power and great glory; viz., the blessing of all the families of the earth with a knowledge of divine grace and an opportunity for returning into full fellowship with the Father and to eternal life. His commission covered this entire work, as represented in the promise of God to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," and our Lord explained to the two brethren on the way to Emmaus that it behooved him to suffer for the sins of the world before he should enter into his glory, and ultimately begin the work of their blessing, because he could not have the power or the authority to bless until first he redeemed from the sentence of death.

And this is the commission which our Lord and Head has in turn committed to his followers. We are sent on the same mission, and hence it is declared that we are to suffer with him in the present life—to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ"—and then to share with him in his glory in the blessing of all the families of the earth. How grand a commission! What a great privilege to be invited to walk in his steps—of trial and suffering now, and of glory, honor and immortality by and by! Whoever appreciates this privilege will show his appreciation, not only in words, but in deeds, in truth, by laying aside every weight, and the easily-besetting sin, and running with patience the race set before us in the Gospel.

The breathing upon them was evidently symbolical; an illustration of his words, "Receive ye the holy Spirit," by which, when, fifty days later, they would receive the Pentecostal blessing and adoption of sons, they might know that while the holy Spirit is *of* the Father it is nevertheless *by* the Son. And so the apostles understood it, as Peter subsequently explained.—Acts 2:33.

"WHOSESOEVER SINS YE REMIT THEY ARE REMITTED"

We are not to understand that either the Father or the Son gave over to the apostles or to others the *power* of remitting sins. We see, indeed, that sins could not be remitted by power, but only by the satisfaction of Justice, and that hence it was necessary for Jesus to die for our sins, and to rise for our justification, before those sins could in any sense of the world be remitted. The most that could possibly be understood from our Lord's words is that he would so supervise the words and writings of the apostles that in every instance they would lay down such directions respecting sins and their forgiveness as would be in full accord with the divine arrangement—that thus they might act as mouthpieces of God explaining to men the nature of sin and the terms of its forgiveness. This view we know is fully borne out by the facts in the case. The apostles did define sin and the terms of forgiveness, justification, reconciliation, etc., in a manner entirely satisfactory, in a manner in which our Lord himself never explained these things; because he left this work for his apostles to accomplish in his name and under the guidance of the holy Spirit.

This commission is grossly misunderstood and misapplied by Catholics, who claim for the pope, the bishops and the lower clergy of their institution the right, the power, the authority, to forgive sins,—to determine what penalties shall be inflicted, and to offer release from such penalties on certain conditions of their own making. It is in support of this claim, and as an adjunct to it, that Papacy has established "the sacrifice of the mass," by which it claims that all of its priesthood can so consecrate flour and wine and water as to make of these the actual flesh and blood of Christ, which then being broken they claim is Christ sacrificed afresh, as the basis or authority for *their* forgiveness of sins.

We claim, on the contrary, that all of the Royal Priesthood (under Christ, the Chief Priest, and under the directions given them through the chosen apostles), are fully empowered to declare to the world *the terms* upon which sins will be covered, cancelled, remitted,—and consequently the terms without which there is no remission. The right to do this comes, not through any power or authority enjoyed by the under-priesthood now, but as a result of the information which they receive of the holy Spirit, through the inspired utterances of the apostles. By these means "we have the mind of Christ," and know clearly the terms upon which he is willing to receive sinners; viz., upon repentance, and faith in him, and consecration to his service. Any and all of the royal priesthood are privileged to tell this good message to whoever may have an ear to hear it;—but we are instructed of the Lord not to expect that many will have the hearing ear now, but to know that the present is rather the time when only the few specially blessed of the Lord will be able to understand and appreciate this grace of God by faith.

"BE NOT FAITHLESS, BUT BELIEVING"

One of "the eleven," Thomas, was not with them on the evening mentioned. This would imply that he had disbelieved the stories told by the sisters respecting the message of the angels and the Lord's manifestation to Mary. He evidently thought them laboring under some delusion and excitement, which he ought to discountenance, and he therefore did not meet with the others to confer respecting their newly begotten hopes; they might enjoy such ephemeral hopes if they chose, but as for him, he could not do it. Having seen the crucifixion and the wound in the side, he could believe nothing else than that the Lord was still dead. And even when the apostles met him the next day, and told him how Jesus was in their midst and showed them his hands and his side, Thomas still disbelieved, and told them that he would not even trust to the sight of his eyes, which might be deceived. On his part he would want also an opportunity to feel the print of the nails and to thrust his hand into the spear-hole in the Lord's side. If he could have such evidence he could believe, but not otherwise.

Our Lord's followers today, as then, differ constitutionally to a considerable extent. Some find it easier to exercise faith than do others. It was right that Thomas should take care not to be deceived in the matter, but it was wrong that he should be so deficient in faith as to stand out stoutly in disbelieving when he had his evidence from so many of the brethren whose honesty he could not doubt. However, the Lord is very patient and long-suffering toward us all, and so he was with Thomas to the extent of granting him the very evidence which he had said would be satisfactory.

A whole week passed without any manifestation of the Lord to any of his disciples; however, the next first-day of the week (Sunday, "the eighth day," the Jewish method of counting including both days) found the Lord's followers gathered in hope of some further reports, evidences, etc., connected with his resurrection, when Jesus again "appeared," and we may well suppose them full of interest and suppressed excitement not unmixed with disappointment, and fear that they might see him no more. But all this was a part of the lesson they needed;—for meantime they must have reasoned out that a great "change" had come to our Lord, that he was no longer a man as before, but a spirit being, who exercised the powers of angels in respect to his appearing and disappearing—coming and going invisibly "like the wind." Thomas meantime, altho still sceptical, had become sufficiently interested to want to be present, to want to receive any proofs or evidences that could be adduced by which he would know that his dear Lord was now alive again. As before, Jesus came into their midst, the doors being shut, and again gave the word, "Peace." How beautiful and how blessed it would be if the Lord's people whenever they come together, to meet each other and to meet Jesus in spirit, would greet each other with this salutation from the heart,—"Peace be unto you!" Uttered in the right spirit it should imply that their hearts were in a peaceable condition, seeking each other's peace and welfare and to avoid strife. This meek and quiet spirit would have a quieting and pacifying effect to a considerable degree upon any others present in such a meeting who had less of this holy Spirit. The spirit of peace is contagious amongst the Lord's people, even as the spirit of anger is contagious in the flesh. "My peace I give unto you," said our Lord; and hence whoever has not this spirit ruling in his heart lacks an important evidence of discipleship. The Apostle classes the contentions with those who are disobedient to the truth (Rom. 2:8); yet allowance is to be made for weakness of the flesh in this as in other respects; and to "contend earnestly" for the truth (in a spirit of love) is commended. (Jude 3) Whatever our natural dispositions may be, the indwelling of the Lord's spirit is sure to be manifest in "the *peaceable* fruits of righteousness."—Heb. 12:11.

Immediately our Lord addressed Thomas, thus indicating his thorough knowledge of his doubts and fears; he invited him to come forward and have the very evidences which he declared would be necessary. We presume that Thomas did as he said, altho the account does not mention it; it is implied in his prompt confession of his faith in the words, "My Lord and my God!" We are not to suppose that by this expression Thomas meant that he recognized the risen Jesus as being the heavenly Father, as some would suggest: on the contrary, we are to remember that amongst the Jews the word "god" signified mighty one, and was sometimes applied to angels, and sometimes to great, influential men, as well as to the All-mighty One, Jehovah. God, mighty one, was an appropriate title to apply to our Lord Jesus; but in no event should Thomas' words be understood either to be wiser or truer in any sense than our Lord's own expression of a few days previous, when he said, "I have not yet ascended to. . . . my Father and your Father; my God and your God." As the angels were *elohim*, mighty ones or gods, to mankind, so Jesus, God's beloved Son, was properly recognized by his disciples as being far more than man, as being a mighty one, a god; and Jesus, in turn, recognized the Father as his God as well as ours. With this view all is reasonable, consistent and harmonious. With any other view of the subject there is confusion.

Our Lord did not reprove Thomas for his hard-headed determination to have indubitable proofs before he would believe; but he did tell him of a more excellent way,—that while it is good to believe upon the basis of physical sight and physical touch, there is a still higher attainment of faith than that, which is able to see things that cannot be seen with the natural eye, and to feel things which cannot be felt with the natural touch. He would have Thomas and us all realize this well; so that we might the more cultivate this spiritual sensibility: not that he would have us credulous and ready to believe without evidence or testimony, but so filled with true faith and confidence in the Father's mighty power, and in Christ's own promises, that we would be ready to believe certain things upon the evidence of others, yea, to expect those things.

And this has been the condition of acceptance with the Lord throughout this Gospel age. We have not seen Jesus except with the eyes of our understanding; we have not heard his voice except as we have heard with the ears of our hearts; yet this is the more blessed faith;—the kind more appreciated by the Lord himself than the kind which would be satisfied with nothing but a tangible demonstration. A time is coming in which God will give to the whole world of mankind tangible evidences respecting all the features of the divine plan. Faith will then be swallowed up in sight, but when that time shall have come the rewards of faith which are now held out will no longer be open. Other rewards will be given, rewards of obedience; but they will not be so great as the rewards of faith.

Now, while it is dark, before the Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing in his beams, to scatter all the doubts and fears and hindrances, the Lord puts a premium upon faith, and only those who can and do exercise it may and do have certain rewards, privileges, opportunities and blessings. Of the Gospel-age-little-flock it is written, "We walk by faith and not by sight." We endure, "as seeing him who is is invisible;" we run for a crown and a throne which we may see only with the eye of faith; we obey the voice of him who speaketh from heaven, but whose voice now is the still small voice, which only the few who exercise faith can hear, appreciate and understand. By and by the time will come when this voice shall shake the earth and cause the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth. Obedience then will be proper and bring a blessing; but obedience now, even unto sacrifice of earthly interests in following the footsteps of him who set us an example, brings the greater blessings—the blessings which pertain not only to the life which now is, but also to that which is to come,—the blessings of glory, honor and immortality.

WORD FROM THE BRITISH BRANCH

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—There is nothing special to narrate at present, but I shall drop you a line on general principles. The 13 cases came on Friday about 6 P. M. (By Saturday evening at 10, they were all opened and the contents properly stowed away, thanks to the fact that they were so far as possible packed in parcels, and thanks also to two brethren who came in to help—one on each evening.

The outlook for DAWNS is good this year, and if the 5,000 last ordered are sent *via* Baltimore I think they will not be here much in advance of the time they are needed. The lot just received came in the nick of time, so far as cloth and leatherette are concerned. I think we will not at present go very deep into the matter of volunteer work by secular hands, as a more excellent way seems to be available; *i. e.*, moving the colporteurs into some of the territory where at present we have no readers, and thus getting volunteer as well as colporteur work done there. They all do volunteering on Sundays, so it will be no new thing to them.

The church in E. London had their annual business meeting last Tuesday. They unanimously requested me to serve as pastor for the coming year (from March 1), and at my request as unanimously requested Bros. Bull (A. C.), Guard and Lightfoot to serve as assistants.

Some time ago you gave it as your opinion that the twentieth century would not have advanced far without showing some great "sign." I reckon you hit it pretty close, if the Morgan-Rockefeller-Hill Trust be taken as a "sign." The papers in England talk about Mr. Morgan "syndicating the world." What do you think of Isa. 5:8 in this connection? If the parable be taken as a representation of "Christendom," which was foreshadowed by the first "house of Israel" (v. 7), we see that God gave Christendom the advantage of the "choicest vine" (Christ. John 15), and when he looked for justice and righteousness as the fruits (Gal. 5:22), behold oppression and a cry. The combine seems to be losing no time in seeking to acquire control of the world's interests in various lines (Mr. Morgan is coming to Germany this month to combine his crowd with the German steel combine), "that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth," and may make great profits out of it. But verse 10 should be a warning to them, and a comfort to God's people, for one bath equals only eight gallons, and one ephah is but a tenth of a homer. "Great will be the fall thereof" in anarchy, I presume.

Spoke last evening on Matt. 6:33, showing that the Lord here puts God and the things of this world as possible "masters" of his disciples. We cannot serve both, "therefore I say unto you," etc. If we serve the things of this world, as the nations do (cares of this life, etc), God's Word will be unfruitful in us; but if we serve God, seeking first his kingdom and righteousness (if we seek and find his righteousness, we shall also find his kingdom, 2 Pet. 1:5-15), all these things shall be added to us, and in fact shall be OUR *servants*, instead of we in bondage to them.

Notwithstanding the course of this world being opposed to those who seek God's righteousness, the Father will overrule in the affairs of his people that those who seek *first* his kingdom, etc., shall not be deprived of the necessaries for an honest living. Godliness has "the promise of the life that now is," etc. Showed how some misunderstood this passage to authorize an idle waiting for the necessaries of life to fall down on them, because they take the wrong thought from the Lord's reference to birds and lilies. It is true that birds do not sow or reap, and that lilies do not toil or spin, but also true that birds do not know how to sow and reap, nor do the lilies know how to spin. But the birds get their food in God's appointed way for *them*, and the lilies get their glory in God's appointed way for *them*. So man must get his food in God's appointed way for *him*, and any Christian who seeks to get it in another way is *"disorderly."* (2 Thes. 3:7-

11) The idea was to show that this passage does not authorize *begging* or idle waiting for the Lord's people to supply one's needs. Would you think these views correct?

Hope you are as well as usual. We are in fair health, and rejoicing in the Lord. With love to all, in which Sister H. joins,

Yours faithfully in Christ,
E. C. Henninges. [Manager British Branch.]

INTERESTING QUESTIONS CONSIDERED

EARTHLY TREASURES VS. HEAVENLY TREASURES

Question.—Since I find that the approaching time of trouble will mean anarchy and the destruction of all values, I feel little disposed to put forth energy for more than life's necessities. Is this right or wrong?

Answer.—In reply, we are sending you a Tower of April 15, 1896, which contains some interesting items.

It is our opinion that the disorders prevailing during the time of anarchy will render title to property null and void, so far as transfer or sale will be concerned. Nevertheless, it would not be unreasonable to expect that a home of modest appearance would as likely be respected as anything. Rents and mortgages, we think, would be of little account as a reliance for income. Similarly, insurance will probably be of little value; the mutual societies failing first when the "hard times" come, and thus assisting in bringing the anarchy. People who are learning to depend on such assistance will be the more despondent and desperate when this reliance fails.

But all this, while it should properly hinder us from having the world's spirit of land and money hunger, should not hinder us from reasonable energy in our business; for surely even if money would lose all value at that time, there is still opportunity for using it wisely in the Lord's service in the interim, and should we not thus to some extent be conforming our course to the Master's words, when he admonished that we lay up treasures in heaven, where it will be safe?

NOT THE GOD OF THE DEAD

Question.—If the dead are dead, and an awakening, a reanimation, is necessary to future consciousness, in what way should we understand our Lord's comments on God's words to Moses, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob"—"Not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him?" —Luke 20:37,38.

Answer.—This is to be understood from the standpoint mentioned by the Apostle when he tells us that the believers should not sorrow for their dead friends, as do others, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, let us also believe that *those who sleep in Jesus* will God bring [from the dead] by him." While the original sentence was not that man should sleep, in Jesus or otherwise, but that he should utterly die, lose all life and all rights to life, yet God shows us that it was his plan from the very beginning to provide a Redeemer, and that in the redemption sacrifice the ransom would be paid and mankind be released from the original sentence. It was in view of this plan that God spoke to all the faithful of the times past respecting his purposes. Thus it was that he said to Moses that he was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the God who had made promises to these that would surely be fulfilled, promises which declared that in them and their seed all the families of the earth would be blessed, promises, therefore, which implied their awakening from the dead, and which implied, therefore, that from the divine standpoint they were *not extinct, not annihilated*, but merely resting in death until the due time should come, mentioned by Job, when he says, "O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave until thy wrath be overpast; then thou shalt call and I will answer thee, for thou wilt have a desire unto the work of thy hands." (Job. 14:13,15) The "wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness" now, and has been so revealed ever since father Adam's transgression. It is revealed and may be seen in all the sickness and pain, and trouble and dying, and just as the Apostle says, makes of the world in general a "groaning creation, travailing in pain together, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God"—waiting for the establishment of the Millennial kingdom, under Christ the Head and the church his brethren, his bride, his body.

Our Lord was answering the Sadducees, who deny that there will be any *resurrection of the dead*, and he offered this testimony in proof, not that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were not dead, but in proof that there would be a resurrection for them, which would have been an impossibility had they become, as the Sadducees claimed, extinct. Our Lord, in other words, tells us that all those who are in harmony with him are not, in his estimation, dead, in the full sense of the word dead, but merely for the time being sleeping and waiting until the morning. As the prophet declares, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning"—the resurrection morning. Had it not been his plan to have a resurrection, God would not have referred to Abraham and others in such a manner as he did.

WORDS OF CHEER AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Dear Brother Russell:—We have to report for "Volunteer" work for 1900 as follows:—

Churches.	Towers distributed.	Under direction of
53	8,000	Bro. W. J. Thorn.
317	28.672	Bro. A. M. Graham.
Total 370	36,672	

We still have about 1,000 Towers which we will distribute during the present month.

We are all prepared for a new campaign. At a meeting held Sunday p. m. Brother A. M. Graham was chosen "Captain" for 1901, with instructions to make requisition for necessary ammunition. I send you a copy of the new volunteer roll-call of 43 names—21 brethren, 22 sisters. We think the above report a good basis; we will certainly need as many as 36,000 as there is little doubt of our being able to accomplish as much as last campaign, as shown above. We did more last year than in the previous ones, covering more territory and giving out more Towers. We have reached every suburb within 10 miles, and in some directions going 14 miles out. It is 20 miles from extremes of this territory (Boston). The enthusiasm and zeal was inspiring; there was no grumbling and no shirking. Our last day's work was done with the thermometer at 3° above zero, some of the friends traveling 16 miles to get to the field.

The fact that this work is "doing with our might what our hands find to do" has stimulated the zeal of us all. No other service has ever seemed so fruitful in blessings to the Lord's flock. It was grand to note the tact and skill some of the Volunteers learned to use in managing the "rams" and "goats" in the Babylonish flock, who made trouble occasionally. Generally the "soft answer turned away wrath." We received many a "God bless you," and met many who had read and enjoyed the Dawns. We found our Brothers Sherwood and Jones in the Babylonish camp. Both withdrew—Brother Jones becoming a volunteer. On one occasion a Bible class teacher came out and asked for Towers to give to his class, saying, "I want every one of my scholars to have one of those papers." Again, on another occasion, the Pastor of a church came out and asked to see the Tower, and after looking it over said, "Stand right there on the steps; I will be glad to have my people read that paper." There is scarcely a week that we do not meet some one who read that Tower and was blessed in the reading. It has been a blessed work, every way and no doubt the present healthy spiritual condition of the church here may be considerably attributed to this work—its influence is sancitifying.

Our yearly meeting on Jan. 2 was a love feast, and gave evidence of spiritual growth on the part of all. All hailed the news of another tract for distribution with joy and responded to the call heartily. During the past year Brother and Sister Black and Sister Mason, and quite recently Sister Mower, have entered the colporteur service, and we still pray the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers into the field. The past year has been one of spiritual growth and blessing under our dear Lord's leading, for which we praise him and gather fresh courage and confidence for new battles, and we trust, new victories—both within our hearts and without, as he may be pleased to send. Dear Brother, pray for us. Your brother in Christ,

Alex. M. Graham,—*Massachusetts.*

Dear Brother Russell:—I write to express, as well as I may in words, my thanks and love to you for this grand message of helpfulness to the church in the April 1 Watch Tower, on Rev. 3:10. It came to us in the "nick of time," and O, how it has cheered and strengthened our souls. It is a companion piece to "Pressing Toward the Mark," and I wish we had the two articles in pamphlet form together. I have been thanking our heavenly Father and you over and over again (nor do I consider it a vain repetition) for those helpful, solicitous words. I am so rejoiced to believe that the Lord is directing your mind to the upbuilding of the "little flock," and we are getting in each issue of the TOWER just what each individual case requires. I read with pleasure and profit often those hymns in "Zion's Glad Songs."

We are still having severe trials in a business way, and also on account of the truth, but we have plucked from the orchards God's precious promises, hope, love and patience and, as a result, thank God, are still pressing on toward the mark of love, the perfection of character which is most pleasing to our Lord. My prayer for all the saints is that nothing shall hinder or separate us from the love of God, but that we may come off more than conquerors through him who hath loved us.

With much love from Brother Raymond, myself and the brethren here, I remain, yours in the one Faith,

MRS. G. B. RAYMOND,—*New York.*

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"LOVEST THOU ME MORE THAN THESE?"

JOHN 21:15-22.—MAY 5.

We now come to our Lord's fifth manifestation of himself after his resurrection—some would say the seventh, not counting, as we do, that our Lord's manifestation to Mary was the same referred to in Matthew as his appearance to "the women," and that his showing himself to Peter was in the walk to Emmaus. All of these manifestations, whether we count them four or six, occurred within the first eight days after our Lord's resurrection—on the two first-days or Sundays, and were in or near Jerusalem. What we designate the fifth appearance was in another part of the country altogether—in Galilee—and was probably at least two weeks later. No account is given of the doings of the apostles in the interim, but we can surmise them. They probably waited in expectation at Jerusalem over the third and possibly over the fourth Sunday after the resurrection, and were disappointed that our Lord made no further manifestation. They then remembered, perhaps, the message which Jesus had sent by Mary, that he would meet them in Galilee.

Having no business further at Jerusalem, and their Master and leader having thus disappeared, "changed," so that altho they believed him to be no longer dead he was invisible to them except as he would appear for a few moments talking to them, and again disappear indefinitely, they were at a loss what to do, and decided to return to their home country on the Sea of Galilee. More than this, as active men in the prime of life, they must be doing. Several of them had been fishermen, and Jesus had called them from their nets to be "fishers of men," and they had left all to follow him; but now they could no longer follow him. Everything was changed when he was changed, so far as they could see. They could not carry on the work longer, for what could they preach? How could they tell others of their hopes in a King who had been crucified, and whom they, altho he was risen, could no longer see nor point out to others? They had not yet received their new commission; nor were they quite ready for it.

It is not surprising that under these circumstances seven of them with one consent, under the lead of Peter, determined to reëngage in the fishing business. This was the one business in which they had experience, and that only three years before. They fished with nets, and the habit seems to have been to do the fishing at night. This was the very occasion Jesus was waiting for. He wished the disciples to reach the extremity of thinking and reasoning on the matter of his resurrection, and what they should now do, in order that they might be prepared to receive definitely and profitably the instructions he had to give respecting their future course. The reactionary tendency to turn from preaching to the fishing business would be sure to come; and he considered it expedient that it should come while he was with them, that they might be profited to the utmost in respect to it. Now that they had reëmbarked in the fishing business the time had come for our Lord to demonstrate to them two things: (1) That he had a mission for them to perform in connection with the fishing for men which they had not yet accomplished, and which his death and resurrection would not interfere with, but rather stimulate and make really effective. (2) It would enable him to demonstrate in a most practical manner that the divine power by which he had hitherto provided for their necessities, and had at times fed multitudes, was still his, and would be continually exercised in their interest if they would continue to obey him.

It is interesting for us to note thus that while our Lord was invisible to the disciples they were visible to him, and all of their plans, arrangements and doings were fully known to him; and he was ready to take advantage of every circumstance and to make all things work together for their good. Thus, by miraculous power exercised in some manner unknown to us, he hindered fish from going into their nets that night. They, not knowing the true situation, were no doubt greatly disappointed, grieved, vexed, at their poor success, and perhaps classed it as a part of failure and tribulation which had in some respects followed them ever since they had espoused the cause of Jesus. And there is a lesson here for each and all of the Lord's people today: We know not what is for our highest welfare. Sometimes those things which we crave and desire to grasp, considering them to be good, might really be to our disadvantage. Blessed are they who are able by faith to pierce the gloom of every trial and difficulty and perplexity, and to realize that "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and that he is causing all things to work together for their good. So it was with the apostles: their disappointment became a channel of blessed instruction.

In the dawn of the morning Jesus appeared to them as a man, standing on the seashore. He called out to them to inquire if they had any fish, as tho he would purchase. They replied that they had toiled all night and caught nothing. The stranger then suggested that they cast the net on the other side of the ship, and so humbled were they by their disappointment that they did not stop to argue the question and to declare that they were old experienced fishermen, and that they did not know if he had any experience whatever; they merely concluded that as they had been lifting and casting the net all night they might just as well do it again, and thus demonstrate to the stranger that there were no fish in that vicinity. But behold! immediately the net filled with great fish, so that these seven strong men (Peter, Thomas, James, John, Nathanael, and two others whose names are not given) were unable to draw it and were obliged to drag it ashore.

Immediately the disciples grasped the thought that the stranger on the shore was Jesus, and none of them more quickly than loving John. The devoted and impulsive Peter whose heart still burned as he remembered the Lord's words, and perhaps as he remembered also his own weaknesses in connection with our Lord's last night of earth-life, could not wait for the boat to take him to the shore, but swam,—apparently fearing lest the Master should disappear again before he would have another opportunity to see and converse with him. When the disciples got to shore with their net full of fish they found, not only Jesus, but a fire and fish thereon already cooked. Here they had the lesson that under the Lord's care and supervision they could either be successful or unsuccessful in the fish business, and that he had the power, not only to give them fish in the ordinary way, but to provide cooked fish by miraculous power if it better served his purpose so to do.

They breakfasted with Jesus, for they knew him—not by any marks of nails, but by the miracle which he had performed. We read rather peculiarly, "None of them durst ask him, knowing it was the Lord;" they were so sure that it was he that they could not think of even seeming to question the fact by inquiry. The conversation while they breakfasted is not recorded, the Evangelist coming directly to the important words by our Lord addressed to Peter, the senior and leader of this new fish-business partnership. He addressed Peter, not as he had been accustomed, by his new name, Peter, but by his old name, Simon, possibly as an intimation to Peter that he had not manifested in the last few day the rock-like qualities implied in his surname and was now inclined to leave the work for the Church for secular business. And the inquiry was most pointed, "Lovest thou me more than these?"—boats, nets, fishing tackle, etc.? You started out to be my disciple, and now I ask the question, In which place is your heart—with me in the service of the kingdom, or in the fish business? Peter's answer was prompt, "Lord, thou knowest that I love *thee.*" Jesus responded then, "Feed my lambs"—my little ones—instead of longer following the fish business. Then Jesus said the second time the same thing, and Peter made the same reply, and then our Lord answered, "Take care of my sheep"—give your thought, attention, care, to them, rather than to these fishing implements, boats, etc. Jesus asked him the third time the same question. Peter was grieved with this: it seemed to imply doubt on the Lord's part and perhaps the third time reminded him that he had denied the Lord three times, and that now the Lord was requiring him three times to confess his love for him. It touched a very tender spot in Peter's heart and experiences, and we may be sure that it was not done by our Lord, even in this delicate manner, with a view merely to pain Peter, but with a view to his blessing, his profit. Peter's confession this time was still stronger: "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep."

It is worthy of notice that our Lord's words on these three occasions were not exactly the same altho the Common Version so represents them. In the New Testament Greek two words are used for 'love," *agapee* and *phileo.* When our Lord said "lovest" in the first two inquiries, he used the former word, *agapas*, which signifies kind *love* in its strongest, purest and most disinterested form; but in his third inquiry our Lord used the other form, *phileis*, which signifies attachment, duty-love, the obligatory love such as relatives bear toward each other, even when the other, deeper, love is lacking. Peter in all of his answers uses the latter form of the word, thus asseverating his personal attachment and devotion to the Lord, but, in view of recent experiences, he refrained from claiming the highest love for which our Lord inquired. This humility was an excellent sign, as showing that Peter had learned a needed lesson and had ceased to boast, but rather to fear his own weakness. Our Lord's use the third time of the word indicating duty-love grieved Peter specially because by changing the word he implied—Are you sure that you have even the duty-love, Peter? This discrimination as between these two words is borne out by other uses of the same in the New Testament.

DUTY-LOVE (PHILEO) ILLUSTRATED

"He that *loveth* father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that *loveth* son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."—Matt. 10:37.

Duty-love to our family relatives is right, but it must not equal our duty-love toward the Lord, else we can never follow him as "overcomers."

"He that *loveth* his life shall lose it."—John 12:25.

It is our *duty* to *love* life, in the sense of appreciating it and being unwilling to destroy it or waste it foolishly; but he who has become Christ's disciple and who is pledged to walk in his footsteps even unto death is to remember that he has already surrendered his life as a man, exchanging it for the hope of life as a "new creature," a spiritual being. He is no longer to be controlled by *phileo* or duty-love toward earthly life, but, moved by *agapee* love, he is to willingly lay down his natural life in the service of God—"for the brethren."

"For the Father himself *loveth* you, BECAUSE ye *have loved* me."—John 16:27.

In both of these cases *phileo* signifies duty-love. This was the highest form of love the disciples as a whole could as yet appreciate, as Peter testified. And the Father's love for them was the same duty-love: the disciples had not yet received the holy Spirit and its *agapee* or highest disinterested love and its character, and hence the Father could not love them for themselves but exercised a duty-love toward them merely *because* they had attained a duty-love toward Christ and had become his friends and disciples.

"If ye were of the world, the world would *love* his own."—John 15:19.

Phileo or duty-love is exercised by the worldly parent and child and neighbor on the selfish basis.—*"his own."*

"If any man *love* not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be *Anathema Maranatha* [—he shall be accursed or condemned to the second death when the Lord comes]."—1 Cor. 16:22.

An appreciation of the work of Christ will be expected of all when brought to a knowledge of the salvation which God has provided in him: and whoever refuses to respond in *phileo* or duty-love will be cut off from life early in the Millennial reign. But those who exercise the *phileo* or duty-love will be expected to press forward and to attain the "mark" of *agapee* love, true, disinterested character love,—if they would attain life everlasting. Thank God that the present life does not close the door of opportunity to any that have never known *phileo* or duty-love, nor to *many* who have known this, but have not yet attained *agapee.*

"*Love* of money," "*lovers* of their own selves," "*loveth* to have preëminence," *lovers* of pleasure," "*lover* of hospitality," and *friend*, are from *phileo* duty-love or a love which has a cause or demand upon it. Peter exhorts that we add to brotherly *kindness* (*phileo*) the next and higher grade of *disinterested love—agapee.*—2 Pet. 1:7.

DISINTERESTED LOVE (AGAPEE) ILLUSTRATED

"God so *loved* the world that he gave his only begotten Son."—John 3:16.

The love prompting man's redemption was not *phileo* or duty-love for God had not wronged his creatures in the sentence of death; nor had man ever done anything for his Creator which could put the latter under obligation or duty-love in return. God's love prompting to our redemption was *agapee*, or disinterested charity, benevolence, love.

"God commendeth his *love* toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly."—Rom. 5:8.

This *love* (*agapee*) which God exemplified is the kind he sets before us as the highest standard or "mark" toward which we must run if we would gain the prize;—a mark which is impossible to our fallen flesh, but which is attainable by our renewed minds, wills, hearts. This standard is expressed in the words:—

"Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with all thy soul, mind, strength; and thou shalt *love* thy neighbor as thyself."—Luke 10:27; Rom. 3:9.

"The end of the commandment is *love.*"—1 Tim. 1:5.

That is to say, the object of all instruction and discipline on God's part is to bring us to this character likeness to himself represented in this word *agapee*—love; for "God is love [*agapee*], and he that dwelleth in love [*agapee*] dwelleth in God and God in him."—1 John 4:16.

We are to recognize as "brethren" those who have only the *phileo* degree of duty-love, as Paul did when he wrote, "Greet [for me] all that *love* [*phileo*] us in the faith" (Titus 3:15); but we are to see to it that we "*love* the brotherhood" (1 Pet. 2:17) with *agapee* or higher love, which counts not present life precious and to be saved, but gladly lays down life for the brethren—in daily and hourly sacrifices of time and money and all earthly interests on their behalf.—1 John 3:16.

Peter contrasts the two loves in one verse, saying, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto [the extent of] unfeigned love [*phileo*] of the brethren, see that ye [go on to] *love* [*agapee*] one another with a pure heart, fervently."—1 Pet. 1:22.

"Love [*agapee*] worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love [*agapee*] is the fulfilling of the Law."—Rom. 13:10.

It is *agapee* that is mistranslated "charity" in 1 Cor. 8:1—"Knowledge puffeth up, but *agapee* buildeth up."

It is *agapee* that is misrendered "charity" in the Apostle's great discourse on love in 1 Cor. 13:1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 13; 14:1. Here he styles *agapee* love the principal thing of Christian character, the crown of all Christian graces, telling us that without it all sacrifices and self-denials would be valueless in God's esteem, while with it as the inspiring motive our feeblest efforts are acceptable through Christ.

PETER WISELY AND GENTLY REPROVED

So far as the record shows these questions respecting his present love were the only reproof our Lord gave Peter on account of his temporary deflection and denial of his cause; and here we have a lesson which many of the Lord's people will do well to lay closely to heart. Many feel as tho they must exact from a brother or a sister a very decided apology for any act of discourtesy, even tho much less important than Peter's misdeed. Let us learn well this lesson of reproving others very gently, very considerately, kindly, by a hint rather than by a direct charge and detail of the wrong—by an enquiry respecting the *present* condition of their hearts, rather than respecting a *former* condition, in which we know that they have erred. We are to be less careful for the punishments that will follow wrongdoings than for the recovery of the erring one out of the error of his way. We are not to attempt to judge and to punish one another for misdeeds, but rather to remember that all this is in the hands of the Lord;—we are not in any sense of the word to avenge ourselves or to give a chastisement or recompense for evil. This is not to be understood as annulling parental obligation to judging and chastening children; tho the principle of love is to have full control there also, to the extent of our judgment. We are to have kindness, love and benevolence toward all, especially toward those who are followers of Jesus. As for

Peter and his denial of the Lord, and as to the offences which may come to us through brethren, we may know that under divine providence some corrective penalty or discipline, direct or indirect, always follows; but we are not to attempt to inflict those penalties, nor to impress a condemnation, upon those who are in error and who realize their error, but rather to sympathize with them wisely, by helping them to learn the good lessons.

On the other hand, however, we would all have considered it a noble act on Peter's part had he fallen at our Lord's feet at his first opportunity and entreated his forgiveness for the weaknesses of the past. We would have loved and honored him the more for so hearty a manifestation of his repentance: indeed, altho the account does not so state, he may have done this. And brethren who at any time trespass upon the rights, interests or feelings of others, however unintentionally, should be prompt and hearty in their apologies; even tho brethren filled with *agapee* would not demand this as a condition of fellowship.

In replying to Peter our Lord uses three different Greek words in his three different exhortations: the first time he exhorts him to feed the lambs; the second time to care for or tend the sheep; the third time to feed the weak or delicate sheep. This gives us three views of the Lord's flock. There are the young, the beginners, the lambs, the babes in Christ, undeveloped in Christian *character*, and who need special feeding with the truth,—"the milk of the Word." Secondly, there are the more matured sheep of the Lord's flock, of riper knowledge and character, who have learned to attend to their own feeding upon the precious truth, but who, nevertheless, need tending or guidance, direction, oversight. Thirdly there are the weak sheep, who for the time ought to be strong, ought to be able to feed themselves upon the bounties which the Lord has graciously provided in his Word, but who, through weaknesses of the flesh, or besetments, or bad provender, or some reason, have not made progress, and are therefore weak in the faith. These are to be fed, cared for. And all of these matters are parts of a bishop's or overseer's duty in the Lord's flock.

While the Lord's words were addressed specially to Peter, as the leader of the group, undoubtedly the instructions were meant also for all the "eleven," for the apostles were all bishops, all caretakers of the Lord's flock. And the same message is applicable, tho not in the same degree, to all ministers of the truth today; whoever, by the grace of God, is placed in a position of opportunity to feed the Lord's flock should consider it one of the highest privileges of life, and should gladly lay aside every weight and hindrance, that he might thoroughly enjoy and perform this service. Thus the Apostle said to the elders at Ephesus, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the holy Spirit hath made you overseers to feed the church of God." —Acts 20:28.

These three classes of the Lord's flock are to be found today: the young, the advanced and strong, and the weak and delicate, who need special assistance. Of this latter class many today are in Babylon, and need the helping hand which the Lord's people are able to extend to them—they are weak, impoverished through lack of nourishment, through a famine, not of bread nor of water, but for hearing of the word of the Lord. (Amos 8:11) They have been hearing the words of human theory and "tradition of the elders" for a long time, and have been starving upon its inconsistencies; and so, wherever found, they are hungering and thirsting for the truth, and need that Peter and all of the Lord's followers shall do with their might what they are able to do to deliver such from the chains of error and darkness by which they are held—to liberate them and bring them in contact with the spiritual food which the heavenly Father is now so abundantly supplying.

In view of Peter's prompt and unhesitating answers respecting his filial or duty-love, the Lord gave a prophecy indicating that he would indeed be faithful to the last; and implying that he would be a martyr by crucifixion, his hands being extended. And tradition tells us that Peter was faithful even unto death, and that being ordered to be put to death by crucifixion by Nero, at his own request he was executed head downward, as being unworthy, according to his own statement, to be crucified as was his Lord.

Our Lord's words, "Follow me," referred not merely to a spiritual following, but he walked along the shore of the sea, the disciples following. Peter having heard the Lord's prophetic declaration respecting himself, seeing John near, inquired respecting his future—What will he do? What will happen to him? Will he be faithful unto death, and will he also be a martyr? Our Lord's refusal to answer may be considered rather in the light of a reproof to Peter and a lesson to us all. We are not to question divine providence, but rather to submit ourselves thereto. It seems to be a trait of human nature to think of companionship even in trouble, persecution, etc., and many, like Peter, have wondered why they should have trials and difficulties different from those which came upon some others of the Lord's flock. The Master's answer to Peter is his answer to all such: "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." Each of us should learn the lesson of reliance upon the Lord's wisdom in all of our affairs, whether he has particularly indicated them or left them still obscure. We may know of his love and wisdom and power, and may trust him where we cannot trace him, and be contented whatever lot we see, since we know it is his hand that it is leading.

"IF I WILL THAT HE TARRY TILL I COME"

These our Lord's words respecting John, seem to have raised the suggestion in the minds of the disciples that John would not die—that while the others would die he would remain alive until the second coming of Christ. But John himself tells us that Jesus said nothing of this kind; it was purely an inference on the part of the disciples. We may see in John a figure of some of the church living in the end of the Gospel age—unto the second presence of the Lord. John is not alive, but a class whom he represented has continued and still remains and will then be "changed," etc. Let us who are privileged to remain to this time of favor and blessing and enlightenment give glory to the Lord, and see to it that the loving disposition of John is manifested in us, and also his energy, his zeal; for while he is called the loving disciple we are to remember also that he was, because of his impetuous zeal, styled, with his brother, Boanerges—sons of thunder. Let us be full of energy, full of sacrifices which love prompts, that we may glorify our Lord in our bodies and spirits which are his. To this end it will be well that we remember the Lord's words, which applied to the entire seven as well as to Peter, tho he was spokesman for the entire number: "Lovest thou me more than these?" The same question arises with all of the Lord's people today. It is necessary that we have more or less contact with the world, with business, with home duties, with social amenities, etc., and the question is How shall we discharge our duties, balancing them with our duties toward the Lord, as "new creatures," his "royal priesthood"? Shall the Lord see that we love the earthly things better than him? If so, he declares that we are not worthy of him, and he will not recognize us as members of his bride. He will have in that select little flock only such as love him supremely—more than they love houses or lands, husbands or wives, or children, or any earthly thing. —Matt. 10:37.

THE CHURCH'S GREAT COMMISSION

MATT. 28:16-28.—MAY 12.

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world [age]."

Our Lord's next manifestation to his disciples was near the close of the forty days of his invisible presence after his resurrection. It was, according to our reckoning, the sixth occasion of the kind, and much more marked in some respects than previous ones, for, in common with others, we believe that at this time our Lord manifested himself not only to the eleven apostles mentioned in our lesson, but also to the whole multitude of believers whom the Apostle Paul mentions as being "over five hundred brethren." (1 Cor. 15:6) This meeting, we are informed, was by special appointment of time and place; hence there was an opportunity for all the deeply interested ones to be gathered together. Dr. Bordman suggests some of those composing this number to have been "the eleven apostles; the seventy evangelists; Mary of Nazareth; Mary of Magdala; Mary of Bethany; Mary the wife of Cleophas; Mary the mother of John Mark; Martha, and Joanna and Susanna, and the woman of Jacob's Well; Peter's wife's mother and the impotent man of Bethsaida;

the centurion of Capernaum and the widow of Nain; the penitent woman of Simon's feast and the woman healed on the way; Jairus and his daughter and Bartimeus; the Syro-Phœnician woman, and the deaf mute of Decapolis; the grateful leper of Samaria and the woman bound with the spirit of infirmity; Zacchæus and Lazarus, whom he raised from the dead; and the blind and deaf and mute and halt and palsied and lunatic whom he had healed; and Joseph and Nicodemus." We would certainly expect these to be amongst our Lord's friends who had great confidence in him, and who, after experiencing great disappointment respecting his death would have great hopes enkindled in their hearts through the reports of the apostles of his resurrection and his manifestations to them.

Wise was the plan which gave to his followers the "infallible proofs" of his resurrection, and the instructions necessary to appreciation of the same, in so gradual a manner as we have seen. Three manifestations on the day of our Lord's resurrection; one a week later, on the eighth day; the fifth probably two weeks later on the 22nd day after his resurrection, and now the sixth manifestation, probably ten days after that, about the thirty-second day. Thus gradually the two lessons necessary were taught: (1), the *fact* of our Lord's resurrection, that he was no longer dead but alive; and (2) that he was "*changed,*" that he was no longer "the *man* Christ Jesus," but that he was now "a quickening *spirit,*" manifesting the powers and attributes which they knew belonged to spirit beings—invisibility and power to appear in various forms as a man—power to come and go as the wind, none knowing whence he came or whither he went.—John 3:8.

We note the wisdom manifested in the order of the appearances also; first to Mary, who seems to have been a woman full of faith as well as full of zeal, and one whose word would have influence with the apostles; next Peter, a leader amongst them, was convinced; then the remainder of the eleven, except Thomas, who doubted; then the eleven, Thomas included, and perhaps some of the women with them, not mentioned; then what would seem to them the long interim of non-appearance, in which some of them started back again to the fishing business; then the convincing of these that the risen Lord had all the power that he ever possessed, and was as able to be with them and to guide them and to provide for their necessities as when he was a man, and with them daily in the flesh; then the instruction of them that their mission should still be to feed his sheep and his lambs; and his appointment for this general meeting, which would be rendered doubly forceful by reason of its previous appointment.

The time had come; the friends of Jesus were gathered; for nearly five weeks they had been studying the great lessons of divine providence connected with the death and resurrection of the Lord, and how all these could happen to him and he still be the promised Messiah—yea, as he explained, how all these things were necessary to him in order that he might be the Messiah, and accomplish all the great and wonderful work predicted in Holy Writ—how he must first suffer to redeem mankind, before, as the King of Glory, he should be fully authorized and empowered to bless them with eternal life and all the privileges and blessings proper to the redeemed and reconciled.

When they saw him they worshiped him, "but some doubted." The ones who doubted we cannot reasonably suppose to have been any of the eleven apostles, for they were fully satisfied, thoroughly convinced, and had so expressed themselves previously. Those who doubted must, we think, have been of the "five hundred brethren" present at this appointed meeting, who had had no previous intercourse with him since his resurrection, and some of whom, we may reasonably suppose, were much weaker in the faith than the apostles and the special friends already communed with. The statement that "some doubted" is an evidence of the candor of the Evangelist's record. It shows us, too, that the Lord's followers were not over credulous, but rather disposed to sift and weigh the evidences presented, and the subsequent zeal, energy and self-sacrificing spirit of those who believed gives us abundant evidence of the sincerity of their convictions respecting our Lord's resurrection, which they as well as we recognize to be the very keystone of our faith in him. If Christ be not risen our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins.—1 Cor. 15:17.

When our Lord appeared his message was the very one they needed to have impressed, and which he had been to some extent impressing at his previous appearance. It was that all *power* in heaven and in earth had been given unto him. We are not to understand by this that the Father had abdicated or surrendered any of his own power or authority, but rather are to remember that, as the Apostle Paul elsewhere states, in any such declaration the Father is always excepted. (1 Cor. 15:27) Nor are we to understand that our Lord meant that power and authority were given him to set aside or overrule or violate any feature of the divine law and plan.

We are rather to understand his words to mean this: I came into the world to do the Father's will, and by manifesting my obedience to that will, and fulfilling its demands, to not only redeem mankind from the sentence of death through Adam, but also to secure to myself the title and *authority* promised of the Father to belong to the Messiah. From the time I made my consecration I was *reckoned* to be the Messiah, but my Messiahship depended upon my faithfulness even unto death—even the death of the cross. I was faithful in this, and as a reward the Father has raised me up from the dead, a partaker of the divine nature, and the heir of all the gracious promises and blessings before mentioned as pertaining to Messiah. All this Messianic power and authority that was once mine reckonedly or prospectively is now mine *actually;* for I have finished the work which the Father gave me to do, and that acceptably; and its acceptance has been manifested in my resurrection to my present condition of spiritual glory and power—Acts 17:31.

"*Therefore* go ye, disciple all nations." Their commission to go and spread him as Messiah was based on the fact that the Father had accepted his work, finished at Calvary, and had *recognized* him with full authority as Messiah, by his resurrection from the dead: *therefore* we may preach Jesus, the power of God and the channel of all his promised mercies and blessings to all who have "an ear to hear," to all nations, and not, as previously, to the Jewish nation only.

Following the assurance of his *authority* as the Messiah, our Lord, addressing especially the eleven apostles, but indirectly, with and through them, addressing all his followers, gave them and us the great commission under which we, his people, have since been operating. It might be termed the *ordination* of his apostles and all his followers as preachers, ambassadors, members of the royal priesthood, speaking and teaching in the name of the Master, the fully empowered Messiah. The commission divides itself into three parts: (1) "Make disciples of all nations;" (2) "baptizing them;" (3) "teaching them." The word teach, in the Common Version (vs. 19) is not from the same Greek word rendered "teach" in vs. 20. The word in vs. 19 signifies proselytizing or making disciples of. The word "teach" in vs. 20 signifies instruct.

A wrong thought is derived from this text by many students of the Scriptures, when they consider it to mean, Go and convert all nations. This is not the thought, but rather, Go ye and gather converts from all nations, and baptize them and teach them, etc. This view is in accord with our Master's declaration on other occasions, in which he testified that they would not be converted at his second coming, but quite the reverse: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" This interpretation is in harmony with our Lord's statement in Matt. 24:14, "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a *witness* unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." Whoever gets the wrong thought respecting the commission is apt to take the wrong action in his endeavor to comply with it. Those who have concluded that the Lord intended the conversion of the world are led to various subterfuges, both in mind and in conduct, in order to attempt to carry out the commission they misunderstand. This is leading some at the present time to ignore the Scriptural definition of the terms of membership in Christ's kingdom—to lower the standard both of faith and of conduct, in order to admit a larger proportion of the human family and in order to, if possible, convince themselves and others that the world is growing better and being converted. Some have not only concluded that the preaching of the cross of Christ and faith in the redemption is unnecessary but have even gone further than this, and have claimed that even a historical knowledge of Christ is unnecessary, and that heathen religions are to be esteemed as part of the preaching of the Gospel, and that the heathen obedience to their religious customs is to be esteemed as obedience to the Gospel. Thus more or less false views of the commission are leading astray many who see no hope in any other way of ever attaining to that which our Lord commissioned nearly nineteen centuries ago, and which otherwise they would feel has thus far failed most miserably, and has no hope of ever being accomplished.

On the other hand we hold that the commission rightly read and understood has been fulfilled; that the message of Christ and the kingdom has been proclaimed, directly or indirectly, with more or with less force and energy, in every nation under heaven, and that as a result some from every nation have been made disciples; and that incidentally a "witness" has been given to all the peoples of the earth respecting the redemption and the divine provision for salvation through the Redeemer. Of these disciples gathered out of all nations by the message of the Lord a "little flock" will be found to whom it will be the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom, in joint-heirship with Jesus in glory as the seed of Abraham, through whom, in the Millennial age to follow this, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. From this standpoint only can our Lord's commission be properly appreciated and its fulfilment recognized.

DISCIPLING THE WORLD

The work of the evangelist comes first—Go make disciples of as many as will hear your message. The word "disciple" signifies pupil, and those interested through the evangelist are only supposed to be pupils in the school of Christ, in the primary department. As they become instructed in righteousness their full consecration is in order, as represented in *baptism*—death to self and to the world—buried with Christ by baptism into his death. (Rom. 6:3-5) Then comes the third step, *teaching* them to observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded. Any neglect of this commission and its order of procedure means comparative failure; and yet on every hand we see that its specific features are neglected. We find the majority of professed Christians giving the baptism first, in a wrong order as well as of a wrong kind. Secondly, they disciple them into sectarian denominations and make them members of these, and get them to consecrate their money and energies to these rather than to the Lord. Thirdly, having thus gotten them into sectarian bondage they neglect them, and go out after others, failing entirely to give them the *"teaching"* which the Lord indicates is necessary as a preparation for joint-heirship in his kingdom—*teaching* respecting the divine character and plan, and the graces of the holy Spirit and the necessity for rooting out the spirit of worldliness and selfishness, and developing the Spirit of the Lord,—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love.

To follow the Lord's instructions the royal priesthood should first, when discipling, inform those who have ears to hear that they are sinners through the fall;—imperfect in thought, in word and in act; and consequently unacceptable to God and under sentence of death, extinction; but that God has made a provision for their rescue, and their return to harmony with him and to life everlasting: that Christ Jesus, in harmony with the Father's plan, paid the penalty of Adamic sin and condemnation, and thus purchased the whole race of Adam, and proposes to set at liberty all who obey him. That now he is offering *release by faith* to as many as have the hearing ear—"even as many as the Lord your God shall call," that such as hear and accept the call may reckon themselves as "justified by faith," as having their sins covered, and as being thus reconciled to the Father through faith in Christ; and that now, if they become followers or disciples of Christ they may become joint-sacrificers with him, and by and by be made joint-heirs in his kingdom, and its great work of blessing the world.

So many as are interested in the message will inquire the way by which they can attain this, and the answer must be that the full acceptance of discipleship must be indicated by a full consecration, heart, mind and body, to the Lord—even unto death; and that this submission of the will to the Lord is counted as a *baptism*, a burial, an immersion with him into death; and that as soon as they have performed this real baptism or immersion of the will they should submit themselves to an outward immersion in water, which would symbolize this, portraying their death and burial to self, to sin and to the world, and their resurrection to newness of life and conduct as members of the body of Christ.

They are to be urged to take this step of consecration unto death, not in their own strength or name, nor in the name of their instructor; but are to be pointed to the fact that this course is authorized by the Father, by the Son and by the holy Spirit. It is thus to be done "in the name of" or by the authority of the Father, Son and holy Spirit, and not in the name of a sect or denomination or any human teacher. It is a mistake on the part of some to consider this text to mean that converts are to be baptized *into* the name of the Father, Son and holy Spirit. On the contrary the "Apostle distinctly declares, that we are baptized *into* Christ as members of *his body*.—Rom. 6:3-5.*

Those who go thus far, who respond to the preaching of the Gospel, and inquire concerning the way, the truth and the life, and who, with true repentance from sin and contrition of heart, desire to become disciples of Christ, and who then take this step of consecration are baptized thereby into the *Church*, "the body of Christ"—not the Baptist church nor any other human institution, but the one true church, the church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven. (Heb. 12:23) They need not that their names should be written in any earthly roll or register. The names of such, we are told, are written in the Lamb's book of life, and if they are faithful to their covenant he will not blot out their names, he assures us. The seal of their acceptance is the holy Spirit, whose leadings and instructions and marks of character become more and more discernible to them and to others daily, as they thereafter seek to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

But still they will need instructions: in fact, all that has gone before in their Christian experience has merely prepared them to receive instruction; and when they have reached the condition of justification by faith, and then of sanctification (consecration to the Lord, baptism), they have merely become "babes in Christ." As such they are ready for spiritual food, and should first be fed with the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby, and as they make progress the Lord himself stands pledged to it that they shall have "meat in due season," and as they are able to bear it the "strong meat" which belongs to them that are developed, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, "overcomers," soldiers of Christ, having on his armor and fighting a good fight, lifting high the royal banner, and active in helping others to attain the same condition.

To Satan, our wily foe, we must credit the perversion of this great commission, so explicitly stated; making it meaningless as we have seen: first by making it mean the conversion of the world; second, by destroying the real idea of baptism; third, by confusing the Lord's people as to the matter of discipling, and to make them think that it is gathering membership into sectarian bundles; fourth, to make them think that this is all that is necessary, and that teaching in the church is a waste of time, which should be devoted to what the adversary calls "saving souls," but what in reality is an endeavor to gather unregenerate people into sectarian systems and to delude them into thinking that they are in any sense of the word members of the true church of Christ, and saved; fifth, by misleading those whom he cannot thus delude, but who realize that there is to be a growth in grace and in knowledge, into a misunderstanding of the Apostle's statement (mistranslated in our Common Version), "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you."—1 John 2:20, 27.

Under this last delusion many are turned aside from the instruction which the Lord designs should be given through teachers whom he would raise up—turned aside to vagaries, to dreams and imaginations and misinterpretations of Scripture which they fancy are whispered to them by the holy Spirit, but which frequently give evidence of being the suggestions either of their own minds or of the fallen angels.

Let us, as the Lord's people, seeking for the old paths, note well the Master's instruction in this connection, and let each one of us who seeks to serve his cause labor exactly along the lines here marked out—not thinking that his own imperfect judgment or that of fellow-mortals is superior to the Lord's, but to the contrary, that the Lord, the Head of the church alone was competent to give the proper commission which must be followed implicitly.

That our Lord gave this commission not merely to the apostles but to all who should believe on him through their word is clearly shown by the words with which he closed the commission,—"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." The apostles did not live to the end of the age, and hence the Lord's words signify that he will be with all of his followers who avail themselves of his commission, and who endeavor to present his message to those who have ears to hear out of all nations. He of course did not mean that he would be personally present with them, for he had already told them that personally he would go away, and that personally he would come again at the end of the age (John 14:21), and his words are not to be understood as contradictory. His meaning in the present instance evidently was that he would supervise their work, he would be the real Head of the church, he would oversee all of their affairs, he would be with them in the sense of supporting and guiding and counselling those who would walk in his way and proclaim his message—and in proportion as they were faithful to the charge. This assurance of the Lord's presence was intended to give the apostles courage for the work he was committing to them. While he was with them in the flesh they merely followed his direction, and as soon as he was smitten they felt as sheep having no shepherd, and now he was going away, but he wished them to realize that his power would be with them and his supervising guidance of their affairs would be granted them, as surely as while he was with them in the flesh—tho apparent only to the eye of faith. According to their faith it should be unto them a strength, a power.

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* See our issue of June 15, 1893, "Baptism and Its Import," a sample copy of which will be loaned free upon request with promise to return it.

And all the way down through the age the Lord's people have similarly been required to walk by faith and not by sight, and the lesson no doubt has been valuable to them in spiritual upbuilding, much more so than had he remained in the flesh with us. And if the thought of the Lord's spiritual supervision of his work was to be a source of encouragement and strength to those who would attempt to teach in his name all through the age, much more may we of the present time realize his actual presence in the harvest of this Gospel age, altho we see him with no other than the eye of faith, yet, believing, we have joy unspeakable and strength and courage for the work. He is with us in the harvest work as he was with the apostles in the sowing of the seed.

Surely he who was careful to supervise the sowing work is not less interested and careful in respect to the reaping. Let us then thrust in the sickle of truth with energy and courage, remembering that we serve the Lord Christ, remembering that we are not responsible for the harvest but merely for our energy in gathering what ripe "wheat" we can find. If the labor be great for the finding of few grains of ripe wheat we are to rejoice the more in those we do find, and learn to love and appreciate the more that which is scarce and precious. Let us remember, too, while using all the wisdom we can in this service, that the Lord's object in giving us a share in his work is not so much what we can accomplish as in the blessing that the labor will bring upon us. This will be an encouraging thought to the dear ones who are engaged in the "Volunteer" work: and if they find many discouragements and but small results the reflection that the Master knoweth them that are his, and that he appreciates every sincere effort made to serve his cause and to lay down our lives on behalf of the brethren, will give courage and strength to those who otherwise might faint by the way.

INTERESTING QUERIES ANSWERED

IS FAITH THE GIFT OF GOD?

Question.—I have always considered that faith is what each individual must personally exercise and develop, but according to Romans 12:3 it would seem that this is something we get in a measure at least from God. Can God impart what he himself does not possess? In what way, then, does God give us a measure of faith? God having told us a truth in his Word, is it not entirely a matter resting with us as to whether or not we have confidence in it—have faith in it? "Faith cometh by hearing of the Word."

Answer.—The word here rendered "faith" (Rom. 12:3) is from the Greek *pistis*, otherwise translated fidelity, assurance. As you say, we have much to do with our own faith and assurance and exercise a certain amount of it before we are begotten of the Spirit at all, else we could not be justified by faith, for justification precedes our presenting of ourselves living sacrifices and our acceptance and begetting of the holy Spirit. This much of faith is our own evidently, but after we have received of the Lord's Spirit our faith may grow exceedingly, so that we will be able to walk by faith and not by sight—to accept the things that are not seen, and to sacrifice for them things that are seen and temporal. It may be said with propriety that the attitude which permits us to receive God's message of grace unto justification is all of God, in the sense that all of our blessings are from above—"every good and perfect gift." But it is especially true that faith in spiritual things which we develop after we are begotten of the holy Spirit is the result of divine instruction; as it is written, "They shall be all taught of God," and the faith which will enable the consecrated ones to come off victors is not merely the natural faith with which they started, and with which they laid hold upon the Lord and justification, but a higher attainment of faith, the result of being taught of God through his Word and by his providence.

In the text under consideration our sober thinking must depend upon the time we have been under the Lord's instruction, and the degree of attention we have given to learning the lessons intended for the increase of our faith. This development is in the Scriptures spoken of as a "gift," also as a "fruit" of the Spirit of God in us, and again as God's "workmanship," for by his truth and by his providences he is working in his children, not only to will but also to do his good pleasure—he is working in us faith, hope, joy, peace, love and all the graces which he approves; and if we will be obedient to his teaching and leading he will complete the work eventually and we shall be copies of his dear Son our Lord, and joint-inheritors with him.

WHO WERE THOSE SAINTS?

Question.—Who were those "saints," mentioned in Matt. 27:52, 53, who arose and came into the holy city after the Lord's resurrection?

Answer.—(1) The persons mentioned could not have been the ancient worthies, perfected; because of those the Apostle declares that "they without us [the Gospel church] shall not be made perfect." In other words, their resurrection will not be due to take place until after the first resurrection of the church has been completed.—Heb. 11:39, 40.

(2) The class mentioned cannot have been saints of the Gospel church, because the church had not been selected—even the beginning of its acceptance with God had not yet taken place, and did not occur until the day of Pentecost, nearly fifty days later.

(3) The record seems to imply that the earthquake which occurred at the time of our Lord's death opened these graves—produced the awakening mentioned; but that the awakened ones tarried and did not manifest themselves in the city of Jerusalem until after our Lord's resurrection.

At very most it was an awakening similar to that which Lazarus experienced, and the daughter of Jairus, and the son of the widow of Nain, to die again, later on. We may be sure of this because the express declaration of 1 Cor. 15:20 is: "Christ is the first-fruits of them that slept"—the first one *resurrected to perfection of being*—the first one lifted *completely* out of death to perfection of life. The persons mentioned could have been no more than merely aroused from the slumber of death temporarily, and for some purpose of which we have no knowledge. We were at first inclined to doubt the genuineness of the passage, but find that a portion of it at least appears in the oldest Greek MSS. yet discovered.

SEVEN, SIXTY-TWO AND ONE EQUAL SEVENTY

Question.—In Dan. 9:25, 26 we have different periods given—seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: some things are said to happen after the sixty-two weeks, and again something is said about one week, and altogether the matter seems to be confused. Please give us the harmonizing view.

Answer.—We must take into consideration the statement of vs. 24; *viz.*, that the entire period under discussion is seventy weeks (symbolical). This is divided into three parts; *viz.*, seven weeks, sixty-two weeks and one week—total, seventy. The first seven weeks marked specially events connected with the Temple; the end of the sixty-two weeks were to mark Messiah's appearance. But we are to remember that the sixty-two followed the seven, hence the end of the sixty-two weeks would be the end of the sixty-nine weeks as respects the whole, and the one week following would be the seventieth week. It was this last, or seventieth week of years, that constituted the Jewish time of favor. It (seven years) began with our Lord's baptism, was marked in its middle with our Lord's crucifixion, and ended three and a half years later, after the ripe "wheat" of the Jewish age had been gathered into the Gospel age; and immediately at its close the Gospel message began to be sent to the Gentiles upon equal terms with the Jews,—Cornelius being the first Gentile convert.

MEMORIAL CELEBRATION REPORTS

From every direction come reports of interesting and profitable commemorations of our dear Redeemer's death, on the anniversary of his "Last Supper," April 2nd. Our hearts have been greatly refreshed by these letters, and we doubt if the space of our columns could be better used than in holding of a "testimony meeting" and hearing from representatives of all classes of "brethren." We can, of course, only publish a small sample lot of letters—being forced to omit some of the very choicest. Up to time of going to press we have received 171 reports of meetings, the average attendance being twelve. Last year the average reported was ten.

Beginning at home: The church at Allegheny (Pittsburgh, across the river, included) had a most delightful season of fellowship and communion with the Lord and each other. The attendance was about 325, of whom about 310 partook of the elements representing our Lord's broken body and shed blood. The meeting opened at 7:30 p. m., with appropriate hymns, and prayers by various brethren, after which a short discourse was preached, setting forth prominent features of Israel's passover and showing that these were typical of Christ our Passover, slain for "the church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven;" whose deliverance now means ultimately the deliverance of all who, when brought to a knowledge of the truth, shall demonstrate that they are God's people, "Israelites indeed," glad to escape the bondage of sin and Satan, typified by the Pharaoh of Egyptian taskmasters, etc.

We rejoiced together in the death of Jesus, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, while deeply sympathizing with his sufferings on our behalf. We discussed the necessity of the "blood of sprinkling" upon the door-posts of faith structure, and that none of the "first-born" could be safe from the "destroying angel"—the second death—except as the saving blood was thus publicly confessed. We saw, too, that only by eating the lamb—appropriating the merits of Christ, feeding upon him in their hearts, can any have the strength needful for the journey out of Egypt, the world.

Then followed a reminder of how our Lord instituted the memorial of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine, to take the place of the literal lamb and to represent the antitype; and that only those who partake of the realities which these symbolize have part or lot with the Lord in the elect first-born class, now being sought. The secondary feature was also set forth;—that (as the Apostle explains, the one loaf represents the complete church which must be broken, and the cup symbolizes the covenant of the Lord's people to share his sorrows and sufferings—death—with their Lord.—1 Cor. 10:15-17.

Then asking blessings of God upon the bread and the cup, as did our Lord, we partook of the emblems with reverent and grateful hearts and sang a hymn and went out—avoiding unnecessary conversation, and seeking to meditate upon the incidents connected with our Lord's betrayal and death; remembering his words to his faithful eleven, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation," and applying the lesson to ourselves, remembering that this is always a time of special temptation and testing and for remembering our Lord's words to Peter: "Satan hath desired to have thee that he might sift thee as wheat;—but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." The same Lord is interested in each of us, and we, as members of his body, also pray one for another, and seek to assist one another in the narrow way. The Lord's scattered sheep everywhere were remembered in our petitions to the throne of grace, as we are sure we at Allegheny were remembered by you all.

The emblems were sent to 21 who were unable to be with us.

"THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME"

Dear Brother Russell:—About fourteen of the friends met at my house last night to celebrate the Memorial Supper. We felt our Lord's presence and received a great spiritual uplifting. Brother Smith, formerly a Baptist clergyman, was with us, as were also his wife, two daughters and one son. They were very much impressed and said they had never understood it in the light in which it was presented to them last night. This same brother with his wife and two sons symbolized their consecration last Sunday, in Boston, by immersion. Altogether, from Lynn we had six immersed. The church at Lynn is prospering wonderfuly, and never since I have been here has the spiritual condition seemed so good. Tho in time past our work did not seem to bear much fruit, we have kept on, and now we can see the results. I had the pleasure of meeting a sister who came out of Babylon into the truth through a Watch Tower that I gave her while serving one of the out-of-town churches in the Volunteer service. The interest here seems to be increased and we have a good attendance at our services.

We received a great spiritual blessing during and since our dear Brother Samson's visit. I praise God for such men as he. Oh! it is blessed this fellowship with the saints and I can never thank our Father enough for it and for his wonderful goodness in bringing me into the light. I am enjoying the walk with my blessed Savior each day, and tho some times I pass through shadows I am striving to say "Thy will be done." We desire your prayers, dear Brother, that we may learn more perfectly the lesson our heavenly Father would teach us.

The article in April 1, Tower on "Patience" was just what I needed. May God bless and keep you in his love is the prayer of your brother in Christ.

C. P. Bridges,—*Massachusetts.*

Dear Brother Russell:—The churches of Bethlehem and Allentown, Pa., joined in "remembrance" of him last evening (12 being present), and renewed their consecration to our blessed Lord. It was a profitable occasion to us all.

Your Brother in the glorious hope,

E. C. Remmell,—*Pennsylvania.*

Dear Brother Russell:—I wish to inform you that the memorial last evening was a very impressive one, and one long to be remembered. There were 25 present, willing to accept and share our Redeemer's death and sufferings. With love in Christ, S. J. Arnold,—*Ohio.*

Dear Brother Russell:—I just wanted to write you a few lines concerning the good meeting we had on the evening of April 2nd. We surely enjoyed a blessed season of commemoration of our dear Savior's suffering and death. There were eleven present this year, about double what we have ever had before. We opened our meeting with hymns 23 and 13. Then we all knelt in prayer led by Bro. Towne. And tho we were saddened in recalling the scenes of Gethsemane, were rejoiced that we were ransomed and that Jesus was exalted to such a glorious position, "with all power in heaven and in earth." As some were present who had not met with us before on a like occasion, a few words were said in explanation of the occasion of our meeting, why meet tonight, and what it takes the place of. Then concerning the emblematical bread and juice of the vine, and the real, we read from pages 69, 70 and 71, Tower 1898. Then followed testimonies in which all took part, expressing our deep appreciation of what our dear Savior accomplished for us. After offering prayer for the blessed "bread from heaven" that was broken for us, the emblem was served. And after a few moments meditation and communion with the Master, and prayer for the precious blood represented by the cup, it was passed. In closing we sang hymn 276.

We seemed to realize more than ever what a great work the Lord did for us, our unworthiness without his merits, and the opportunity of ourselves now becoming a part of the great Sin-offering, laying down our lives jointly with him, being broken with him, that we might also have a part in his resurrection, and jointly reign with him, in blessing all the families of the earth. We remembered you all at Allegheny and were very thankful for the "meat in due season" which the Lord has so graciously provided through you. We prayed the Lord's blessing might be with all the little companies throughout the world, met in memory of his broken body and spilt blood.

Praying the Lord's choicest blessing upon you and his harvest work, in which all the brethren and sisters here join.

Yours in his service, John Hoskins,—*Illinois.*

Dear Brother Russell:—We met last night to memorialize the sacrifice of our dear Redeemer. Six of the dear friends partook of the emblems. (Sister Herr met with the friends at Scranton.) It was a blessed meeting and a season of great refreshment to all. Yours in His love and service,

M. L. Herr,—*Pennsylvania.*

Dear Brother Russell:—On Tuesday evening of this week the church at Buffalo celebrated the Lord's Supper at the home of Sister Eckhardt. The participants were only twelve, but, counting Christ's presence with us, of which we all felt assured, it made up the same number comprised in the little company who were present on that memorable occasion centuries ago, when our Savior as a man celebrated the Passover with his disciples. We trust however, that Judas was not represented.

Although few in number, each one seemed animated by the same Spirit, and I think all felt like saying with Paul,—"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." I believe each one present was strengthened by that true Bread from heaven, and that all departed with a stronger determination, if possible, to "run with patience the race which is set before us," and to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling."

The church here unite in expressing their Christian love to you. We all pray that the Father may strengthen and keep you, enabling you to give to his loved ones the "meat in due season."

With best wishes, I am your brother in Christ,
E. F. CRIST,—*New York.*

DEAR BROTHER:—Sister Black and I partook of the emblems with Sister Hasson, at her home. We had a blessed season, entering into fellowship, in our thoughts and prayers, with the different groups and single celebrants all over the field. As a result we hope to take up our work with added zeal and courage.

Your brother in the blessed hope,
W. W. BLACK,—*Massachusetts.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Have just concluded Memorial service this evening. Myself and wife only. We have had a profitable hour and have been greatly blessed, as I hope many of the little circles of the household have been this evening. We purposed going to Clifton to meet the friends there for this occasion, but snow storm and muddy roads rendered it out of the question. Please accept our very kind regards and believe us to be yours in Christ.
F. J. & E. CHAPMAN,—*Kansas.*

DEAR BROTHER:—The church at Portsmouth celebrated the Memorial Supper last night. There were present eight brethren and one sister, besides another lady who does not hold with us. Great solemnity and profound joy pervaded every heart. All agreed in saying it was "good to be there."
Yours in him, WM. W. MURRAY,—*Virginia.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I write also to tell you of the great blessing which all received in the celebration of the Lord's Memorial Supper last night. We met in a parlor and had the comfort of having with us many who live too far to attend our regular meetings. There were probably twenty-five in all present. All seemed fully consecrated to the Lord, and many were the moistened eyes, as all whom the time would permit gave testimony of their gratitude to the Master for his great gift of himself for us. Our thoughts were especially prepared for the Memorial by a good-sized meeting Sunday morning, when Brother Wyndeltz, in a marvelously clear manner, brought out the subject of the ransom, the Passover; and how it is our blessed privilege to be joint participators in that one loaf. We had you and the Allegheny work in memory to the Lord in prayer that he may graciously guide and preserve you, and continue the blessings you have heretofore bestowed.

All join me in love to you and the dear brethren at Allegheny. Yours in our dear Redeemer,
S. H. HUSTON,—*Texas.*

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FRESH ATTACKS UPON THE BIBLE

"Wounded in the house of its friends," is certainly true of the Bible today; for it has no outside foes one-half so antagonistic, so injurious. But it is not the Bible's friends who thus attack it—but enemies, who under guise of being its friends have received honored positions in the household of faith,—who, from the vantage point of its pulpits and colleges and editorial chairs, insidiously stab the Bible, while professing to love and reverence it.

Three volumes have just issued from the press, each one calculated to undermine, shake and overthrow the faith of many of God's people, who could not be reached or shaken by the same testimony if it reached them from disreputable or infidel sources. The first of these is volume III. of the series being published by the higher critics. The second is by Rev. Lyman Abbott, D. D., successor to Henry Ward Beecher in Plymouth pulpit, but now editor of the *Outlook.* The third is by Judge Charles B. Waite. It is not for us to judge that these essayists are dishonest; nor that they are seeking rewards of fame as leaders of thought, in a direction toward which all but the very few will shortly follow them, "as sheep having no shepherd." Rather, we will suppose these writers to be thoroughly honest—intent upon telling the truth as it appears to them. Indeed, we see in this movement a fulfilment of the Bible's predictions respecting our day, the ending of the present age.

We may not state the matter too strongly when we declare that God is back of the many present-day movements which are ensnaring many and making shipwreck of their faith, in the sense that he designedly does not hinder such erroneous presentations, but, on the contrary, permits circumstances to foster and prosper them. Thus the Lord declares through the Apostle, "God shall send them strong delusions that they may believe a lie: that they all might be damned [condemned, as unworthy a place in the Bride of Christ] who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness;—because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved."—2 Thes. 2:10-12.

The very men who are thus becoming blind leaders of the blind into the ditch of unbelief are men who have had first-class opportunities as respects education and opportunities for Bible study; men who, had they loved the truth and sought it, would have found it clear, convincing, precious; but who, rejecting the Lord's leading, and leaning to their own understandings, have become vain in their imaginations; have cut loose from their faith-anchorage, and are helplessly drifting—they know not whither.

Does some one say,—It is strange that God should prosper rather than oppose these strong delusions! Yes, and the Lord himself calls it "his strange work," "his strange act." (Isa. 28:21) Describing this "strange" prospering of error and unbelief the Lord says:—

"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lip do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: therefore behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder [miracle]: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."—Isa. 29:13, 14.

This language was applicable to typical Israel at the first advent, and consequently is applicable to nominal, spiritual Israel in the present "harvest" time of this Gospel age. The above is merely a rehearsal of what the Prophet explains more in detail in the previous chapter. (Isa. 28) In verses 9 to 12 the Lord explains the preaching of his message through imperfect human lips, and that this message, rightly received, should have brought rest and refreshment for the weary and heavy laden: yet to the majority its blessed influences were lost, so that as a whole Christendom or churchianity is about to go backward and fall and be broken and snared and taken in the general *unbelief* that is even now sweeping over the civilized world.—Verse 13.

The secret strength of this delusion, which has made the Word of God of no effect through human tradition, and prepares the way for this great falling away, is mentioned in verses 15 and 18. It is the covenant made by the great teachers with death, and their agreement with hell (*sheol*—the grave, the state of death). Under this agreement or covenant, which all the creeds of Christendom endorse, *death,* which God's Word styles an "*enemy,*" is accepted as a friend; while the *grave,* the Bible teaches us, is the great *prison-house* of mankind, from which in due time the glorified Christ will deliver all of the prisoners who will accept his righteous terms—by restitution processes.—Luke 4:18-21; John 5:28, 29; Acts 3:19-21.

"Hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men [disdaining teachers] that rule this people." You have thought it *wise* to teach the people that death and the tomb are not enemies—that the dead are more alive than ever they were, either in a place of bliss or of torment. You feared to tell the people the truth, that the dead are dead, lest this should decrease your superstitious hold over the minds of the people. You said: The people will prefer to think of their friends going at once to glory, without waiting for the second coming of Christ.

and a resurrection of the dead, and it will heighten our influence over sinners to tell them an untruth—to misrepresent to them the words *sheol* and *hades* and to make them believe that these words represent a flaming torture-chamber, presided over by legions of furious demons, and that at any moment they may by accident be dropped into that eternal torment if they are not members of some of the sectarian systems, which we have organized, but none of which were or will ever be recognized by Jesus or his apostles. You have thus practically in effect said, "We have made lies our refuge and under falsehood have we hid ourselves," and are safe—no matter how great a storm may arise;—even though an overflowing scourge of infidelity come, we are safe in the ignorance of our people, and in their dependence upon our dictum for their faith and hopes of the future: as we have succeeded in "bamboozling" them in the past, we shall continue to do in the future.—Isa. 28:15.

But the Lord's answer is No! This very error shall work your ruin, and the overthrow of your system, and all identified therewith shall suffer loss. (Vs. 18; 1 Cor. 3:15) I have laid the only sure foundation, Christ Jesus, and he that trusteth him, and he alone, shall not fall, but "be able to stand" in the great time of testing, near at hand. For "judgment also will I lay to the line and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail [hard, cutting truth] shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters [truth] shall overflow the hiding place," and force you to show your subterfuges. (Verse 17) The falsehood respecting death and the death-condition will fall with all that you so carefully built with this hay, wood and stubble of falsehood. The *fire* of that day shall test it and destroy it; and when it goes down you will go down with it, and will no longer have influence and preferment with the people.—Verse 18.

This falsehood has been at the bottom of the various errors which have confused you; and because you had wilfulness of heart and drew near me with lip-service, rather than a full consecration of heart, ye deluded and blinded yourselves (as teachers) as well as those whom you "rule," so that to all of you my Word has become as a sealed book—understood and appreciated neither by the learned nor by the unlearned. (Isa. 29:10-12) Hence the fall of both leaders and followers into the ditch of unbelief—infidelity. This calamity will pursue you continually until you come to "understand the report [doctrine, truth]."—Isa. 28:19.

Why so? Because the creed-beds you have made for yourselves are too short for men to *rest* upon. They would serve the purposes of infants in thought and reason; but as knowledge, growth, comes, the bed is found too short, too uncomfortable. The covering, too, is insufficient for the developed mind, though sufficient for the infantile. No thinking person can wrap himself securely in the narrow hopes of any "orthodox" creed: if he gets under the covers of the Calvinistic creed-bed and endeavors to consider himself one of the elect, as therein taught, he is harrassed by the chilling air of doubt, and cries:—

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Am I his or am I not."

If he removes to the trundle-bed creed of Arminianism, and seeks to cover himself with the hope that there is no election—that the door is open and that "whosoever will" surely includes himself, he cannot get warm because the chilly doubt comes to him again with the suggestion that the Scriptures certainly do mention a "little flock" and an "elect" class and a "narrow way." And he reasons that if God deliberately planned and prepared an eternity of torture for the vast majority of his creatures, he must be a loveless if not a conscienceless being—on whose mercy no reliance is to be placed. The larger he grows mentally the more uncomfortable the short beds and narrow creeds, until he resolves to get out of them in disgust. The difficulty is that it is not merely respecting human creeds that he loses faith; but believing that they represent God's Word, the thinker becomes a general skeptic, and viewing the Bible from the outside only, and in the light of the traditions of the elders, he is deaf to every influence and appeal for the truth during the present age, and until in the new dispensation the voice of the Son of man shall declare the truth with no uncertainty—when all the deaf and dead shall hear and, obeying, may have "life more abundant."

The theory, that the dead are not dead, is the basis for the false doctrines of hell and purgatory, and these monstrous absurdities are the rocks upon which the entire system of Babylon is being wrecked; and only those who learn *in time* that these are unscriptural, and who learn the true Gospel as illustrated in the divine plan of the ages, will be able to stand the *shock* of skepticism, higher criticism, evolution theory, etc., now sweeping down upon churchianity.

Rev. Heber Newton, D. D., of New York City, a leading man in "Orthodoxy," more courageous than some of his associates, boldly states his agreement with death and *sheol*, over his own signature, as follows:—

"Death is the true resurrection. No other resurrection is conceivable.

"He who dies awakens into consciousness the same being as of old.

"The threads of the old existence are not cut at the touch of death.

"Death ushers us into no foreign world. All that is essential to human life here will be found there."

REVIEWS OF THE BOOKS MENTIONED

The fact that the first named is gotten out by the higher critics, tells in a word of its antagonism to the Bible as a *divine* revelation, and it will probably circulate chiefly among theologians already well saturated with doubts, and too conservative to circulate such books among their people to arouse doubts and questions they could never hope to answer. But the other two books are of a different caste—intended for the people, and likely to be well advertised, and "pushed" upon public attention by their publishers, and will work havoc among those resting their faith upon sects and creeds. We must notice these, to guard our readers against them. Remember, however, that we do not expect to be able to help any to "stand" except "the very elect," and them not so much by outward as by inward evidences of the Bible's divine authorship. Remember that it is our understanding, as outlined in these pages for the past twenty-two years, that Babylon's sudden fall, as a great millstone, is to result from such influences.

Dr. Abbott's work is styled, *The Life and Literature of the Ancient Hebrews;* and we have come across what we consider an excellent and very moderate review of it in *The North American*, from which we make extracts, which we believe will interest our readers, as follows:—

BOOK SHOULD HAVE GREAT INFLUENCE

"Coming at this particular point of human mental history, when so many of us are religiously unsettled, unwilling either to accept materialism, or to believe what never can be proved, the book may be expected to exercise no little influence upon our decision. . . . If Dr. Abbott's book be the last and authoritative word of the Higher Criticism, then its opponents at least know where they stand, and where issue should be joined.

"The present reviewer is bound to mention his profound dissent from the position which Dr. Abbott has taken. If what the reverend essayist pronounces to be the final truth about religion be so indeed, then it seems to me that religion is not worth attending to. We have practically not advanced beyond the religious state of the ancient Egyptians, or of classic paganism. Religion is morality softened a little by an illogical suspension of judgment regarding some so-called religious mysteries. Dr. Abbott does not state his opinion in these words; but after examining his argument I cannot see what else to make of it. He does not believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God; he does not believe that Christ is God made flesh.

NO SUBLIME PASSION IN IT

"What he does believe on these points is common-sensible, plausible and ingeniously argued; but it is poignantly disappointing to those who look for the glow of supersensual faith; there is in it no lift, no sky, no sublime passion. I do not see how such a creed can hold and combine men; how it can do anything but loose and disperse them. It makes no demand upon us, except to be amiable and keep the commandments. It makes the straight and narrow path only too smooth and facile. It engenders no misgivings as to the competence of human intellect to solve all important religious problems. It ventures to call Herbert Spencer's Unknown Energy at the background of phenomena by the name of Deity; but it supplies us with no adequate reason for loving him, or for a conviction that he, in any comprehensible, vital way, loves us. It denies that he has ever vouchsafed us any first-hand, incontestable revelation of himself.

"According to Dr. Abbott, he (God) always permits himself to be colored, modified, and arranged, as it were, according to the limitations and bias of his human prophets; and we have nothing for it but their own personal persuasion that they were not wofully deceived in their assumed function. In short, the Bible is a remarkable and superior kind of literature; and God is an august and lovely possibility. Christ is, or was, a man in whom the divine Spirit was powerfully and perhaps uniquely manifested. But nothing has really happened in religious history which could not be paralleled in kind, if not in degree, with what happens in the experience of any one of us. And yet Dr. Abbott states everything so softly and sweetly that we hardly feel, at the time we read him, that he is depriving us of religious essentials. It is only when we think him over afterwards that we perceive that we have nothing but husks to eat, and that the immortal springs have run dry.

HERE IS THE KEYNOTE OF IT

"The keynote of his attitude is in a chance sentence in the preface: 'What will the New Criticism do with the Bible?' Why shall we not rather ask, What will the Bible do with the New Criticism? As a matter of fact, it turns out that the New Criticism does not and cannot touch the Bible, in its divine essence, at all. It is occupied entirely with a minute and learned examination of the outside or shell of the Bible—with its letter, as we say. It makes certain discoveries, or arrives at certain theories, with regard to this letter; and then proceeds to judge of the Word of God upon the basis of these external discoveries and deductions.

"The conclusion reached is that the Bible is not divinely—that is, directly—inspired; is not the authentic and eternal Word of God; and, since no other book claims to be that, it follows that there is no such thing extant as a full divine revelation. Now, obviously, God can never be found out by man, working with his finite human faculties; if he do not reveal himself, he will never be revealed, and must always remain a mere surmise or plausible deduction from facts which man is capable of discerning. There is nothing—absolutely nothing—divinely authoritative upon which we can take our stand.

AUTHORSHIP OF THE BIBLE DISCUSSED

"The Bible is nothing more than an adventitious collocation of writings, composed by Hebrews of salient intellectual, moral and emotional gifts, who lived some thousands of years ago. We are to take it for what it seems to us to be worth, and for nothing more. It is full of errors, chronological, geographical, scientific; it is full of fairy tales, lyrics, imaginative stuff of all kinds, which, however, possess the common peculiarity that they do contain constant references to the Hebrew Jehovah. If there do not live among us today poets, story-writers and 'prophets' just as remarkable as these old Hebrew ones, that is only because it happens so; and on the other hand, our historians and scientific writers are far more trustworthy.

"As regards the prophets, we are to understand that they were not prophets in the sense that they foretold things to come; if Isaiah or somebody else used a form of words which might be regarded as a foretelling of the coming of Christ, that is a mere coincidence, nothing of the kind was in the prophet's thoughts. Upon the whole, were a number of devout, pure-minded, highly gifted men to get together today, they might turn out a very respectable Bible of their own, entitled to just as much respect as this ancient volume or library, which has been so painfully handed down to us from antiquity.

"I say, they might; no doubt, on the other hand, they might not; but at any rate, there is no apparent reason in the nature of things why they should not.

WONDERS AT DR. ABBOTT'S CONCLUSIONS

"Now, I do not suppose there are many to question that the Bible has all the imperfections that Dr. Abbott finds in it. But many must be at a loss to discover why, admitting the imperfections, and conceding that the Bible is nothing else at most than an attempt to show that God is reckoned with in human history, Dr. Abbott should regard the Bible as in any sense a divine book.

"If the Bible be not something infinitely deeper and more vital to mankind than this, it is practically nothing; and that it should have survived all these years, and have so powerfully influenced mankind, is extraordinary, to say the best of it. It leaves us destitute of any certain knowledge of God, and entirely free to deny that any Supreme Being exists.

"In truth, unless we are prepared to make assumptions, at the outset, far outstripping any possible conclusions or discoveries of human knowledge or science, we cannot hope to have any God or Bible whatever. If we are to credit a divine Providence at all, we must credit it without any reservations whatever.

"If I could prove my belief in God by any process of logical demonstration, I should cease to believe in him. It is a certainty miraculously implanted in the soul, or it is nothing.

"I believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. I do so in virtue of reading the Bible, and being convinced by a spiritual and mystical process that it is the divine revelation. I then perceive that the trivial and often revolting historical details of a depraved and infidel people which it recounts; the songs which it sings, the apostrophes which it records, the allegories, the stories which it narrates, have not, in their literal significance, any divine or external meaning whatever.

"But all these are a mask, cover or body, under or within which is a soul or spirit, answering part to part to its material envelope or instrument, and conveying the spiritual truths concerning the Creator and the human being which he has created, which are essential to that creature's integrity and salvation.

"Though its compilation seems to have been governed by chance, it was not so, but it was divinely ordained from the beginning. And whether or not the writers thought they were inspired, every word which they set down had already existed in the divine mind, and their hands were divinely guided so to write it and not otherwise.

"The true alternatives between which we must make our choice are the view stated by Dr. Abbott, which gives up religion; and this, which demands the surrender of the judgment of the human senses. His book may precipitate this choice, and thus do a good beyond what he had himself foreseen."

JUDGE WAITE'S CRITICISM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

This book is ably reviewed by the New York *Tribune*, from which we give the following extracts:

"Of the numerous gospels in use in the church in the second century, the author says that only three were probably apostolic, namely, the Gospel of St. Paul, the Gospel or Recollections of Peter, and the Oracles or Sayings of Christ, attributed to Matthew. These, as well as numerous other sacred writings now unknown, were reserved as sacred scriptures in the early church, until they were suppressed in the interest of the present four gospels. 'I found myself,' says Theodoret (A. D. 430), 'upward of two hundred such books held in honor among your churches, and, collecting them all together, I had them put aside and instead introduced the Gospels of the four Evangelists.' Many of the early Fathers refer plainly to these suppressed writings, and some of these references indicate that writings now unknown to the church were regarded as authoritative. The three writings mentioned above probably did not teach the miraculous conception of Jesus or his physical resurrection. But it is the contention of the author that these and other beliefs gradually grew into shape in the church, and that then the present Gospels were written, many of the materials in the older writings being used, the Gospel of Paul was thus the germ of the Gospel of Luke; the Gospel of Peter of the Gospel of Mark, and the Oracles of the Gospel of Matthew.

"Holding thus as to their origin, the author naturally rejects the Gospels as unhistorical. Undoubtedly, he says, there was a moral and religious teacher that came to be known as Christ. This teacher, who had devoted followers and disciples, was put to death in the reign of Tiberius, and after his death Paul, the chief of his disciples, founded a new religion on his doctrines and precepts and on the belief in his resurrection. Both Peter and Paul, in the opinion of the author, were responsible for much of the cruelty, bigotry and fanaticism which came later to characterize Christianity. The apostolic fathers emphasized most the supernatural elements in Christianity, and in a credulous age new supernatural additions could easily be made without exciting any protest."

THE FOUNDATION OF GOD STANDETH SURE

Replying to the Judge's arguments, we notice first, that their weight depends greatly upon the attitude of the mind receiving them. If we will imagine a mind (and they are legion) already disgusted with the din of the jarring and contradictory creeds of Christendom's sects, numbering more than a hundred; and if, additionally, we will imagine that mind awakened, in part at least, to a realization of the injustice, unmercifulness, lovelessness, pitilessness, heartlessness, of the doctrine of eternal torment of all except a "little flock" of "saved" ones; and if we will remember that this awakened and disgusted mind has from infancy been taught that the Bible is the foundation for that slander upon the divine Creator, then we can easily see that to such a mind the weight of Judge Waite's book would be immense. Such an one is prepared and waiting for an excuse for utterly repudiating the Bible, and getting rid once and forever of harrassing fears respecting the future of himself and millions of others, which as a nightmare had haunted his soul since infancy.

To the mind thus prepared and fertilized with the rich compost of the errors of centuries, including the "dark ages," every argument of this book will doubtless bring conviction and seem utterly unanswerable. The seeds of doubt, once sprouted, will make reverence give place to contempt, and every item that is obscure is classed as an inconsistency and contradiction, and speedily faith's anchorage is wholly lost. And in the case of the majority there is no real *faith*, but merely credulity, which vanishes still more rapidly.

But, on the other hand, note the position of those who approach these questions and suggestions of doubt from the opposite standpoint;—like those mentioned by the Prophet, saying, "The people that do *know* their God shall be strong and succeed." Suppose this one to have "tasted that the Lord is gracious," in realizing the forgiveness of his sins, and that being thus justified he has made a full consecration of himself to the Lord—even unto death; and that thus he was begotten of the holy Spirit and realized the new life begun in his heart, and making progress in all the fruits of the Spirit;—one in whom old things had passed away and all things become new.

Suppose, additionally, that this one was living today, and consequently privileged to partake of the "meat in due season" provided for those of the household of faith who are Israelites indeed, and in a proper attitude of heart to receive it. Suppose that he had been a faithful student in the school of Christ and learned of him, being "taught of God." Suppose that now he saw clearly the divine plan of the ages;—the fall of our first parents, the promises through the patriarchs and the prophets of a great Redeemer out of Israel, who, dying, should thus redeem or purchase all men, not from torment, but from death, and who, since his resurrection, has waited with the work of restitution (resurrection) for the world until, as appointed by the Father, he shall have first selected his "elect" church, his bride and joint-heir in the kingdom, which is to bless and restore all the willing of the purchased race.

Suppose this one, who has *seen* with the eyes of his understanding the wisdom, justice, love and power of God portrayed in God's Word in respect to the divine plan, as it shall ultimately shine forth as the sun,—would it be easy to convince such an one that he had followed cunningly devised fables? Nay, verily; he would say with one of old, "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him."—2 Tim. 1:12.

Ask such an one what he thinks of the fact that the New Testament was not handed down from heaven in book form, but grew, as one after another added his testimony, and he would answer, Why, yes! How else could it come to us and yet have us "walk by faith and not by sight"? Inquire what he thinks of the fact cited above, that Theodoret declared that in the churches of one province he found over a hundred different manuscripts, by various authors, dealing with the events of our Lord's ministry; and that he, Theodoret persuaded them to accept as authoritative the four Gospels we now use,—relegating the remainder to less prominence, as unauthoritative. Ask if this would shake his faith in the narratives of the four Gospels, accepted now as well as then?

His answer would be, No; this does not shake my faith. I know very well that none of the Gospels were written until after Pentecost; and that later on there were numerous presentations of the matter by more and less competent writers. I know that of the four accounts so long canonically recognized by the Lord's people two (Mark and Luke) make no claim to having been written by apostles. I can well surmise that all accounts in that day of scarcity of books would be costly, as to time of preparation; and on this account, as well because of their sacred theme, all such would be kept in more or less honor, by the Lord's people. I can readily see the wisdom of deciding which of these versions were the more accurate in detail and desirable in style of diction: and I agree that a council of believers would be a desirable way of reaching a conclusion on this subject that would be beneficial to all. And I fully endorse the selection made, and conclude that in this, as in all of his people's affairs our Lord supervised. Furthermore I am the more convinced of the honesty of the records, as well as of those who decided upon them, by the fact that two of them do not claim to have been made by eye-witnesses, nor by apostolic writing, but were by St. Paul's contemporaries and assistants; and one of those says most modestly:—

"Forasmuch as *many* have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us [primitive Christians], even as they [apostles, etc.] delivered them unto us—[they] who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of these things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus."—Luke 1:1-3.

Could there be anything less like deception than this? Would it not have been easy for dishonest men to have omitted the introductory words of Luke's Gospel, and to have given it the name of James, or Paul, or Andrew, or Peter, or Nathaniel? And could they not have done similarly with the Gospel by Mark? Moreover, it is evident from the above words of Theodoret, as well as from other records, that the general recognition of the four Gospels we now recognize took place long before Theodoret's writings. He mentions the matter in a manner that implies that the province thus instructed and advised was an exception to the rule—different from the churches of other provinces. And this, and the evidences against the rejected ("apocryphal") books, and the evidences in favor of the four Gospels we still recognize were so weighty with the churches that Theodoret evidently had no difficulty in convincing them of the propriety of the course he advised.

No secret has been made of the fact that certain records respecting that time were rejected, and some Bibles, especially old Family Bibles, contained numerous of those rejected books, separated from the accepted ones, and styled as a whole The Apocrypha. And we have no hesitation in saying that the difference between these rejected records and those accepted and kept are so great that not one of our readers would be unable to quickly detect the wide differences between the style and general presentations of these and the simple, grand, unostentatious presentations of our four Gospels.

But, some one may ask, If these Gospels were not *selected* in the apostles' days, but long afterward, how do we know that they were inspired? We answer, that in the apostles' days most of the evangelizing was done by word of mouth, few people knew how to read, even if they had books; and the Lord evidently did not intend to fix matters so that there should be no room for doubts and doubters, and no room for exercise of faith in his supervision of his own cause. He undoubtedly did supervise the matter, so that we have in the four Gospels a very full record of the facts. Nor are we to think that inspiration is requisite to the telling of the truth; and these Gospels make no claim to having been inspired or needing inspiration;—they are histories. We read Macaulay's history of England and believe its records without thinking of asking whether Macaulay was inspired to write it. We trust it even though we have no reason to assume that God supervised its statements, as we have good reason to expect he did with the Gospel records.

As for the Epistles, their case is different,—they are not merely historical records; they are doctrinal treatises; respecting the authority, the inspiration, of their writers we have good reason to inquire. And whoever will examine the rejected or Apocryphal epistles will find that they are wholly inferior to those retained, and in addition, that no apostolic epistle was rejected and no unapostolic epistle retained. The conclusion of the early church was the same that ours now would be. (1) That Paul was the Apostle chosen of God to fill Judas' place (the uninspired and undirected action of the eleven in choosing Matthias, previous to Pentecost, being entirely ignored by the Lord). (2) That all of the apostles were specially selected and specially inspired and directed of the Lord for the work given them to do; and that they have no successors in office and authority;—even though Papacy has since claimed, to the contrary, the same inspiration and authority for its popes. The last book of the Bible sets its seal to the thought that the twelve were special representatives of God, and that the number could not be added to,—by showing the glorified church of the future, under the symbol of a city—whose *twelve* foundations had in them written the names of the *twelve* apostles of the Lamb.

It is objected further, that some of the books now recognized as parts of the New Testament were regarded with suspicion by some of the churches for quite a while, and openly rejected by some for a season;—among others the second Epistle of Peter, and Revelation. We answer, that this is not surprising; and so far from being an unfavorable item it is favorable;—showing clearly that whatever indifference might have been manifest in some congregations at first, some were very critical, very exacting as to the proofs of genuineness of what they received. And as for the Book of Revelation, it belonged less to that day, anyway. It is specially ours of today, and contains abundant internal evidence of its one-ness with the remainder of God's Book.

However, as at first stated, all these things, while clear as crystal to those possessed of and taught by God's Spirit, are obscure to all others who will find abundant opportunity for "stumbling at the Word, being *disobedient*." It is still as true as when our Master said it, that—"If any man will do my Father's will, he shall *know* of my doctrine." Whoever will not *do* this, whatever else that is good he may do, will not know,—not being of the kind "to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom." (Matt. 13:11) To all others the matter may be foggy, at best; even as the Prophet declared, "None of the wicked [unfaithful to their covenant] shall understand." The Scriptures are for and addressed to the church —the saints and the household of faith; and their evidences are internal, not external; just as the symbolic vessels and furniture, etc., of the Tabernacle and of the Temple were completely hidden from outsiders, and could be fully seen only by the typical priesthood, in the light of the typical oil and lamp.

Does some one ask, What can we do for friends whom we may expect more and more to see drifting off into skepticism? Must we let them go without endeavoring to help them?

We answer, No; we should do all we can for each one, even though we know that it will avail nothing for the vast majority. Give them the following treatment, asking divine wisdom to know how to approach them wisely. (1) Let them read this paper, and (2) loan them MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., the first four chapters of which were specially written for the assistance of truth-seekers, who need first of all to have faith established in the Bible as a *whole*. If they are in the proper condition of heart, that is to say, if they have the "hearing ear," they will get a start at least in that volume, which perhaps has converted more infidels than any other book in print today. If they love the truth and appreciate the divine character as set forth in the *Plan of the Ages*, they will want to go on and on in the green pastures of truth, and by the still waters they will be refreshed, and doubtless the great Shepherd will by his rod and staff guide them to the kingdom. But the record is that a thousand to one shall fall.—Psa. 91:7

WHENCE THE PRESENT GENERAL BLINDNESS?

Prevalent blindness and loss of faith in the Bible are attributable to the various so-called Orthodox creeds of Christendom; formed during the "dark ages," these are full of superstitions and falsehoods, and vain attempts to reconcile these with the holy Scriptures. Now that reason is awakened it does not occur to the devoted sectarian that the fault is wholly with his creed, and that it really is in violent conflict with God's Word as reverently and reasonably interpreted. On the contrary, he loses faith in his Bible in proportion as he loses faith in his creed; because he considers them to be in harmony —identical in their teachings.

He has a reverence for his Bible as an antique, as a remembrancer of the past,—intimately associated with his earliest experience at a pious parent's knee; and he has a similar reverence for the creed and denomination to which his parents and himself have long been attached. But he has lost *faith* in both. He can see at a glance the inconsistency of the teachings of the various creeds, that God is either *incapable* of extending the knowledge of Christ to all mankind, and giving all a fair opportunity for believing and obeying the Gospel, or else that he is *unwilling* to do so to any but an *elect few;* and that the vast remainder are to be tormented to all eternity;—which, if God knew the end from the beginning, implies that he provided them with eternal life with the foreknowledge and intention that they should thus suffer.

Men could stifle reason in this manner once, but they can do so no longer. It is to their credit as reasoners, and to their credit as men and women of heart and sympathy, that they reject such theories as impossible of belief, and declare that such testimony bears on its face the evidence that it is untrue; that it is a blasphemy against the true God and a dishonor to the conscience and reasoning powers of every one who so professes; and that they had rather trust to a theory of their own construction, built on love and reason, than stultify themselves longer by such professions.

And not seeing that their creeds malign the Bible as much as they do the Creator, they reverently lay aside Bible and catechism as relics of their thought-infancy. Nominally they still adhere to their denomination as being "as good as any, and as correct as any;" and the denomination still adheres, nominally, to the creed and the Bible and the accustomed forms and ceremonies: believing them to have a salutary effect upon the young and a restraining influence upon the immorally inclined.

However it may be kept secret, the "broad-minded" and "intelligent," "up-to-date" ministers and members of the various denominations have taken, or are rapidly taking, the view advanced by Dr. Abbott, set forth foregoing: that *morality*, and not *faith* in Christ, is the divine test. The tendency of many is to universalism; but the majority, having lost faith in the Bible, have no guide whatever except their own or other men's reasons, and are full of doubts. They have lost their anchor and are being driven to shipwreck on the rocks of infidelity by the increasing winds of reason.

These all need help; but there are none who can render aid except such as by the grace of God have gotten their own eyes open to see that the Bible has been unintentionally traduced in the house of its friends—that it is loyal to God, and most beautifully grand and self-consistent to the sanctified reason, and able to stand the test today and to come off victor, as much as in the past; while, on the contrary, the sectarian creeds can find no defenders among reasonable men.

The bolder infidels tell us that the Bible was made up by priests and knaves. We inquire, which priests and knaves?—of which denomination?

Was it made by Methodist priests and knaves?

If so, why did they not add a dozen or so more texts to support their special tenet—that divine grace is free during this Gospel age? And why did they not omit those texts which mention "election" and the "elect"?

Was it the Presbyterians who made the Bible?

If so, why did they not add more texts on election, and omit the three or four which appear to be contrary to the doctrine of election, and which they cannot explain away?

Was it Lutheran priests, Episcopal priests, or Baptists? No! for similar reasons.

Oh! Finally they conclude that it must have been made by the priests and knaves of the church of Rome! Well, let us see whether its internal evidences favor that view. What object did they serve by such a fraud?

If the Roman Catholics made the New Testament, and pretended that they gave the words of Jesus and the apostles, so as to furnish a foundation for their teachings, how comes it that they are and have long been the bitter foes of the Bible—Bible readings, Bible Societies, etc.? And how comes it that they did not make a Bible which would support their theories? Why did they not put into it clear statements to the effect that Peter was the first pope; that our Lord's mother was the "Mother of God," and that she should be prayed to; that saints are to be prayed to; that images, crucifixes and pictures are to be adored? Why did they omit mention of "holy water," "holy candles," "extreme unction," consecrated cemeteries, and the invalidity of any but priestly marriages? Why did they not insert commands respecting the wearing of "scalpels," the necessity of masses for the dead, to get them out of purgatory? Why did they not insert instructions to all to apply to the priests for indulgences, and fix liberal prices at which they should be supplied? Why was Purgatory left unmentioned when it is the mainstay of their church treasury? Why did they not throw in at least a dozen or so texts amongst the epistles of Paul, Peter, James and John describing hell and purgatory in vivid colors, instead of omitting a single mention of either? Why did they not insert a dozen texts or so on the doctrine of Trinity, instead of leaving the entire Bible without such a text, until the seventh century, when *one* text was corrupted, so as to indirectly imply something of the kind? (1 John 5:7—admitted by all trinitarians to be corrupted, and omitted from the Revised Version). Why did they not insert a passage to show that the *"clergy"* are separate and distinct from the *"laity"?*

Why, on the contrary, did they insert passages which say that there is no such class distinction as "clergy" or "laity" in God's church, but that—"Ye are all one in Christ Jesus"? Why did they permit that their favorite, the Apostle Peter, should be made to contradict their theory and practice, by saying, not of the "clergy," but of the whole church, "Ye are a royal priesthood"? (1 Pet. 2:9) Why did they permit the oft repeated statements that the *end* of the wicked would be "destruction"—"second death," etc., which would be wholly contradictory to their theory of *"eternal torment"?*

We answer, that the evidence is conclusive that the Bible was not made by any of the sects, and is in antagonism to them all, and that in justice it should be judged by itself—by its own internal evidences. And all who have seen its beauty from this standpoint, praise God for the light:—for his wonderful plan of the ages, of which the ransom at Calvary, *once for all*, is the center, the election of the Gospel church a grand incidental, and the blessings of the Millennial age, bringing opportunities for obedience unto eternal life to all the redeemed is the grand outcome.

Whoever knows this Gospel and does not desire and endeavor to spread it to others about him who are blind to it, but hungry for it, surely lacks the spirit of Christ, whatever may be his profession. How dwelleth the love of God in him?

"HE ASCENDED UP ON HIGH"

ACTS 1:1-11.—MAY 19.

"While he blessed them he was parted from them and carried up into heaven."—Luke 24:51.

Luke, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, in its introduction refers to his Gospel narrative of the life of Jesus—respecting "all that Jesus began both to do and to teach until the day in which he was taken up." It was no doubt of divine intention that he should express this matter in this particular form, and refer to the personal work of Jesus as merely the beginning of his work. Only those who grasp this thought; *viz.*, that the body, or the church, "the body of Christ," in the flesh, is a continuation of the work of Jesus, the Head of that body, in the flesh—only such can grasp with clearness the divine plan. We are to consider the name, Jesus, as the personal name of our Lord and Head, and the name Christ, or Anointed, as the official name, applicable to him as the head, and to the whole church as his body. From this statement the two advents of Christ are brought close together, for the work of the first advent, the sacrifice of Christ in the flesh, will be little more than completed, until the work of the second advent begins, the blessing of all the families of the earth with restitution privileges and mercies, at the hands of the glorified Christ, Head and body. Indeed the *preparation* for the new age and its work laps upon this Gospel age and its work.

It was in harmony with this thought (that the work which he had begun, his apostles and all his footstep-followers, were to carry on) that the Master so particularly instructed them during the forty days after his resurrection. We have already noticed that he appeared to them in all some six or eight times, and now in the present lesson we have an account of his seventh (or ninth) appearance, at the end of the forty days. It was probably at least a week after he had seen seven brethren in Galilee that he appeared to them again at Jerusalem, where he evidently had appointed the apostles to assemble. Here he met with them and gave them his final parting instructions, which were perfectly in harmony with his previous teachings, that their mission was to continue to be a spiritual one, to feed his sheep and to feed his lambs—to continue the work which he had begun, and to follow in his footsteps. But he impresses upon their minds the fact that they are incompetent for this work until first they shall have received of the Father through him a special power from on high, for which he bade them wait at Jerusalem. He reminded them that this blessing for which they were to wait was the same that he already had mentioned before his crucifixion,—telling them that the Father would send the holy spirit in his name, that it would bring to their remembrance all things that he had spoken unto them, and guide them into all truth, etc.—John 14:16, 26; 15:26.

He would impress his disciples with the importance of the blessing for which they were to wait, and with the fact that it meant to them a new era, a new dispensation: as they knew of the reformation movement instituted by John the Baptizer, and that the repentant sinners were immersed in water, he would have them know that now he was instituting a church on a much higher plane, and that all who would be received into it would be immersed in holy Spirit,* holy power—come under an influence of power from on high. His declaration that this would be not many days hence, was indefinite purposely; first, that they should expect it soon, and not be disheartened or discouraged, and yet he left the exact number of days unstated, so that they might be continually watching for it. This left the apostles in a waiting attitude, and, as Luke informs us, in an attitude of prayer and expectancy, very profitable to them at this juncture.

Slowly, during the forty days, the disciples were learning to expect very different things from what they had in mind at the beginning and throughout the Lord's ministry: they were learning that the kingdom glories and honors were not to be distributed immediately; but that a new dispensation, and a new kind of work in harmony with it, was set before them to be done; and gradually their minds reverted to the prophecies in which the blessings of the Lord upon the nation of Israel are set forth, and the intimation given that the blessings upon the whole world are to flow through the children of Abraham in some national capacity. They had confidence in these prophecies, and now they would ask the Lord respecting them. How could these prophecies be fulfilled under the new arrangement, which seemed to ignore the nation and to merely use themselves, the Lord's followers, a mere fragment of the nation. Hence their inquiry of the Master whether now or soon or when the prophecies would be fulfilled, which promised the restoration of Israel to divine favor as God's kingdom, thus implying its release from the power of Rome and all other dominions.

Our Lord's answer was not to the effect that they had misunderstood these prophecies, and that they would all have some kind of spiritual fulfilment; on the contrary, by his answer he implied that their conception of the prophecies was quite proper, but that the time for their fulfilment had not yet come, and that they must not press the question as to the times and seasons; they must trust to God, who has these in his own keeping, and who will abundantly fulfil every promise he had ever made in its due time.

Our Lord, then, drew the minds of his disciples back to their own work, to which he had called them—to the work which they were to accomplish as members of his body in the flesh. He informs them that they shall be specially empowered through the holy Spirit, which the Father would send in his name; and that using this power, this influence, they would be privileged to be his witnesses—his representatives—representatives of his character, his teachings and his work, not only in Jerusalem and throughout Judea and Samaria, but also eventually to the utmost parts of the earth. He would have them see that a great work was being committed to their care. God would attend to all of his promises in due time; now they, to be his co-laborers and witnesses, must be attentive to the work to which they had consecrated themselves, and for which they now were to be thoroughly empowered and quickened through the holy Spirit. With this parting lesson, while he was walking with them and talking to them on the Mount of Olives, going in the direction of Bethany, he began gradually to ascend from them, a cloud receiving him out of their sight.

One error leads to another; and the failure to note that our Lord's change of nature from human to spiritual took place in his resurrection, and that his presence during the forty days was that of a spirit being, unseen except when he for a few times very briefly appeared to his disciples for the purpose of instructing them, and these different appearances in different forms, in different kind of clothing, etc.—has led some to very peculiar ideas respecting our Lord's ascension. Thus we find one doctor of divinity saying on the subject: "The ascension was a noble and fitting close of the earthly career of Jesus; far better than to die again, as Lazarus did, or to remain always on earth in his body—the only alternatives!" Poor man! How tightly error has blindfolded the eyes of his understanding, that he should think thus.

From the Scriptural standpoint, that our Lord was raised "a quickening *spirit*," invisible to mankind, and that he merely "*appeared*" in forms of flesh, the matter has an entirely different aspect. From this standpoint we see that this last appearance of our Lord to the disciples, like the other appearances, was intended for their instruction, and to help natural men, not yet begotten of the holy Spirit, to understand deep things, which otherwise they could not so well have comprehended. Our Lord's ascension was simply another way of *disappearing*. When he appeared to them in the upper room, the door being shut, and talked to them and convinced them, having finished his lesson he "*vanished*" as suddenly as he had "*appeared*." The body of flesh and its clothing, which, by miraculous power, he had organized within the room, he could and did disorganize again by a power beyond our comprehension—the same power which turned the water at Cana into wine; by the same power by which angels had frequently appeared as men for a purpose,—disappearing when the purpose had been accomplished. Indeed, in one of these instances narrated in the Scriptures, an angel accomplished his disappearance in very much the same manner in which our Lord disappeared on this last occasion of his ascension.—Judges 13: 19-21.

The propriety of *thus* terminating his intercourse with the disciples is evident: they would have no further expectation of his appearing to them again as a man, in different forms, after such a farewell: they would understand that he was gone from them now as a spirit being, as he had previously said: "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come." The confusion of the D. D. from whom we quote foregoing, is the more manifest from the fact that in further writing upon this subject he recognized the "two men" of vs. 10 as being angels who, for the time being, had assumed human form for the purpose of communicating with the disciples, and impressing upon them a certain valuable lesson. Why could not the gentleman see that our Lord, having finished the work which the Father had given him to do (*viz.*, the laying down of his life as the man Christ Jesus) was no longer a little lower than the angels, a fleshly being, but was now "changed," and as he was, previous to coming into the world, a spirit being of the highest order, so now, as the Apostle declares in his resurrection, he was a life-giving spirit? (1 Cor. 15:45) And if the angels had power to appear as men, and did so appear, why should not their chief and Lord have power so to appear to his disciples in various forms, for the purpose of convincing them that he was no longer dead, but risen,—no longer a man, but "changed"?

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* "Ghost" is old English for "spirit"—the word is really obsolete, and had the American Revision Committee had its way it would never have appeared in the Revised Version, we are told. It is not used in the American Committee's Version; it is misleading.

Our Lord's words, "It is expedient for you that I go away," lead us to inquire, Why was his ascension expedient? Let us consider the matter. Had he remained with the disciples, present but invisible, and appearing to them and to all of his followers occasionally throughout this Gospel age, of what special advantage would it have been? What could he do for us in this manner that could not as well be done for us from his high station in the heavens with the Father? And again, had he remained with the church it would have seemed all the more inexplicable that he should have permitted his representatives to be misused, slandered, abused in various ways, and that he should seem to take no part in the management of the affairs of the world, while claiming the legal right through purchase, by his own blood, to be its prince and Savior from the power of sin and Satan. For all these reasons it was appropriate that he should not be with us, but that we should know that he was with the Father, and should wait for him until the time appointed of the Father—until all of his faithful disciples had been called and proven acceptable, and the foreordained number of the elect fulfilled;—and that he should then come to receive them to himself, and to establish them as his joint-heirs in the kingdom; and to assume the rulership of the world, to bind the Adversary, to overthrow his dominion, and to establish truth and righteousness on a permanent basis by the divine authority and power which he possesses.

But there was another and all-important reason why he should ascend to the Father, and it is that which our Lord mentions, "Except I go away the Comforter will not come." (John 16:7) Why not? We answer, that the whole world being under divine condemnation, none could be recognized by the Father and adopted into his family, begotten of the holy Spirit as his sons, so long as they were sinners. And the death of our Lord Jesus, while it was the ransom-*price*, had not as yet affected any of those for whom it was intended. Before it could benefit them he must ascend to the Father and must present that sacrifice or *price* as on behalf of those to whom it would be applicable: that they, being justified by faith and sanctification or setting apart to holiness and divine service, even unto death, might receive the Spirit of adoption into the family of God's spiritual sons.

This was the reason, and it is in full harmony with the Apostle John's statement: "The holy Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:30) He had received his glorious body in the resurrection, as the Apostle shows us in 1 Cor. 15:43, 44; but it remained for him to be glorified (honored) after he would appear in the presence of the Father and present before him his complete work, and officially receive divine approval; then he was honored, glorified, with a name that is above every name, "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:10.

We can imagine the eleven apostles (all Galileans) standing looking after the disappearing Master, and endeavoring to peer into the cloud that had received him from their sight, and endeavoring to comprehend the meaning of the various lessons of experience through which they had recently passed; and their perplexed thoughts respecting the promised coming of Christ again, and the interim of loneliness which he had promised should be compensated for by the promised holy Spirit which should comfort them. Then appropriately, at the needed moment, under the divine providence, two beings stood by them, "men" in appearance, but in garments which indicated that they had only assumed the form of men for the occasion, and which told the apostles that these were really angels. These in cheerful tone and impressive manner assured them that they need not continue to look into the sky, but to remember that he would so come again in like manner as they had seen him go.

How strange that so many of the Lord's people, even amongst those who fully believe in, and with deep interest long for his second coming, should overlook the particular features of this angelic testimony! First, that it was the *same* Jesus that should come again—not the former Jesus, whom they knew in the flesh, but the same Jesus, who was taken up from them, and whom they recognized as so thoroughly "changed" from the time of his resurrection—the spirit Jesus, "a quickening spirit." This is the one promised to come again, not in weakness, as "in the days of his *flesh*," but a spirit being, clothed with full plenitude of divine power to establish them as his kingdom, and through them to bless all the families of the earth.

How strange, too, that the other important fact which the angel noted, *viz.*, the "*manner*," is so often overlooked by the same class! What was the manner of our Lord's going? Was it with great ostentation, with the sound of a literal trumpet calling the attention of the whole world? Was it in a manner known to the whole world? Or was the *manner* of his going an extremely quiet one, known only to his most faithful followers? His second coming is to be "*in like manner!*" Those who give to the words of the angels their true weight and force, laying the emphasis upon the right words, will receive a blessing in so doing, and be the better prepared to understand the character of our Lord's *parousia*. They will be less surprised to know that it fulfils all these conditions; that he is now seen only with the eye of faith, and only by the most consecrated of his people. It will be after his second coming, that he (unknown to the world) will reckon with his own servants, his saints, exalting the worthy, faithful over a few things, to be rulers over many things. (Matt. 25:14-30) It will be still later on that he will restore the kingdom again to Israel—to the worthy ones of that people, through whom, as the earthly agents of the spiritual kingdom, the blessing of divine grace and truth shall flow to all the families of the earth. And in connection with the giving of the kingdom to the elect the great time of trouble will reveal the new ruler to all the families of the earth in the fiery judgments upon all iniquity, until every eye (of understanding) shall see him—revealed as King of kings and Lord of lords.

PENTECOST—THE DAY OF JUBILEE

Acts 2:1-11.—May 26.

"When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."—John 16:13.

Pentecost signifies fiftieth, and was used amongst the Jews as the name of one of their most important feasts or religious celebrations. As their fiftieth "Jubilee" year followed a cycle of seven times seven years, so Pentecost, as a jubilee day, followed a cycle of seven times seven days, from the time of the gathering of the sheaf of first-fruits, which was presented before the Lord as a "wave-offering." This sheaf of the first-fruits evidently typified our Lord in his resurrection on the sixteenth of Nisan—he having been slain as the Passover Lamb on the fourteenth of Nisan.—Lev. 33:5, 6, 15, 16.

In our last lesson we noted the fact that it was the eleven apostles that were witnesses of our Lord's ascension, "men of Galilee;" and it was these, who were to be his special representatives, and through whose word others were to believe, that he instructed to tarry at Jerusalem until endued with power from on high. The present lesson shows us the same eleven apostles in the upper room complying with our Lord's injunction, waiting in an attitude of prayer and expectancy, and in readiness to begin their mission of feeding his sheep and lambs. In harmony with this view is the statement, a little later on, when the preaching began, that "all these are Galileans." And again, "Peter standing up with the eleven." (Acts 2:7, 14) We are not positively informed that any others were present at this time, but from previous statements, to the effect that others (to a total of one hundred and twenty) met with the apostles, "continuing with one accord in prayer and supplication," we may reasonably infer that they were present at the time of the Pentecostal outpouring of the holy Spirit, and that the whole company was thus baptized, immersed in the holy Spirit, which filled the place where they were assembled. There is no good reason, however, for questioning respecting the cloven tongues of fire—that these sat upon any but the apostles. The statement is that "It sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The subsequent statement is that all those who spoke, all to whom the spirit gave utterance or tongues, were Galileans; but whether or not the apostles were thus specially recognized at this time, we are assured, not only from our Lord's words, but also from his subsequent revelation, that the apostles occupied a special place in connection with his kingdom, his church, assigned to no others.—John 6:70; Rev. 21:14.

The Pentecostal blessing signified divine acceptance of the sin-offering which, finished at Calvary, our Lord at this time had presented before the Father. The outpouring of the holy Spirit upon the consecrated believers constituted their begetting of the Spirit to the new nature, and implied thus, that the condemnation upon them as the children of Adam and under the Law Covenant was cancelled, and that now they were accepted in the Beloved, counted as children of God, and if children then heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be that they would suffer with him, that they might also be glorified together—Rom. 8:16, 17.

As is implied in our Lord's statement and in his promise, this was a new thing. No such outpouring of the divine Spirit had ever occurred before as respected the children of Adam. Indeed, no such acceptance and new begetting on God's part was possible until first the sin-offering had been made and accepted. The only thing corresponding to it was the descent of the holy Spirit upon our Lord at the time of his consecration at baptism in Jordan. He there received the holy Spirit of adoption in the same sense, but "without measure," he being perfect; those who received this holy Spirit at Pentecost received it by measure, that is, in limited degree. (John 3:34) Although they were all "filled" with the Spirit, yet, because of weakness and imperfections of their organisms, they could only receive limited measures,—these differing one from the other according to natural temperaments, etc.

God's holy spirit had indeed been manifested in various ways previously, but all of them differed from this manifestation. For instance, it was the holy power of God which moved upon the waters in connection with the world's creation. (Gen. 1:2) Again, as the Apostle Peter declares, "Holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the holy Spirit" —mechanically. (2 Pet. 1:21) He further explains that what they spake and wrote they did not comprehend; because their utterances and writings were not for themselves, but for us of the Gospel age. We are, therefore, to recognize the fact that the spirit dispensation had its beginning in Jesus, when he was thirty years of age; but so far as others were concerned its beginning was in the sanctified ones at Pentecost, as recorded in this lesson. Neither are we to think that these Pentecostal outpourings and baptisms require a repetition, for the holy Spirit thus once poured upon the church was to abide, to continue, with the church, not to be withdrawn and poured out afresh repeatedly. Some have concluded that there were times when the holy Spirit was not in the world at all; but this was because they were looking for it in a wrong direction or under-wrong conditions. At times the nominal church of outward professors has been so overgrown with the "tare" element that the true "wheat" could not so readily be discerned, yet we are confident that the Lord never left himself without a witness, and that even in the darkest hour of the dark ages there were some of God's true people in the world; some representatives of the body of Christ; some, therefore, possessing the holy Spirit; some who therefore constituted the salt of the earth and the lights of the world, even though the darkness was great around them and its influence so powerful that no record of the true church is to be found, but only the records of the apostacy.

The holy Spirit, in harmony with our Lord's promise, was sent only to the consecrated class, and was to *abide* in the true church class, "the body of Christ;" and we, and all others who since have come into fellowship and union with our Lord, "the Head of the body which is his church," have thus come into and under the influence of the holy Spirit, our rightful portion and privilege. By this Spirit we were begotten to the spiritual nature, and became heirs of all the exceeding great and precious promises which belong to "the body of Christ."

It was appropriate that the giving of the holy Spirit should be with certain outward demonstration and manifestation; not merely to impress and convince the apostles and the early church, but also for the benefit of those who should subsequently come into relationship with the church. Faith must have a ground to rest upon; an assurance that there was at the beginning such a direct recognition of the Savior's sacrifice and of the divine acceptance of the consecrated ones who trusted in him. The rushing wind fitly represented this holy Spirit; indeed the words "spirit" and "wind" are both from the same Greek word; a wind is the best illustration of God's Spirit, because it is powerful, and yet it is invisible. The cloven or split tongues "like as of fire" or *light*, was also fit symbols by which to teach the church something respecting the divine power that had come upon her.

As a tongue it represented the influence which God would use during this Gospel age as the agency of his spirit in accomplishing the work he now designs to do; for "it pleased God by the foolishness of *preaching* to save them that believe." (1. Cor. 1:21) This way of preaching is not a foolish way, since it is God's way; but it is so different a way of effecting a work from what the natural man would have chosen that it seems to *him* to be an unwise way. True, at the beginning of this age the tongues, the preaching, was supplemented by miraculous "gifts" among the Lord's people, but these were not designed to be permanent, as the Apostle explains (1 Cor. 18:8); and after the apostles who alone had the power to confer these gifts had died, the gifts themselves of necessity gradually vanished; since which time the preaching tongue has been practically the only instrument which the Lord has used in connection with his great work of calling out and sanctifying the peculiar people to be the bride, the royal priesthood, the body of Christ.

Some have incorrectly identified the fire-likeness of these tongues with the prophecy of John the Baptist, respecting Christ, saying, "He shall baptize you with holy spirit and with fire." (Matt. 3:11, 12) John's words were not addressed to the disciples, but to the promiscuous company of his hearers, some of whom were Israelites indeed, and some, as he declared, a generation of vipers. The Pentecostal blessing was indeed the fulfilment of a part of John's prediction; *viz.*, the baptism of the holy Spirit (Acts 1:5); but this was not the fulfilment of the latter part of John's prophecy respecting the baptism of fire. The room wherein the disciples were assembled was not filled with fire, and they were not immersed in it, either literally or figuratively. The cloven tongues which appeared upon their heads were not fire, but light, a fitting symbol of the holy Spirit, and the message of light and truth and blessing which the apostles were proclaiming. The baptism of fire, which John predicted, came later, not upon the faithful Israel, but upon the class whom John designated, a "generation of vipers"—upon the class of whom the Apostle Paul says, "Wrath is come upon this people to the uttermost." The trouble, the *destructive* trouble, the fiery trouble, in which that whole nation was figuratively engulfed and baptized, and which ended in A. D. 70, after witnessing the destruction of millions of lives, millions of property, and the complete overthrow of Israel's national polity, was the worthy fulfilment of John's prediction of a baptism of fire.

The fact that the holy Spirit upon the apostles was accompanied by miraculous manifestations or gifts, tongues, etc., does not imply any greater favor of God toward the primitive church, which had those gifts, than toward the Lord's people of a later day, after those gifts had ceased; for, as the Apostle points out, it was possible for some to have those gifts without having much of the real spirit of the Lord. He says, "Tho I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, *I am become as sounding brass* or a tinkling cymbal. Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am *nothing.*" (1 Cor. 13:1, 2) We are, therefore, to esteem love for the Lord and for the brethren and for the neighbor—active love, which does as well as wishes and says—to be the best evidence of an acceptable condition with the Lord, the best evidence of a filling with *his holy Spirit*—a far better evidence than the possession of the "gifts" described. Far greater, far more precious gifts of the Spirit, then, are the gifts which the Spirit develops in us—the fruits of the Spirit—joy, peace, faith, love, etc.

The news respecting the miraculous manifestation of divine power spread rapidly through the city of Jerusalem, which, in addition to its general population, had at this season of the year visitors from all the neighboring countries, speaking various languages and dialects. And this furnished the opportunity for the Lord's humble disciples, "unlearned men," to begin their great work for which now they were fully commissioned and empowered. Quite possibly by this gift of tongues the Lord made up to his disciples the lack of larger education and fitted them for the work; at all events, not only on this occasion do we find that they were able to discourse in all the various languages, but subsequently, when traveling in various quarters, we have no mention of any difficulty encountered in respect to the languages or dialects, though these were many amongst the different classes and nationalities.

The concourse of the people at Jerusalem attending this feast was of a religious kind—the most religious Jews from all the surrounding countries and nations (where more Jews resided than in Palestine), gathered on such occasions to do homage to the Lord, to render thanks and to pray for the promised blessings and kingdom. In addition to this, it was the custom for many of the most religious to permanently remove to Jerusalem in their old age, that they might die there; and thus we see that the Lord's arrangements, and the human arrangements which his providence had favored, all cooperated at this time for the favorable presentation of the good tidings that Messiah had come, and that he had redeemed Israel and the world, according to the prophets and the types; that he had ascended to the Father as the great High Priest for his people; and that this Pentecostal blessing represented the divine favor bestowed through him, and open to as many as would really receive him and become his followers—disciples. When we consider the class of hearers, and the miraculous power resting upon the speakers, it need not surprise us that so many were converted in so short a time—three thousand.—Acts 2:41.

We are given but a meagre account of the preaching; *viz.*, an extract from Peter's discourse; but from the number of converts it is evident that all of the apostles engaged in the service. A summary of their preaching is given in vs. 11, where the hearers are represented as saying, "We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." These wonderful works we have already referred to as relating to our Lord's death and resurrection, and his commission to his apostles, which they were now carrying out. True, it is said that the apostles used other words, amongst them, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation"—thus intimating the condemnation of the Jewish church and polity, and the fire of divine wrath, the trouble, shortly to come upon them.

But the main part of their discourses was not a tirade against the Jews, but rather a showing forth of the wonderful features of the divine plan; and even in the charge against the rulers and the people for the great crime they had committed in crucifying Jesus, the Apostle puts the matter as kindly as possible, saying, "I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Herein we have a valuable lesson for all the followers of Christ who preach in his name and who would win souls from the darkness of error to harmony with God. The proper, the effective preaching, today and then, is that which tells of the wonderful works of God in man's redemption, and not that which tirades against the nominal church—even though it be necessary occasionally to point out the errors of Babylon, as the apostles pointed out the errors of Judaism. Our course, like theirs, should be one of great moderation and kindness, as well as plainness of speech, "speaking the truth in love."

The harvest work of the present time reminds us much of this gathering of the harvest in Israel. Now, as then, those who are addressed by the holy Spirit are the Israelites indeed—"devout men out of every nation under heaven." And so prominently is this the direction in which the holy Spirit is guiding in this harvest work that one of the charges against the work is, that we are not going after the drunkards and harlots and gamblers and thieves and vagabonds, but are seeking to feed the Lord's sheep and lambs,—seeking to present present truth, meat in due season to the devout of every nation. And such, we believe, is the will of God concerning us; and so we advise that all of the Lord's people, as they seek to proclaim the grace of God, remember the words of the Lord, that we are to feed his sheep and his lambs, and not spend unnecessary time with the goats and the wolves, as soon as we recognize their kind, except it be to drive them off or to expose their true character to the sheep.

Our commission is to "preach the Gospel to the *meek*," not to the froward and the vile; to bind up the broken-hearted, not to seek to break the hard hearts. The Lord has his own plan for dealing with the stony hearts in the time of trouble which is near, and during the Millennial age, in which the necessary force will be used to restrain the evil and to open their eyes and ears of understanding. Now our commission is to go to those who have an ear. "He that hath an ear let him hear." Those who have not the ears to hear the message, and who have not the hearts to appreciate its beauty, should not be argued with or wrangled with, but wisely left as quietly as possible in their ignorance and blindness until the Lord's due time for scattering the pall of darkness, the gross darkness which Satan has brought upon the people. We had rather leave in ignorance and under the bonds of superstition those who manifest no appreciation of the grace of God; for doubtless, if their superstitions were loosed in the present time, it would be nothing to their advantage; perhaps to the disadvantage of others. Let us remember that the Gospel message is to gather out the Lord's peculiar people, a little flock, and that so far as the world is concerned the Gospel is only a "witness" now.

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A HIGH PRIEST OF COMING GOOD THINGS

HEB. 9:11-14; 24-28.—JUNE 2.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"He ever liveth to make intercession."*—Heb. 7:25.

No signature is attached to the Book of Hebrews, nor does the writer of it in any way identify himself, except as we see in its style, close reasoning, deep penetration and wide knowledge of the divine plan, strong evidence that it was written by the Apostle Paul. Who but he could have written it? It is not addressed to Jews, as if with the intention of converting those who did not believe in Christ—but to the Hebrews—to those who were the children of Abraham according to the flesh, but who had accepted Christ.[*] The Apostle would strengthen and establish the faith of these (and indirectly of all others who would come to a similar knowledge of God's dealings with Israel). In this epistle he seeks to show that, so far from the new dispensation repudiating the old one, it was merely an advance step which was being taken because its due time had come. The Jewish system was not being repudiated as a divine institution, but was being established as such, everything in the new dispensation having an analogy to the things in the old one, but on a higher plane.

Thus all the Mosaic arrangements were honored, and shown to be of divine institution, good for the time, and serving a noble purpose as types and lessons of instruction and preparations for the Gospel. The time had now come for the establishment of the antitype—the antitypical Covenant through the antitypical Mediator, sealed with the antitypical blood of the Covenant, and to be followed by the antitypical Day of Atonement, preceding the antitypical blessing of the people and their full and permanent release from sin and condemnation.

In line with the foregoing, the Apostle, in the lesson before us, is pointing to Jesus, ascended and in the heavens, as the antitype of the earthly high priests when they went into the "most holy" on the day of atonement to sprinkle the blood of the atonement upon the mercy seat. It will be remembered[*] that on the day of atonement the high priest put on his linen garments (not his glorious garments) and with the blood of the sacrifice went into the most holy to present it as the ransom price—the atonement. While he was within the people had no evidence of divine favor resulting from his sacrifice, but waited on their faces in the dust, representing the prostrate and helpless condition of mankind in degradation, needing and waiting for the divine blessing. So now, our great High Priest comes forth with the promised blessings the blessings of restitution until all the work of atonement be accomplished, and until all the members of his body shall, with their Head, have put on the garments of glory and beauty, typifying honor, majesty and authority. Then the blessing will quickly follow, from the uplifted hands (manifested power), of our great High Priest; then, indeed, restitution blessings will prevail toward the whole creation now groaning and travailing in pain together.—Rom. 8:22.

It is in respect to this coming blessing that the Apostle declares our Lord to be a High Priest of coming good things—coming blessings—obtained of God in a higher tabernacle or temple than the Jewish earthly one—a tabernacle, the Holy of Holies of which is heaven itself, from which in due time our great High Priest comes forth with the promised blessings of restitution, etc.

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[*] Nevertheless, we believe the Book of Hebrews to be a presentation of the Gospel specially suitable as a message to unbelieving Jews—superior in its influence to anything which we or others could present. Accordingly, we are preparing a booklet giving this Epistle in the *Hebrew-Jargon*, familiar to Jews of all nationalities, for use among them,—hoping that through the assistance of our readers in all lands it may be the means under divine providence of blessing and enlightening some, and preparing them for the mercy future, mentioned by the Apostle in Romans 11:31. We will send a copy of this brochure when issued to each WATCH TOWER subscriber, and trust that few if any will be wasted;—the stewardship then will be yours.

[*] See *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices*—this office.

In order to appreciate this matter we must see that not only was the High Priest superior to the high priests of the Aaronic order—their antitype—but also that the sacrifices which he presents are of a superior character—his own blood, his own life; having sacrificed it on our behalf he entered into heaven itself, the holy place—"having found [procured] lasting ransom-deliverance [for those whom he as high priest represented]."—Verse 12.

The Apostle urges that these conclusions are logical and reasonable, they recognized the fact that the typical sacrifices had served in a measure for purification, and made the creatures represented thereby *typically* acceptable with God for a time, and this, which was all that the most zealous Jew could claim for the Law, being accepted as true, how much greater must be the blessing which the greater, the antitypical, High Priest would bring, would secure, as the result of his better, more precious and wholly acceptable sacrifice. Our Lord Jesus offered up himself; the offering took place at his consecration, which was symbolized by his baptism at Jordan; his dying, his sacrifice, began there, tho it was not "finished" until he breathed his last at Calvary. His flesh which he offered was "holy, harmless, undefiled," an acceptable offering, a full offset or *ransom-price* for father Adam, through whose disobedience the condemnation of death came, not only upon himself, but also upon all his posterity. The man Christ Jesus was begotten again, begotten to the spiritual, the divine nature, through the holy Spirit which there came upon him, and which constituted him the Anointed—the Christ, the Messiah. From that moment onward this Anointed One, Messiah, the new creature, was the anointed High Priest, whose business for the time was that of offering up himself —offering up or sacrificing himself as the man Jesus, even unto death. Meanwhile, as a "new creature," he was growing in grace and gaining all the experiences necessary to fit him for his office as man's High Priest in all things pertaining to God. Jesus, from the time of his anointing of the holy Spirit, was reckoned as having begun the new life, as having been begotten of the Spirit to be a spirit being (which was perfected in the resurrection, when he arose from the dead a quickening spirit)—it is to this spirit begotten High Priest that the Apostle refers, saying that our Lord (the new creature) offered himself (the man) without blemish unto God through, or by, the eternal Spirit by which he had been begotten.—Verse 14.

TO WHOM WAS THE RANSOM PAID?

Some have inquired sarcastically, "To whom was the ransom paid?" asserting that if paid at all it must have been paid to Satan. Our answer to this question is found in the Apostle's words in vs. 14 of this lesson;—that our Lord Jesus offered himself *to God* in sacrifice; that the ransom price was paid to Justice, that it was not Satan who gave the law under which Adam was tried, and under which, on his failure, he was condemned to death; but as that was God's law and God's condemnation, so the ransom price which God provided for in Jesus must be paid to God—to divine Justice—"that he might be just and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."—Rom. 3:26.

The Apostle urges that this clear view of how "Jesus died and paid it all," how he *bought* us with his own precious blood, giving the exact sacrifice which was necessary, according to the divine law, should purge or free our consciences from a sense of guilt, and that forever. We should see that if God, who counted us justly condemned, has provided now in this sacrifice a ransom price acceptable to himself, "He is just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) And since this is a matter of faith, our blessing and good conscience toward God, and realization of the full reconcilation through the precious blood, will be in proportion as we exercise faith in this great fact which God has revealed in his Word. According to our faith it will be unto us; he who exercises the faith may go on realizing his acceptance with God; but he who fails to exercise faith will be hindered from approaching God, and using the blessed opportunities put before us in the Gospel, as truly as those who know not of the ransom.

The Jewish Covenant was one which required perfect works, and not merely a perfect heart or will; and since, as fallen men, the Israelites could not perform *perfect* works, even their best endeavors must be works which could only result in death. Now, however realizing the better sacrifices which Christ had accomplished, and realizing that a new order or dispensation had come in, based upon a New Covenant, of which Christ is the Mediator, they were to realize that he, having paid the *ransom-price* for the "sins of the whole world," could accept their will, their intentions, their righteous endeavors, as fulfilling their Law Covenant, and thus they might thereafter enjoy a living faith, instead of sorrowing for works that were dead.

To impress the foregoing lessons, the Apostle, in vss. 24-28, contrasts the work of Christ in the true Tabernacle or "Holies" with the work of the typical high priest of the Aaronic order in the typical tabernacle or temple. Jesus could not have been an earthly High Priest, because, according to the Law, the priests could only be of the tribe of Levi, whereas our Lord sprang from Judah. Thus he could not, and did not enter into "holy places" made with hands, the typical; but his is a higher priesthood, after the order of Melchisedec, as the Apostle elsewhere explains, and the Temple in which he offers is the antitypical one, and hence it is that in entering the "Holy of Holies" he entered heaven itself, there to appear in the actual presence of God on our behalf, as the earthly priests once every year, on the day of atonement, went into the typical presence of God, into the typical "Most Holy," appearing before the Shekinah glory (representing God) over the mercy seat.

For the same reason, the Apostle explains, it is not necessary that Christ should repeat his sacrifice every year, because his is the antitypical one and prevails everlastingly. The typical priests needed to repeat their typical offerings "year by year continually," *because* they were merely types, and could never cancel sin, but merely, by divine arrangement, covered it for a year. The Apostle reasons that if Christ's sacrifice had been no better than these it would mean repeated sufferings on our behalf, but, on the contrary, all the facts agree that his sacrifice was once and forever; because it was a complete, a perfect sacrifice, which the divine law demanded. This is in direct conflict with the teachings of the church of Rome, which claims that our Lord's sacrifice needs to be repeated (in the "sacrifice of the Mass") in order to the forgiveness of each particular sin for which it is applied; hence the claim of Romanism that her priests have power to transmute the elements of bread and wine into the actual body and actual blood of Christ; to recreate Christ for the very purpose of *sacrificing him afresh*—and this sacrilegious, blasphemous misrepresentation of the divine arrangement is repeated, not only yearly, but daily, in all parts of the world where Romanism has a foothold.

And so far has Protestantism lost sight of the real character of Papacy, and the original grounds for protest which separated their fathers from Papacy, that they are now generally ignorant of this her claim, and ready to consider the Mass as merely a symbol of our Lord's sacrifice, of the same meaning as their own Eucharist or "Communion" service. The coronation oath of the British kings was so formulated as, if possible, to hinder any but a Protestant from ever coming to the throne; hence on this subject the oath declares:—"I do believe that in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper there is not any transubstantiation; and that the invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other saint, and the sacrifice of the Mass, as they are now used in the church of Rome, are superstitious and idolatrous."

The Romanists of Great Britain are complaining against this form of oath as being a reflection against their religious doctrines; and Protestants have so generally lost sight of the real meaning of the Mass that they are inclined to agree with the Romanists that the oath has become obsolete and might properly be changed. Their forefathers evidently knew much more about the real meaning of the Papal doctrine respecting the Mass, that it is blasphemous and sacrilegious, and particularly emphasized in the Scriptures as "the desolating abomination." (Dan. 11:31; 12:11) The Scriptural proposition is that our Lord's sacrifice was once for all, and that Christ dieth no more, death hath no dominion over him (Rom. 6:9), and the Apostle in our lesson shows that there could be no need of a further atonement sacrifice than that which God has already provided. It is able to make perfect and that "unto the uttermost" those who would approach to God.

Perhaps no statement of the Scripture is more thoroughly misunderstood than the 27th verse of this lesson, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." It is unreasonable to suppose that the Apostle has suddenly dropped the topic of his discourse respecting Christ as the antitypical High Priest, in contrast with earthly priests, and to suppose that here he refers to mankind in general, out of all relationship to his subject. Indeed, as respects mankind in general, the verse would not be true; it is not true that God appointed man to die and after that a judgment. On the contrary, Adam, the one perfect man, was appointed to life, and it was while thus appointed to life that he had his judgment or trial; and it was his failure in that trial which brought the sentence, death. Death is the penalty, and must follow the judgment, not precede it. True, the Scriptures teach us that there is to be another judgment or trial for all mankind (and that with some, believers, this trial has already begun), but it is not because matters were so "appointed," but because Christ has redeemed us from the original sentence of death, paying it once for all. And in the *new* trial or judgment, thus secured, the same principle as in Adam's case will hold true again;—the redeemed are appointed to life if they will obey the great Law-giver—they are not "appointed" to die, and none will die except as wilful sinners in the second death. The world of mankind, as a result of the redemption, will be awakened from the tomb, that they may have their judgment or trial (John 5:28,29),—such a judgment or trial must precede the second death sentence in any event.

What the Apostle does mean by this statement may perhaps be more clearly shown by a paraphrase, as follows: We have just seen how the Jewish priests, and their service in the earthly holy places, typified Christ Jesus and his service in the heavenly holies,—now notice that, "As it is appointed unto men [priests] once to die [typically, as represented in the animals which they slew, as their representatives] and after this the judgment [passing in beyond the second vail into the presence of the Shekinah glory, to offer the blood of sacrifice and to receive divine judgment in the matter"] it implied that if everything had been properly done by the priest he would live, and be *judged* worthy to be the priest for the people, and to go forth again as the bearer of divine favor,—to bless them, forgiving their iniquities and releasing them from all condemnation thereunder,—but if anything on his part had been improperly done, in a manner unacceptable to the Lord, his *judgment* would have been unfavorable; he would have perished, died, in passing under the second vail; for this was the law on the subject—Lev. 16:2.

This interpretation not only connects with the preceding verse, but also with the succeeding one, for the Apostle says, "*So* [in like manner] Christ was once offered [died] to bear the sins of many [and we have evidence, in the giving of the holy Spirit at Pentecost, that his sacrifice was acceptable to the Lord, and that he liveth, and that divine *judgment* has been rendered, accepting his sacrifice, and therefore favorable to us, for whom the sacrifice was made] and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin [not as a sin offering, nor as a sacrificing priest, but in the glory and majesty of his exalted office symbolized by the robes of glory and beauty, worn by the Aaronic high priests] unto salvation [to accomplish for mankind the deliverance from sin, death and all the concomitants of death, sickness, pain, sorrow]."

Meantime, throughout the Gospel age, the Lord's people by the eye of faith beheld the great High Priest as their Advocate, "who ever liveth to make intercession for *us*," while he awaited the Father's time for his coming forth a second time to make good his exceeding great and precious spiritual promises and blessings upon his church, and to grant the promised restitution blessings to the world, foretold "by all the holy prophets since the world began."

But in advance of the actual blessings, by faith, all who are his brethren, his disciples, walking in his footsteps, seeking to fulfil their sacrifice as he fulfilled his, and under his assistance and direction, may realize that they are not aliens and strangers and foreigners from God, but that they are accepted with the Father—not directly but indirectly, "accepted in the Beloved," who is our Intercessor, our Advocate, and in whom alone we have a standing before the Father and may ask or expect any favors.—Eph. 1:6; Rom. 5:1,2.

PAUL'S HEAVENLY VISION

Acts 22:6-16.—June 9.

"I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."—Acts 26:19.

While waiting at Jerusalem for the Pentecostal blessing promised, the eleven apostles overlooked the fact that they were not to begin their work, nor to consider that they had the proper endowment of wisdom or authority from on high for any part of it, until they should receive the promised blessing. Their selection of Matthias to fill the place of Judas, as the twelfth apostle was, therefore, a blunder; for altho they cast lots, to give the Lord a choice, and the lot fell on one of the two they had decided upon, they were in this doing something beyond their authority. The Lord had his own choice for the one who would take the place of Judas, and this one already had been undergoing special training and discipline "from his mother's womb."—Gal. 1:15; Acts 9:15; Rom. 1:1; 11:13; 1 Cor. 1:1; 9:1.

The name of the Lord's choice for the twelfth apostle was, in the Hebrew language, Saul, and in the Greek, Paul. Under divine supervision, and with a view to his future work, without, however, interfering with his will, the Lord had carefully guided, in respect to the birthplace, opportunities, education, etc., of this one whom he foresaw to be his chosen vessel to bear his message to the Gentiles. He was well-born, well educated, inheriting the valuable right of a Roman citizen; was of a very religious cast of mind, a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee.

Paul, like others of his countrymen, was zealous for the Law, and for the promises made to Israel. He was not a wicked man in any sense of the word, but, on the contrary, was moral, upright, religious, having a religious zeal which led him to persecute Christ and his followers as heretics against the Mosaic institutions. He himself tells us that he persecuted the church "in all good conscience," and yet he freely admits that in his language respecting Christians he blasphemed the holy name, and was an injurer of the saints and a persecutor. In his religious zeal, he tells us he was "exceeding mad against" the Christians, and "delivered into prisons both men and women."—Acts 22:4; 26:11; 1 Tim. 1:13; Phil 3:5, 6.

It was because Paul of Tarsus was not a bad man, but a good man, laboring under blindness and misapprehension, "an Israelite indeed," fighting the truth ignorantly, that our Lord favored him in the miraculous manner related in this lesson. Indeed, we may suppose that the Lord in some manner favored all "Israelites indeed," as we note, for instance, that he favored Nathanael, who at first was skeptical respecting his Messiahship, but was granted convincing evidence because of his sincerity. Similarly we may suppose that some of those who were converted by the miraculous manifestations of the day of Pentecost and shortly afterward (numbering thousands), may have been amongst the very ones who, but a few days previously, had thought of and perhaps had spoken of Jesus as an impostor, and his disciples as shallow-minded dupes. The Lord had mercy upon Nathanael, and assisted him in one way, while he assisted others, at Pentecost, in another way, through manifestation of the Spirit; and now in a still different manner he arrested the attention of Saul, convincing him speedily that he was doing the very opposite thing from what he intended to do.

The heart of Paul being in a right attitude,—of loyalty toward God, of zeal for God, he merely needed to be set right; and we see that immediately the same zeal and fervency of spirit which once persecuted the church was enlisted on behalf of the church;—that he gladly forsook all to follow Christ, as soon as he recognized his true character. These things being true, those who refer to the Apostle Paul's "*conversion*," and who compare it to the conversion of an ordinary evil-doer, show that they are laboring under a serious misapprehension of the facts. Had Saul of Tarsus been a wicked man we could not suppose that the Lord would have been interested in him in any such manner, nor that any such miraculous means would have been used to bring his attention to his wrong course of action.

God's time for dealing with the unbelieving world is not in this age—that work is left for the Millennial age. He is dealing now only with those who are "Israelites indeed," honest at heart; and it is for this class, and this class only, that the Lord's providence and drawing and convincing power is exercised. In other words, God never proposes to change a man's *will*, but where his will is right and his ideas, his conceptions of proprieties, are wrong, it is in accord with every principle of righteousness for the Lord to favor such, and to open the eyes of their understanding: and this same rule holds good now, as the Prophet has declared: "None of the wicked shall understand—but the wise shall understand"—the truly wise. If any of the wicked gain a partial knowledge of the truth we may be sure that they will lose it, for, as the Scriptures again declare, "Light is sown for the righteous: truth for the upright in heart." (Psa. 97:11) God has abundant provisions for dealing with other classes in the future, "in due time"—such as will be best suited to their cases.

Our lesson shows us Saul on his way to Damascus, armed with authority for the apprehension of the Lord's followers, accompanied by others who seemingly were under his command as a police force. All who know anything respecting the exceeding clearness and brightness of the noonday sun in Palestine, glaringly brilliant, will note the force of the statement respecting the great light which suddenly shone upon Saul from heaven about noonday. It must have been an exceedingly bright light; but apparently it affected Saul alone, and not those that were with him, tho they saw it and noted its effect upon Paul, who was blinded by it, as he fell to the ground. If he were afoot this might mean that he immediately prostrated himself, as one would be said to fall down before a king; if he were on horseback it might mean that he dismounted and prostrated himself;—but we do not incline to the thought which seems to be the common one, that he fell from his horse as in a faint. Rather, instead of being stunned or in a faint condition, Saul seems to have been fully possessed of his senses, and to have realized that he was the subject of a miracle. The voice which he heard was one, not of approval, as he might have expected, since he was supposedly in the divine service, but one of reproof: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Paul's clearness of mind is manifest in his inquiry, "Who art thou, Lord?" He recognized at once that the one who had thus power to arrest him in his journey was a lordly one, a powerful one, yet he wished to make no mistake, he wished to know who it was who thus reproved him, that he might benefit the more. The answer must have been a surprise to him, almost a shock. "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest."

Our Lord's answer shows us how intimately he stands related with all those who are truly his; those who touch his saints touch him, for are they not, as the Apostle declares, "members in particular of the body of Christ?" He is indeed, "the Head of the church, which is his body," and the ascended Head feels for and cares for and is interested in even the weakest and humblest of those whom he recognizes as truly his. If we remember this it will be a great help to us in the midst of trials and persecutions—the thought that we are "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ," that "as he was, so are we in this world," and that while we are in the flesh, Christ is in the flesh, and that this will continue until the last members, even the feet members of the body, shall have suffered and have entered into glory. Let us remember this also, and specially, if at any time we are tempted to deal harshly or speak rudely or think unkindly of any of the "brethren." Let us consider that as we, with all our weaknesses and unwilling imperfections, are the Lord's members and subjects of his interest and care, so also are all of the brethren; and that inasmuch as we do, or do not do, to one of the least of his brethren, we do, or do not do, to him. If this thought of the intimate relationship between the Head and the members could be always fresh before our minds, how favorable would be the influence; how often we would improve the opportunity, not only of suffering, as the body of Christ, but of suffering with the fellow members, and assisting in bearing their burdens. "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:16; Heb. 2:11; Col. 1:24.

We are told that Paul's companions also saw the light, but heard not the voice. Elsewhere it is stated that they heard the voice, but saw no man. The statements are not to be supposed to be contradictory, but can be understood to be harmonious by remembering that the expression "hearing the voice" is sometimes used in two different ways. We may say to a friend, "I did not hear what you said." And again, speaking of the same matter, we might say, "I heard a voice or sound, but did not distinguish the words." The two statements might seem to be contradictory, but are really quite in harmony; and so with these two records of the Apostle's words. The voice was heard by all, but the message by Saul only.

Paul was an intensely practical man, and as soon as he understood who it was that had thus arrested him in his course of error he immediately inquired, "Lord, what shall I do?" This meant a great deal; it meant: I am anxious now to undo what I have been heretofore mistakenly doing; I am anxious to be your servant; I appeal to you for orders; I am ready to obey. "He, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6) This, the language and the attitude of all sincere souls, meant full surrender. It meant, I am not more sincere now than I was a moment ago, but the eyes of my understanding have been opened, tho it has cost me the loss of my natural sight. Let me demonstrate, O Lord, that my crime against thee was not of heart, but merely of misapprehension of head; let me lay down my life in thy service.

And similar seems to be the attitude of the Lord's true people today; those who have been blinded for years with misconceptions of the divine character and plan, and who have blasphemed God's holy name ignorantly, in misrepresenting him and his plan; and who have persecuted Jesus by opposing his truth, and those supporting it—these, when now the eyes of their understanding are opened, feel as did Saul, that the remainder of life is only too little and too short to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light;—of him who had mercy upon us, and who graciously shined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord. (2 Cor. 4:4) Those who do not feel their hearts burn, and who feel no desire to pledge themselves to the service of the Lord and his truth, have not the spirit of the Apostle, have not the spirit which is best pleasing to the Lord and most esteemed amongst those who have the mind of the Lord. And if we have this spirit or disposition in any measure let us cultivate it, by thinking what great things the Lord has done for us, and by considering how little we are able to do in return to manifest the appreciation which we feel and ought to feel.

The Lord's answer, sending Paul to Damascus, and informing him that "there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do," shows us that Paul was in the divine mind and plan beforehand. The Lord knew that he was honest, and one who, when the truth would shine into his heart, would not be disobedient to the heavenly vision, but would be prompt to consecrate his life, his all, in the servicee of the Lord and of the brethren. Verily, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." The same thought is brought to us in noting the Lord's answer to Ananias, when the latter was fearful to go to Saul. The Lord said, "Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Such language could not be used by the Lord in connection with one whose heart was not already fully consecrated to the divine will and service, however ignorantly it had been misused. So today we may have more hope of some who are outspoken in their opposition and enmity to the truth and its servants than for some who are its very cold and indifferent friends. The former may be truly consecrated, but blind, and if so the Lord's due time will come for their mental eyes to be open, and then we may be sure that they will be amongst his most faithful followers.

The wonderful light which flashed upon his eyes destroyed his sight. "Saul arose from the earth, and when his eyes were open he saw no man, but they led him by the hand into Damascus, and he was three days without sight, neither did he eat or drink." We may be sure, however, that during those three days he did a great amount of thinking,—endeavoring to grasp, so far as possible, the lessons of his wonderful experience. He tells us that he realized his experience to be nothing else than his seeing of Jesus. We need not suppose that he saw our Lord's spiritual body in its wonderful glory, for we are to remember the Scriptural statement that our Lord now is the express image of the Father's person; and we remember, too, that it is declared that no man can see God and live; that he dwells in a light no man can approach unto. And since our Lord Jesus is his express image and likeness, the same thing must now be true of him. Saul was but a man, and could not, therefore, have seen that which no man could see, and live. What, then, did he see? We answer that he saw a representation of Jesus' glory. Since he could not see the fulness of that glory and live, he was permitted only to see a part of it, and that part destroyed his eyesight. This demonstrates to us the truth of the statement that the divine glory, if fully revealed to man, would cause death. Nevertheless, such an appearance of the Lord's glory to Paul made him as really a witness of Jesus' resurrection as were the other eleven apostles, for neither did they see Jesus, in reality, in his glorious spirit person; they saw him as he appeared in bodies of flesh, assumed for the very purpose of appearing and instructing; Paul saw him partially; that is to say, he saw some of the light from his glorious presence, sufficient to give him absolute assurance that Jesus was no longer, as he had supposed, the dead Nazarene, but the resurrected, glorified, heavenly Lord, a quickening Spirit.

Let us note how the Lord chose a devout man amongst the disciples, when he would send a message to Paul, the record being that Ananias was esteemed amongst the Jews as a good man; and so we should always expect that those whom the Lord would choose as his special messengers would be good men, devout men, pious men,—not frivolous, not worldly, not immoral. And should we ever find any, claiming to be the ministers of the truth, of immoral character, we would have good reason to doubt them; or to suppose that if the Lord even had used them once, he would no longer use such after they had departed from the ways of righteousness. Nevertheless, we are to remember that we must not judge any hastily upon the testimony of the worldly, and especially not according to the witness of enemies of the truth, however religious those enemies may claim to be, but should remember our Lord's word, "They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake."

Altho the Lord, at the hands of Ananias, performed a miracle on the eyes of Saul, so that scales fell from them, and he was able to look upon Ananias, nevertheless, we have every reason to believe that his eyes were never restored to their former strength, and that it was for this reason that the Christian brethren would have gladly plucked out their own eyes for him (Gal. 4:15); for this reason, also, that, altho a learned man, he wrote very few of his own epistles, and was largely dependent upon his companions, tho himself invariably the chief speaker and writer. This was the "thorn in the flesh," which the Lord was not pleased to remove entirely, and which the Apostle learned to rejoice in ultimately, when he came to know that through this God's mercy and grace would abound toward him the more.—Gal. 6:11; 2 Cor. 12:7-9.

And so with us: we might be inclined to think that if we had greater talents and abilities, or we were relieved of certain weaknesses of the flesh, it would be better for us and for the Lord's cause; yet we are to remember the Master's words again, that we are to "seek first the kingdom of heaven," and that all things needful of an earthly kind will be added to us. Our desires and prayers are not to be for the earthly things after which the Gentiles seek, but are to be chiefly for the spiritual things. We are to remember that as respects our earthly interests they have all been committed to the Lord, and that he knoweth what things we have need of before we ask him, and that he has promised to do for us in every matter exceeding abundantly better things than we could ask or think, as viewed from the standpoint of our spiritual and eternal interests. We surely would not want temporal blessings which would in any degree hinder our attainment to the exceeding great and precious promises—the spiritual things which God hath in reservation for them that love him.

Let us note carefully the message God sent to Paul through Ananias. "The God of our fathers hath *chosen thee*, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that just one, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth." Ah! how few indeed realize the truth of the Master's statement, "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me *draw him*." How few realize that God, during this present time, is not attempting to gather the world into his arms, but merely, as the Scriptures abundantly declare, is taking out from amongst the people a peculiar people, a little flock, to constitute the bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir. If all who have heard the voice of Jesus speaking to them through his Word, and who, with the eye of faith, have seen him, and into whose hearts the light of the glory of God, above the brightness of all earthly light, has shined, could but realize how great a favor has come upon them, it would indeed be a great stimulus to their appreciation of the privileges thus put within their grasp. They would see that all this signifies that we are called to be coworkers together with God, to be fellow-sufferers with Jesus in this Gospel age of sacrifice for righteousness' sake, and to be fellow-heirs with him in the coming age, in which the reign of righteousness shall prevail to the blessing of all the families of the earth, and the subjugation of Satan and sin.

This was the thought conveyed to Paul: that the meaning of the experience which had come to him was, that he had been found of such condition of heart as to be worthy to be a witness for God and for Jesus respecting the things he had seen and heard. And so with each of us; we are not to attempt to tell to others things which we have not seen and have not heard ourselves; but first of all the eye of appreciation and faith must be opened, and the ear of understanding unstopped, and then out of that which we ourselves hear from the Lord, through his appointed agencies and ministers, we are in turn to repeat to others—dispensing the divine favor according to our capacity for appreciation and for utterance.

The Lord's declaration to Ananias respecting Paul was, "He is a chosen vessel unto me. . . . I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:15, 16) Thus it is with all of the Lord's chosen ones, like the Captain of our salvation, Jesus, each and all must learn and prove their obedience and loyalty to the divine plan by suffering in this present time, that they may be thus fitted and prepared for the glory, honor and immortality of the kingdom. And to be chosen to suffer much implies qualification for the higher glory hereafter. Thus it was with our Lord and with the apostles: and thus it is written, for our encouragement, that the sufferings of this present time work out "for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17.

Let us also note and apply the words of Ananias, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." There is a directness in this address that is worthy of being copied by all who have an influence upon others, and who are seeking to bring them along in the right way. Urge them to promptness, to full and complete obedience, to a full confession of the Lord and the truth. If they are not inclined to promptly obey after their eyes of faith have seen the Lord, and after their ears have heard his voice, they will be much less likely to be ready to make a consecration after a while, when the world and the flesh and the devil will say to them, Do not be an extremist, now; be moderate; do not make a full consecration of yourself to the Lord. Your neighbors and friends will think you beside yourself, and it will interfere with your hopes and prospects, and turn your friends into enemies. It will cost you too much; go slowly. The right course for every one who would give instruction is that of Ananias, to favor prompt obedience. "The time past of our lives sufficeth us" to have misrepresented the Lord, his character and his plan *to any extent*. The remainder of life is far too short to show forth the praise of him whom we now see to be the glorious one, the author and finisher of our faith.

The baptism of John, which was instituted for Jews, was a baptism unto repentance and remission of sins—not original sin, but sins against the Jewish covenant, and since against Jesus, the Messiah who fulfilled that Covenant. This was John's baptism, the one that was appropriate to the Jews; for every Jew who was in harmony with his God and with his covenant had his original sin covered under the arrangement of the Mosaic Law, in the sacrifices which took place year by year continually, until the great sacrifice came, the antitypical one, which superseded all others. Every true Israelite, therefore, who was in Moses under the Jewish Law Covenant, by virtue of Christ's work in taking the place of Moses, and in substituting the New Covenant for the Law Covenant, was, so to speak, transferred from the Old to the New; from Moses into Christ; and the *typical* covering of original sin became *actual* in Christ. Therefore the Jews were everywhere called upon to repent and to be baptized for *the remission of their sins against their covenant*; that thus they might be in full accord with the Lord. This baptism for the remission of sins, John's baptism, was for the Jews only, and not for the Gentiles, who were not under the Mosaic covenant nor in Moses (baptized into Moses—1 Cor. 10:2), and hence in the transfer of the Mosaic institution into the Christian we were not transferred into Christ. Baptism to the Gentiles means an admission into Christ—into the body or church of Christ, as the Apostle explains.—Rom. 6:3-5.

Noting that the Apostle Paul was so faithful a follower of the Lord Jesus, and that his enlightenment in many respects so clearly illustrates our own spiritual enlightenment in this harvest-time, let us lay well to heart the Golden Text, the Apostle's words, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Let us, dear brethren and sisters, who have seen in the light of this harvest-time the light of the Lord's presence (*parousia*), shining above the brightness of all earthly light, giving a light of the knowledge of the glory of God, showing us something of the divine character and plan—let us not be disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but faithful to our privileges and opportunities in letting the light that has shined into our hearts and minds so shine out to others in our words, and in the living epistles of our lives, that men may glorify our Father which is in heaven.

God's Word is a harp which has long been unstrung,
And men heard but discordant its note;
Now as tuned are its chords from Moses to John,
How grandly sweet melody floats.

It will float o'er the world in a rapturous strain,
Of glory and peace and good will,
And all then shall hear and may join the refrain,
And joy shall the hearts of all thrill.

JESUS REVEALED TO JOHN IN VISION

REV. 1:9-20.—JUNE 16.

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever."—Heb. 13:8.

Visions are not realities, tho they symbolically represent them. This is true, whether the vision come, as Daniel describes his, as "visions of my head upon my bed," or whether they come in broad daylight, as with the transfiguration scene, which our Lord declared was a vision. (Matt. 17:9) The visions granted to John, recorded in the Book of Revelation, are in no sense and in no part to be understood as realities, and this is the significance of John's statement in our lesson, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day"—in a trance.

Altho the words, "on the Lord's day," might not unreasonably be understood to signify that John in vision was carried down the stream of time to the great Millennial day, the day of Christ, the Lord's day, nevertheless, we think it reasonable to understand him to mean also that he saw this vision on the first day of the week. And how appropriate it was that our Lord who arose on the first day of the week, and who most frequently manifested his resurrection powers on that day, should on the same day reveal himself and certain great instructions to the church through John, honoring the same day of the week. It is no wonder, therefore, that Christian people from the very earliest times have held the first day of the week in special reverence as the symbol of the fulfilment of all our hopes, whereof God gave us assurance in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus on this day. Besides, to confine the meaning of the expression to the Millennial day exclusively, would be to ignore the fact that the larger proportion of John's vision related not to the Millennial day, but to the intervening time.

Note the simplicity of the Apostle's introduction to this most wonderful book. He did not write the title of the book as it appears in our Bibles—"The Revelation of St. John the Divine"—that is to say, the Revelation of St. John, Doctor of Divinity, Doctor of Theology. On the contrary, John claims no credit for the revelation; it was not *his*, but, as he distinctly explains, it was from our Lord Jesus Christ,—and to him from God the Father. Nor was it even to John in any special sense, but, as he again declares, unto God's "servants" sent by his "servant John." This simplicity, common to all the apostles, commends them to us as men of humble minds —the very kind we should expect our Lord to use as special servants and messengers to his people. The apostolic simplicity is in striking contrast with the pomposity of the majority of those who claim to be their pupils and fellow servants, and who delight in the titles of "Reverend," "Right Reverend," "Very Reverend," "His Holiness," "Doctor of Divinity," etc. And in proportion as the spirit of the world is quenched by the Spirit of Christ—and in proportion as the Lord's people are zealous in seeking and finding "the old paths" (Jer. 6:16), in that same proportion do these human titles which seem so much to the world and to Babylon come to appear vain, inappropriate, deceitful.

Instead of adding loud and boastful titles to his name, as Reverend, Bishop, Overseer of all the Churches in Asia Minor, we find John introducing himself as "Your Brother," as the companion of all saints in tribulation and in the kingdom, and in the patient endurance of Jesus Christ. He was sharer with Christ, as a member of his body in his afflictions, in his endurance, and prospectively a joint-heir in his kingdom, and in all this he was the brother of all fellow-disciples, sharers of the same sufferings, and prospectively of the same glory. It is generally understood that John had already been severely persecuted, and that at the time of this vision he was in banishment on the little island in the Mediterranean Sea called Patmos—a penal island where convicts were worked in the quarrying of marble, etc. Yet John himself, with remarkable modesty, passes over not only his previous service for the truth, which had brought him his persecution, but also lightly passes over the persecution itself, merely noting that he was in the island of Patmos because of his fidelity to the word of God and the testimony that Jesus was the Christ.

This simplicity, this absence of boastfulness so noticeable in the writings of all the apostles, commends them and their words to our attention, and marks them as being in the ministry not for the gratification of vanity, or seeking earthly rewards of any kind; but simply as the servants of God, who delighted to do his will, and to tell the good tidings, to the utter ignoring of themselves, excepting in so far as mention of themselves and their affairs might be necessary and helpful to the church. All of the Lord's followers do well to note this characteristic of the Master, and of those whom he specially chose to be his followers and our exemplars. In proportion as we attain to the Lord's spirit it will similarly manifest itself in our sentiments and in all our conduct.

John's attention was first attracted by the trumpet-like voice of Christ from behind him. The fact that the location is mentioned at all implies that it has a special symbolic meaning. It signifies that the beginning of this message was not in John's day, nor from some future time, but that the things to be revealed had already commenced, and were already to some extent in the past;—the voice from behind going clear back, as some of the features of the book show, to the time of our Lord's earthly ministry. The trumpet voice directed that its message should be written and sent to the seven churches named. Ancient MSS. omit the words, "saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, and," and also the words, "churches which are in Asia." There were seven churches in Asia Minor corresponding to those mentioned by name in this connection; but while this revelation may have been applicable to them in some manner or degree it was evidently in but a small measure. Those seven churches of Asia Minor we understand were chosen of the Lord as symbols representing seven different epochs in the history of the one true church of Christ, from Pentecost day until the gathering to the Lord of the last grain of wheat in the end of this Gospel harvest.

Turning to see the one who addressed him John beheld seven golden candlesticks (lamp-stands), and standing in the midst of these one having the resemblance to *a* son of man—not *the* Son of man. It is to this particular point that the Committee which selected this as the International Lesson for this date sought to draw attention—the revelation of Jesus to John, it to some extent resembling his revelation to Paul, considered in our last lesson. In truth however, there is considerable difference, for what John saw in the way of light and stars and lamps and brightness was merely a mental vision, while that which Paul saw while on the way to Damascus was a very literal light, which permanently injured his eyes. What John saw in *vision* was not understood by him to be the Lord's glorious body, nor even a representation of it, except in the sense that it was a *symbolical* representation.

For instance, the head, with its white hair, corresponding to the Ancient of Days of Daniel's vision (Dan. 9:27), is not to teach us that our Lord in glory has the form of a man, and hairs that are white, but merely suggestive and symbolic of venerableness, of knowledge, experience, wisdom. The fiery or electric glance of the eyes should similarly be understood symbolically to represent penetrating intelligence, and ability to see and to know everything pertaining to his people, his church. The mouth, from which proceeded the sharp two-edged sword is not to tell us that this is the appearance of our Lord in glory, but merely to symbolize to us that his words in his church are to be as the sword of the Spirit, which the Apostle declares to be sharper than any two-edged sword, discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart, dividing and classifying his people, and separating from his elect every impure thing and every unacceptable element. His voice, as the sound of many waters, might be understood to mean that the Lord could and did speak to his Church sometimes as the voice of musical rippling waters of the brook, and sometimes as the roaring of the sea; or the many waters might be understood as signifying peoples, nations and languages, as elsewhere explained in this book, and that thus our Lord, present with his church, would speak to her and through her by many tongues, in many languages,—the latter view seems to us the more reasonable.

The hand, in which were seven stars, is similarly to be understood as a symbolical part of the vision, representing the Lord's *power* in his church. The stars, as he explains (vs. 20; chap. 2:1, 8, 12, 18, etc), are the angels or messengers or special servants of the church in each epoch. The intimation is that the Lord would recognize in his church, in each of its seven stages or developments, one representative to whom he would specially address himself, and through whom he would specially instruct the church, and whom he would specially hold or keep as his instrument by his own power or hand. This would not necessarily mean that one individual of the church must be used of the Lord, even should he become unfit for the service, but would imply that one servant would be recognized in each epoch. If that servant for any cause or in any manner seemed to be an unsuitable one another might take his place, and be the star or messenger of the church of that epoch.

The whole body was covered, hidden from sight, with a robe, only the head, the hand and the feet being exposed to view, thus agreeing with the explanation given us by the

Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 12:12-31) in which he represents the whole church as being the body of Christ and members in particular, but pointing out that some of the members of the church may occupy the position of an eye or an ear or a tongue, and others the position of feet. Thus the Lord would be present with his people by his spirit dwelling in them, using different members of the body to accomplish for his body different services. The feet, described as like furnace-refined copper would represent those members of the body of Christ who serve, in the sense of carrying forward, financially and otherwise, the Lord's work. Copper is a symbol of humanity,* and this copper being furnace-refined would seem to say that those who belong to the body of Christ, and whom the Lord would use in his service, "the feet" members of the body, must, in their contact and dealings with the world, be refined, purified, clean—"Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord's house." The feet would thus represent the living members of the body, all down through this age; and the refining process to each and all will be fiery trials.

Thus understood, the figure of a son of man (a human figure) in the midst of the seven candlesticks, etc., symbolically represented Christ standing criticising, judging, directing, in the midst of his church, upholding his chosen stars or ministers, and represented in the various members by his people, is an impressive picture or symbol, full of instruction, leading us to expect the Lord's guidance in all the affairs of his church, and to realize that things are not happening to her haphazard. To so recognize that the Lord's people in every part of this age have been "feet" members of the body, carrying forward his work, is not to contradict our previous application of Isa. 52:7, which merely represents the "feet" members of the present time, and identifies them as the ones who declare unto Zion, "Thy God *reigneth*"—in this manner distinguishing these from their predecessors in the pilgrim way.

Seven, as a symbolic number, represents perfection or completeness, and thus the seven candlesticks, the seven churches, represent the complete church, and this union of seven as one was most beautifully typified in the golden candlestick (lamp-stand) of the "most holy" of the Tabernacle and subsequently of the Temple. That candlestick or lampstand was one, but there were seven branches or lights; while in this symbolical picture of the church in Revelation each is represented separately, and our Lord's messages are directed to the seven churches of the seven epochs separately; nevertheless, in reality the church is all one. (1 Cor. 12:12) The union and the separateness are merely as we view the matter from two different standpoints. It is the one high priest who cares for all the lamps, and the one holy oil that in every stage of the church has given light to all of the consecrated class, the "royal priesthood," who have access to the "holy place" and are seated with Christ in heavenly places (conditions).—Eph. 2:6.

It is not strange that John in vision fell down as dead at this glorious symbolical representation of Christ. John may be considered as a representative of the Lord's consecrated ones, who in his presence feel their own deadness. Upon all such he places his hand (his power), and to them gives his message, "Fear not, I am the first and last, I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore, and have the keys of hell and of death."—Vss. 17, 18.

Not all, but only those who fall as dead before the Lord, who recognize their own nothingness, who, in the language of this symbolical book, are beheaded, or lose their own wills, accepting the will of the Lord instead (Rev. 20:4)—these alone are ever able to fully receive this message from the Lord appreciatively. From these *fear* is cast out; and they alone may know that our Lord was the first-born of all creation, and the last; that he was the beginning of Jehovah's work, and the end of it, and that all beings and things were made by or through him, and that "without him was not one thing made that was made." (John 1:3) These also may know, fully appreciate, understand, that the Lord now liveth, and in order to appreciate this they must understand that he was dead for parts of three days—not merely apparently dead, but actually *dead*—his soul poured out unto death, made an offering for sin.—Isa. 53:10-12.

For these also is the wonderful message that this Redeemer, now glorified, has all power in respect to our race—the keys, the authority, the control, not only of *hades* (the great prison house of death), but also the power or control over death in its every degree; so that it is his privilege to raise up so many as will obey him out of the degradation and imperfection of this dying condition, up, up, up, to perfection of life, where death will have no power. These may know, also, that the time for the exercise of this power by the Redeemer is nigh at hand, and that the privilege of deliverance from the tomb and from death into the full liberty of the sons of God, into abundance of life and freedom from the bondage of corruption, will be extended to every creature of Adam's race.

But to others this message is dark and meaningless or worse. Misled by error they believe that Jesus was not really dead, but fully alive always; mistaught that death holds no one, but all are alive in either bliss or torment, they see no force, beauty of significance in the key and its power; and thinking of hell (*hades*) as a torture chamber, filled with devils and their victims, they feel as tho the unlocking of its portals would be undesirable. Surely, all of the favored ones may say, "Blessed are our eyes for they see, and our ears for they hear!"

John was instructed to write, to make clear, to make plain to us and to all of God's people, the things already brought to his attention, and other things subsequently to be brought to his attention; to the intent that all of God's people might be enabled to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God, which passeth all understanding, and which can only be received through revelation from God. And here let us note the force of John's expression (vs. 3) to the effect that there is a blessing upon those who read this revelation, even tho they do not understand, and a special blessing upon those who hear and understand the words of this prophecy, and keep or conform their lives to the things that are written therein.

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* See *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices.*

DISCOURAGEMENTS AND ENCOURAGEMENTS

None are so strong as not to need encouragements in the present time, when all who would be of the "royal priesthood" are required to "walk by faith, and not by sight." We feel this frequently in the Watch Tower office, and know from your inquiries that all laborers in the vineyard are on the lookout for fruits of their labors. You as well as we sometimes wonder that the hundreds of tons of literature and other efforts on behalf of the truth, emanating from this office, do not yield larger results.

Recently, while feeling considerably discouraged that the "volunteer work" seemed to show small results, the Lord lifted the veil a little, and showed us that a greater work was in progress under the surface, than we could have surmised. And as this encouraged us, we now relate the same for the encouragement of our colaborers. First a Presbyterian minister called at our office and renewed his Watch Tower subscription and, expressing himself quite warmly in approval, said: Go on, Brother Russell, a greater work is being done than you can possibly be aware of; I know it, because the ministers express themselves freely to me. The truth is taking effect in every direction. Be of good courage.

This did encourage us, especially when we reflected that this very minister has never openly confessed the truth, so far as we know,—"for fear of the Jews." Shortly afterward, when at the Toledo Convention, a brother from Indiana encouraged us greatly by relating one of his experiences. He said, "I had finished distributing the 'Volunteer Tower' in my town and wondered that I saw no fruit of my labors, when one day a young man came to my bakery and asked if I had not distributed Watch Towers at the Methodist church, and if I could not let him have some more of them. I asked what for? He replied that at a recent meeting of their Epworth League their new pastor brought up the subject of hell, and made some remarks upon it, and then threw it open for discussion. Thereupon one after another, some five or six of the Leaguers, arose and disavowed their former belief in hell,—denying that the Bible taught it and giving reasons. The pastor arose in surprise, and inquired where they had gotten their ideas, and was told that they had read them in Zion's Watch Tower. Others who had not received them, then wanted copies of the Tower. Of course I supplied the young man gladly."

As a further encouragement for you all—as showing that the Dawns and tracts are doing silent work—we mention that every now and then we hear from some who have been reading the Dawn, and studying the Bible with their assistance for years, yet somehow had never before written to us for further reading matter, nor to glorify God on behalf of the light they had received and were rejoicing in. We give below a letter just received which has greatly encouraged us along these lines. It shows, also, how the truth can take hold of the heart, at as early an age as ten years. It should encourage those who have charge of children to teach them the truth. The child mind is more logical often at ten than later, when the sophistries of its elders confuse it, by teaching that *death* and *destruction* are synonymous with everlasting life in torment. Assist the children to a knowledge of the Lord and the truth, and encourage them to right views of life favorable to a full consecration to the Lord. The letter follows:

DEAR SIR:—I would begin with an apology if I were not sure you must be used to such letters by this time, and perhaps expect them from all deeply interested in the truth which you expound. I beg pardon beforehand if I am too tedious and diffuse. I will try to be as brief as possible. I was a very small child (10 years) when your publications were first introduced into our family, through the kindness of Mr. Henry Weber, of Oakland, who was then my brother's Sunday School teacher, and whose name I cannot mention without the sincerest gratitude.

I cannot say what drew my attention to your writings, they were never forced upon me in any way, but I have been an insatiable reader ever since I learned how, and when *Food for Thinking Christians* came in I devoured it with the avidity of a healthy, unspoiled appetite. I was then so little that I had never received any but the most general religious instruction. I do not remember to have read any doctrinal works or heard any doctrinal discussions, but since my earliest recollections I had been taught, and realized as by a natural instinct, that the first object in life is to be good and learn the will of God.

I would like to describe the impression your writings made upon me, but it would be egotistical waste of space, and perhaps seem overstrained, as I was so young. I only want you to know that from childhood I have been familiar with your interpretation of the Scriptures, and acknowledged it as truth. The TOWER has been a regular visitor to our home for so long that I think I have seen it in all its different dresses; and all the volumes of DAWN I have read and reread many times. Of course, as I grew older, I no longer accepted statements implicitly. I am naturally a student and I have thought and questioned and investigated deeply about these things, but always with the result of being more firmly convinced of the correctness of the views I criticised.

In my tenth summer I made a voluntary dedication of myself to the Lord. I think it was an intelligent offering, certainly I have never since wished to recall it. The one object of my life is to make my calling and election sure. The only thing that seems of real importance to me is my success in this. Yet I am often very perplexed to know what is required of me, just now. The practice of the Christian graces, the necessary transformation of my own character to the image of the Son, is clear enough. I can work at that daily, with some evidence of success; for tho I am continually shocked at the roots of sin and folly I find in myself, yet for a long time I have been accustomed to look at all things from God's standpoint, approve what I think he approves, and condemn where he condemns, both in private affairs and in matters of the world.

So far, then, as the discipline of my own "new nature" is concerned, the way is plain, tho toilsome; but when I begin to look about me and ask, What part can I take in the present harvest work? everything is confused and I seem tied hand and foot. I read in the TOWER of other workers, but none seem situated as I am.

In my own circle of relatives and friends I have tried to be a witness for the truth, tho I am afraid a very feeble one. Timidity is a fatal besetment to me, and the reluctance to seem to think myself wiser than my elders and betters.

One terribly severe trial I was enabled to undergo last spring. I withdrew from the denomination I had joined at fourteen. You may wonder why I ever did join it; but I was so young and ignorant, I thought only of acknowledging my Christianity, and really had no realization of binding myself to a particular sect. There is no word of the Confirmation service that I could wish to retract, but I was determined no longer to call myself an Episcopalian, so requested to have my name erased from the list of membership.

The pastor was most kind and considerate. He remonstrated, but being convinced that I was acting conscientiously agreed to do as I demanded, and announced the withdrawal at the next meeting of the congregation. I scarcely know how I went through with that ordeal. It seemed at first as impossible to make myself so conspicuous and shock so many of my family and friends. For, of course, almost every body misunderstood. Except from sisters I have no sympathy and am quite alone. I know there are people in town who take the TOWER, but I do not know them.

Perhaps something may come about to change things in this respect. Several times when you have been in our city I have seen and heard you, but I could not go forward and introduce myself. I do not expect any special answer to this letter. I do not know what particular advice you could give me. But I thought perhaps I had done wrong in remaining entirely unknown and aloof, and that I ought to have some personal communication with the one to whose ministrations I owe so much.

Yours gratefully and respectfully,

EDNA MARY HAMMOND,—*Maryland.*

BIBLE MARKINGS COMMENDED

Those interested in Bible Study appreciate everything which tends to give them a firmer hold upon the sword of the spirit, the Word of God. Such frequently wish that they could quickly find the particular passages desired; and many have been the devices for marginal marking designed to assist in this matter. We have a plan to suggest, as follows:—

USE RED INK for marking all passages which relate to the redemptive work, letting the figure 1 represent the thought of man's need of redemption, or of divine promises thereof. Use figure 2 to represent references to Christ's work in our redemption, as our sin-offering, etc. Use figure 3 to represent references to redemption as an accomplished fact—"ye were redeemed."

USE PURPLE INK for marking all passages relating to the church as the "royal priesthood." Let figure 1 represent present sacrifices and joys of faith in coming glory; let figure 2 represent parables and promises of the kingdom; figure 3, future glories and service in the kingdom.

USE BLUE INK for marking exhortations of the church to faithfulness, using figure 1 for references to *graces* of the spirit, and figure 2 for *zeal* in running the race set before us, figure 3 for reproofs and the "great company."

USE GREEN INK for representing Millennial blessings. Let figure 1 represent the second advent of the Great Restorer; let figure 2 represent Restitution promises, etc., and figure 3 the knowledge, judgments and instructions of the Millennium, and restraint of evil then.

USE BLACK INK for representing death: figure I for Adamic death, and figure 2 for second death.

The verse, or part of a verse, referred to may be indicated by a neat line, like a parenthesis, or a brace mark (⏟), in the appropriate color, followed by the proper figure. Follow, this if you please, with marks to indicate a treatise on this verse in any of the MILLENNIAL DAWN volumes, using A, B, C, D, E, F and G respectively, to indicate the seven volumes of the series (only five yet ready). Use T to represent *Tabernacle Shadows*, S for *What Say the Scriptures About Spiritism?* and H for *What Say the Scriptures About Hell?*—Following the letter indicating the volume, put the number of the page. References to ZION'S WATCH TOWER can be Z, using two figures to represent the year, then a separating stroke followed by the page number.

To illustrate:—

In the margin alongside Acts 3:20,21 we should place a brace line in green ink, then the figures 1, 2; under these we would put A 89, 149; under that B 173, 211, 254; under that put C 243, D 311, 615; next E 24, 240, 418, 435; on next line Z '97—266.

BIBLES WITH WIDE MARGINS

Realizing that such marking would require a wide margin, to do it satisfactorily, we have hesitated to mention it, knowing that wide-margin Bibles usually sell at from $4.50 upward at wholesale; because few are sold, and the expense of special editions, larger covers, etc., is considerable. However, we have secured prices that astonish us.

We can have these superb books made to order so as to supply them at the following prices to our *subscribers only*, so as not to conflict with the publisher's interests; but we are not restricted as to the number of copies you may buy.

French Seal binding, linen lined, silk sewed, full divinity circuit, red under gold edges, etc., $1.50, postage 30 cents.

Persian Levant (morocco) binding, leather lined, silk sewed, full divinity circuit, red under gold edges, etc., $2.50, postage 30 cents.

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ONE-DAY LOCAL CONVENTIONS ADDRESSED BY THE EDITOR OF THIS JOURNAL WE ANNOUNCE AS FOLLOWS:

Detroit, Mich.—May 26

New York City—June 9

Dayton, Ohio—June 23

Harrisburg, Pa—June 30

Reading, Pa.—July 14

PILGRIM VISITS OF BROTHER DRAPER

Scranton, Pa.	May 21, 22	Seneca Falls, N. Y.	June 3
Walton, N. Y.	“ 23, 24	Rochester, N. Y.	“ 4, 5
So. New Berlin, N. Y.	25, 26	Batavia, N. Y.	“ 6
Oneida, N. Y.	“ 27, 28	Buffalo, N. Y.	“ 7, 8, 9
Syracuse, N. Y.	“ 29, 30	Niagara Falls, N. Y.	“ 10, 11
Fulton, N. Y.	“ 31	Beamsville, Ont.	“ 12, 13
“ “	June 1, 2	Toronto, Ont.	June 14, 15, 16

PILGRIM VISITS OF BROTHER McPHAIL

Racine, Wis.	May 20, 21	Chili, Wis.	May 27, 28
Appleton, Wis.	“ 22, 23	Tomah, Wis.	“ 29 30
Steven's Point, Wis.	“ 24, 25	Lodi, Wis.	May 31, June 1
Pittsville, Wis.	“ 26	Chicago, Ill.	“ 2

PILGRIM VISITS OF BROTHER HAY

Fairbault, Minn.	May 19	Lincoln, Neb.	June 3, 4
Lake Mills, Iowa	“ 20, 21	Panama, Neb.	“ 5, 6
Rutland, Iowa	“ 22, 23	Geneva, Neb.	“ 7, 8, 9
Laurens, Iowa	“ 24, 25	Peru, Neb.	“ 10, 11
Sioux City, Iowa	“ 26, 27	Red Oak, Iowa	“ 12, 13
Dow City, Iowa	“ 28, 29	Atlantic, Iowa	“ 14, 15
Omaha, Neb.	“ 30, 31	Des Moines, Iowa	“ 16, 17
Council Bluffs, Ia.	June 1, 2	Indianola, Iowa	“ 18, 19

PILGRIM VISITS OF BROTHER HOWELL

San Antonio, Tex.	May 22, 26	Huntsville, Texas	June 4, 5
Yoakum, Texas	“ 27, 28	Madisonville, Texas	“ 7, 8, 9
Rosenburg, Texas	“ 29, 30	Snow, Texas	“ 10, 11
Galveston, Texas	“ 31 Ju. 1	Vanetia, Texas	“ 12, 13
Houston, Texas	June 2, 3	Marquez, Texas	“ 14, 15, 16

PILGRIM VISITS OF BROTHER SAMSON

McCoy Pa.	May 26, 27	Youngstown, O.	June 9, 10
Lewist a.	“ 28, 29	Cleveland, O.	“ 11, 12
Tyrone, Pa.	“ 30, 31	Tiffin, O.	“ 13, 14
Altoona, Pa.	June 1, 2	Toledo, O.	“ 15, 16
Coalport, Pa.	“ 3, 4	Bowling Green, O.	“ 17
Johnstown, Pa.	“ 5, 6	Fort Wayne, Ind.	“ 18, 19
Elton, Pa.	“ 7, 8	Upland, Ind.	“ 20, 21

PILGRIM VISITS OF BROTHER VAN AMBURGH

New Castle, Pa.	May 19	Beaver Falls, Pa.	June 9
Wheeling, W. Va.	“ 26	East Liverpool, O.	“ 16

PILGRIM VISITS OF BROTHER WILLIAMSON

Barrie, Ontario	May 26	Jefferson, Pa.	June 16
Allegheny, Pa.	June 9	Waynesburg, Pa.	“ 23

PILGRIM VISITS OF BROTHER KOETITZ

Avonmore, Pa.	May 19	Butler, Pa.	June 16
Brownsville, Pa.	June 2	Allegheny, Pa.	“ 23

PILGRIM VISITS OF BROTHER WRIGHT

Washington, Pa.	May 19	Neale, Pa.	June 2, 26
Allegheny, Pa.	“ 26	Tip Top, Pa.	“ 9

The above is a reproduction of the first "Pilgrim" page that ever appeared in the WATCH TOWER. Although the Pilgrim work was started, on a small scale, in 1890, the routes or appointments were never published in the TOWER prior to June, 1901; and continuously since that time the rear cover page of each issue has been reserved for that purpose. For lack of space these itineraries are omitted in these reprint volumes. As a matter of historical interest, however, we list below the names of the 140 Pilgrim brethren appearing in the WATCH TOWER between June, 1901, and June, 1919, according to the year in which their routes were first published:

1901

*Barton, B. H.
Draper, F.
*Harrison, J.
Hay, W. H.
Henninges, E. C.
*Howell, J. A.
*Koetitz, O. A.
McPhail, M. L.
Moffatt, J. H.
*Rogers, J.
*Samson, H.
Van Amburgh, W. E.
*Weber, H.
Williamson, A. E.
Wright, J. D.

1902

*Binkley, A. T.
*Glover, N. H.
Kuesthardt, S.
*Lewis, M. T.
*Ransom, Z. T.
Raymond, G. B.
Streeter, R. E.

1903

Arnold, S. J.
Currie, J.
*Owen, C. A.
*Sarvis, A. E.
*Williams, S., Sr.
Woodworth, C. J.

1904

Bundy, W. H.
Draper, Geo.
Fowler, C. E.
Henika, J.
Herr, M. L.
Johnson, P. S. L.
Rockwell, H. C.
*Stoner, A.
Williamson, F. W.

1905

Bohnet, J. A.
Burgess, A. E.
*Edgar, John
Guepner, H. A.
Hemery, J.
Hersee, W. M.

1906

Bundy, Edwin
Hall, F. A.
*Patten, J. N.
Sullivan, O. L.

1907

Brenneisen, E. W.
Hirsh, R. H.
Hoskins, I. F.
Mitchell, H. L.
Rutherford, J. F.

1908

Hoskins, H., Sr.
Kendall, C. R.
Macmillan, A. H.
*Parker, J. A.
Robison, F. H.
Senor, S. D.
Wise, C. A.

1909

Coward, E. J.
Kuehn, J. G.
Page, W. E.
Peterson, C. J.
Saphore, A. M.
Sexton, E. D.
Sturgeon, M.
Thomson, P. E.

1910

Adams, J. W.
Cole, J. H.
Ericson, C. A.
Williams, S. W., Jr.

1911

Cook, F. F.
*Hunt, G. M.
Ritchie, A. I.
Toole, D.
Zink, L. F.

1912

Barber, R. H.
MacPherson, J. P.
Stevens, W. S.
Taliaferro, E. P.
Wisdom, W. M.

1913

Batterson, W. M.
Emerson, J. F.
Gillespie, J. A.
Heard, C. E.
Hudgings, W. F.
Jolly, R. G.
Kendall, G. S.
Morton, S.
Robie, R. L.
Stephenson, J. F.
Thornton, T. H.
Toutjian, S. H.
Yates, T. P.

1914

Baker, W. A.
Lee, W. H.
Meggison, J. A.
Price, R. R.
Smith, A. L.
Thorn, W. J.

1915

Detwiler, F. C.
Martin, R. J.

1916

Barker, T. E.
Cooch, Jos.
Crist, E. F.
Graham, A. M.
Hadley, R. O.
Palmer, W. B.
Rice, B. M.
Riemer, M. E.

1917

Anderson, Scott
Bacuerlein, J. A.
Baker, E. J.
Baker, W. T.
Black, W. W.
Bowin, M. O.
Cohen, L. T.
Dockey, E. L.
Eshleman, A. D.
Eshleman, A. J.
Hazlett, H. E.
Hooper, W. T.
Horth, F. T.
Howlett, M. A.
Morheiser, D. J.
Myers, C. E.
Pickering, W. H.
Rice, V. C.
Riemer, H. H.
Young, Geo.

1918

*Addington, H. L.
Boyd, B. H.
Donald, A.
Lindsey, W. J.
Magnuson, O.
Nash, R. E.
Noll, I. P.
Spill, W. E.
Williams, J. B.
Zook, C. H.

1919

Hutchinson, J.

---

*Deceased.

Vol. XXII   ALLEGHENY, PA., JUNE 15, 1901   No. 12

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

PRESBYTERIAN CREED REVISION

The General Assembly of the Church of the Presbyterians, whose names are written on earth (compare Heb. 12:23), has again been forced to discuss its creed in response to the general clamor of its people, who want to be told whether or not they still believe it; or whether or not they may do just a little thinking for themselves.

When the Assembly convened in Philadelphia, Pa., its committee reported:—A majority favoring some sort of an amendment or revision, and a minority favoring no revision, no change. The Assembly sided with the majority, and the discussion pro and con showed considerable warmth at times.

Rev. D. S. Kennedy was the bravest of the brave in defending the creed which has so nauseated the tender-hearted, and so severely tried their faith's unreason. He repudiated the statement that "ministers of the Gospel and elders in the church do not believe the oath of ordination they have taken." He challenged any man on the floor to dispute his statement! And, strange (?) to say, not one of the Assembly was willing to sacrifice himself by admitting himself to be a violator of his conscience and of his oath of consecration;—by admitting that he neither believed the Westminster Confession, nor taught it.

Judge J. K. Ewing took the same stand against all revision, saying:—

"I protest against changing the Confession for the sake of popularity; for as the church goes up in popularity, it usually goes down in spirituality. When the church flirts with this idea it falls into a ditch. You will never convert the world by popularizing the doctrine of the church. The Confession in its present form is popular enough for me."

But the majority, without, perhaps, being more conscientious, were less brave. If their consciences could have a little relief they wanted it. It was at this time, after several days of discussion, that Rev. Moffat, D. D., brought order out of confusion, and a rainbow in the Assembly's clouds by some skillful word-strategy. He is reported to have said:—

"What is this whole matter about? Is it revision? There is no revision before this Assembly. I don't know what I am, a revisionist, or an anti-revisionist, for revision is not before us at all. This majority report only asks for more time and authority. Probably revision will be before us next year; if it is, then the speech Dr. Kennedy made this morning will be right in place. How do these men know that a new creed will be the outcome of the adoption of the majority report? I admire their imagination, but I do not admire their exegetical ability.

"I will guarantee that if there is any heresy in the report they bring in next year, the Assembly of 1902 will burn the whole document. This new creed proposed is to sustain the same relation to the Confession of Faith that the Shorter Catechism sustains to the Larger Catechism. The Westminster divines maintained that the Shorter Catechism was better suited to the wants of the common people than the larger one, then why be afraid to go on with this subject? The whole thing is under proper ecclesiastical supervision. The presbyteries asked for it. The last Assembly discussed it and appointed the committee and they have done their work well. I am sorry to see men belittle this work. One hundred and fifty presbyteries asked for some change. What would be your attitude if that number asked for the dismissal of the whole subject?

"I claim it is not wise for this Assembly to disregard the voice of the church in this matter, and we should hesitate long before we say to them, Be still. Preachers who come to the General Assembly ought to practice what they preach. I have sympathy with the common people, and they are demanding some changes. Theologians can get along with the creed as it is; but the common people cannot, and I only want our belief stated so they can understand it, and when it is thus stated, and not till then, will all denominations say: *'Why, they believe just what we do!'*

"The saddest declaration I have ever heard was: 'We simply cannot tell the world what we believe.' This is not true. Adopt the majority report and we will then get a statement of what we believe, and all the world will believe it.'

"Tremendous applause followed the address."

The dis-ease affecting Presbyterianism, the Assembly would have us think a *very peculiar one*. They wish their Christian neighbors and friends to think that the Westminster Confession of Faith, framed shortly after emergence from the superstitions of the "dark ages," is an *infallible* statement of the truth, and therefore unalterable, unchangeable. Neither their own nor other hands must shatter their idol. Neither will they admit that it has an ugly and a repulsive look, and if not broken up and burned should at least be veiled from public view. The resolution which now comforts and rejoices the Assembly and the large and intelligent, but blindly stubborn body of Presbyterians, is that their idol shall not be harmed, nor covered nor veiled;—it will be merely set back in the rear, so as not to be so conspicuous to outsiders and new beginners, and it will be represented at the front door by a more lovable-looking, a more angelic idol.

In other words, Doctor Moffat tells the world and the mass of Presbyterians and the vast majority of the Assembly, that the Westminster Confession is so "deep" that few but himself can really understand and interpret it. He assures them that what appears to them to be black is really the purest of white, and that men of sufficient ability to demonstrate this to the Christian *world*, have been put upon the committee which is to report such a modernized *explanation* of the Westminster Confession. No wonder there was applause at such a suggestion;—that the idol need not be destroyed nor even maimed. Moreover, it was not merely the idol that they cared for, but more especially themselves, the priests of that idol; for whatever would discredit it, would discredit them. If it were proven faulty, fallible, the same would be true of them; for had they not sworn themselves and each other to the reliability of this idol? And if they now were to admit error, falsehood, misrepresentation of the divine character and Word and plan, who would receive their testimony as infallible hereafter? Would there not be great danger that some of the best of the "sheep" would cease to follow traditions of men and seek instead the voice of the Good Shepherd Jesus and his leading into the green pastures and by the still waters of his Word?

Later Dr. Moffat put his thought into the following words which were adopted as a part of the Assembly's instructions to its committee, which has a year in which to fix up the substitute idol and see how lovely it can be made, and yet bear some faint traces of family likeness to its still-to-live parent, the Westminster Confession, to which it will bear the relationship of *representative*, but not of *substitute*. The resolution follows:—

"We recommend that this committee be instructed to prepare and submit to the next General Assembly for such disposition as may be judged to be wise, a brief statement of the reformed faith, in untechnical terms, the said statement to be prepared with a view to its being employed to give information and a better understanding of our doctrinal beliefs, and not with a view to its becoming a substitute or an alternative of our Confession of Faith."

FAMISHING FOR THE BREAD OF LIFE

Some who are awaking are crying out for *bread*—the bread of truth, instead of the stones of error offered by the various creeds. The Rev. T. Chalmers voiced the sentiments of an increasing number, when, not long since, he said:—

"We cannot resist the inevitable. The creed of Calvinism is like a coat which is becoming too small for the rapid growth of human thought. With every movement of the arms it will be sure to rip somewhere, unless we refrain from all vigorous exercise. We do not want any coat which binds us so tightly that we cannot act with freedom. It is folly to attempt to keep pace with the ripping of the coat by a little sewing here and there. It is too small, and no amount of sewing and patching will help it any. It may have a good deal of good material which may be kept and still used, but the system of Calvinism, as a system, has done its service for humanity. We don't want systems any more. We want liberty and truth and love and righteousness. We want more of Christ and less of creed. We want still to grow—to grow until we come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto the perfect man, unto the fulness of the measure of the stature of Christ."

RELIGIOUS FEDERATIONS AND TRUSTS

Long ago we pointed out that combination would be the order of the churches and the world for the new century;—that these will be the great giants of the end of this age, and make necessary the symbolic fire which will destroy present systems, corresponding to the giants, whose wisdom and super-ability and tyranny preceeded the literal destruction of the first order of things (*kosmos*) by a flood of literal waters. The financial giants of Christendom are growing rapidly—beyond the wildest dream of the world's financiers —in every part of Christendom. It must be near the time for the religious combines to begin. Indeed, the leaders in finance are closely related to, and in many instances the real manipulators of, the *nominal* church machinery. Money moves Christendom to a degree that the masses are not aware of. And who can doubt that the spirit of federation, or "confederacy" as the Scriptures designate it, is growing in all directions, and that financial successes will encourage religious combines. It is not long since the Disciple denomination passed the following resolution:—

"The national congress of the Disciples of Christ, lately held at Lexington, appointed a committee of seven to take charge of a movement in behalf of an international confederation of religious denominations. According to this scheme, the different religious bodies are to retain their own creeds, but will be auxiliary to an international congress and will affiliate with all other churches on a common platform. The ultimate aim is to create one international church. This movement is the first of its kind in America, and is in line with the widespread tendency to church federation and church unity, and with the rapidly growing spirit of internationalism in literature, social reform, and art."

Now the *Literary Digest* has the following to say under the caption:—

WILL BRITISH CONGREGATIONALISTS AND BAPTISTS UNITE?

"The movement toward church union and federation, evident of late in nearly every part of Christendom, has been particularly noticeable in Great Britain during the past year. Closely following the organic union of the Free and United Presbyterian churches of Scotland and the proposed union of all evangelical bodies in that kingdom, has come the first joint assembly of the Congregational and Baptist churches of England. Both these bodies are strongly Congregational in church polity and Calvinistic in theology; and there seems to be every reason to believe that their corporate union is only a question of a comparatively short time. Indeed, Mr. Alfred Dawson, English editor of *The Congregationalist*, speaks of that union as a consummation 'sure to take place.' The *rapprochment* which has been going on for a long period, this year culminated in two joint sessions of these bodies, which Mr. Dawson pronounces 'the most wonderful series of religious gatherings' he has ever attended. He writes (*The Congregationalist*, May 11):

" 'There were two joint assemblies: on Tuesday, April 23, when Dr. Parker presided and Dr. McLaren delivered his address as president of the Baptist Union; and on the following Thursday, when the positions were reversed, Dr. McLaren presiding and Dr. Parker delivering his address as chairman of the Congregational Union. The experiment was in every way a success; perfect harmony and the warmest fraternal feeling prevailed throughout, and not one single jar-note was struck.

" 'Reverting to the paramount question of Baptist and Congregational union, the committee of the latter body frankly remarked in their annual report: "Neither of the joint assemblies can meet without the idea occurring to many minds, that a permanent union of Baptists and Congregationalists should not be an impossible dream." Certainly many of the leaders and rank and file on both sides do not so regard it.' "

WHAT LEADING JEWS SAY ABOUT JESUS

The views of Jewish notables respecting Jesus have been secured, and here we give extracts from some of them:

Dr. Isadore Singer, editor of the *Jewish Encyclopœdia*, says:

"I regard Jesus of Nazareth as a Jew of the Jews, one whom all Jewish people are learning to love His teaching has been an immense service to the world in bringing Israel's God to the knowledge of hundreds of millions of mankind.

"The great change in Jewish thought concerning Jesus of Nazareth I can not better illustate than by this fact: When I was a boy, had my father, who was a very pious man, heard the name of Jesus uttered from the pulpit of our synagog, he and every other man in the congregation would have left the building, and the rabbi would have been dismissed at once. Now, it is not strange, in many synagogs, to hear sermons preached eulogistic of this Jesus, and nobody thinks of protesting—in fact, we are all glad to claim Jesus as one of our people."

Dr. Max Nordau, wrote,—

"Jesus is soul of our soul, as he is flesh of our flesh. Who, then, could think of excluding him from the people of Israel? St. Peter will remain the only Jew who said of the son of David, 'I know not the man.' If the Jews up to the present time have not publicly rendered homage to the sublime moral beauty of the figure of Jesus, it is because their tormentors have always persecuted, tortured, assassinated them in his name. The Jews have drawn their conclusions from the disciples as to the Master, which was a wrong, a wrong pardonable in the eternal victims of the implacable, cruel hatred of those who call themselves Christians. Every time that a Jew mounted to the sources and contemplated Christ alone, without his pretended faithful, he cried, with tenderness and admiration: 'Putting aside the Messianic mission, this man is ours. He honors our race and we claim him as we claim the Gospels—flowers of Jewish litarature, and only Jewish.' "

Prof. Emil G. Hirsch, of Chicago University:

"The Jews of every shade of religious belief do not regard Jesus in the light of Paul's theology. But the gospel Jesus, the Jesus who teaches so superbly the principles of Jewish ethics, is revered by all the liberal expounders of Judaism. His words are studied; the New Testament forms a part of Jewish literature. Among the great preceptors that have worded the truths of which Judaism is the historical guardian, none, in our estimation and esteem, takes precedence of the rabbi of Nazareth. To impute to us suspicious sentiments concerning him does us gross injustice. We know him to be among our greatest and purest."

Dr. Kaufman Kohler, a rabbi of New York City, says:

"He was a bold religious and social reformer, eager to regenerate Judaism. True, a large number of sayings were attributed to the dead master by his disciples which had been current in the schools. Still, the charm of true originality is felt in these utterances of his when the great realities of life, when the idea of Sabbath, the principle of purity, the value of a human soul, of woman, even of the abject sinner, are touched upon. None can read these parables and verdicts of the Nazarene and not be thrilled with the joy of a truth unspelled before. There is wonderful music in the voice which stays an angry crowd, saying, 'Let him that is without sin cast the first stone!'—that speaks the words, 'Be like children, and you are not far from the kingdom of God!'

"The Jew of today beholds in Jesus an inspiring ideal of matchless beauty. While he lacks the element of stern justice expressed so forcibly in the law and in the Old Testament characters, the firmness of self-assertion so necessary to the full development of manhood, all these social qualities which build up the home and society, industry and worldly progress, he is the unique exponent of the principle of redeeming love. His name as helper of the poor, as sympathizing friend of the fallen, as brother of every fellow sufferer, as lover of man and redeemer of woman, has become the inspiration, the symbol, and the watchword for the world's greatest achievements in the field of benevolence. While continuing the work of the synagog, the Christian church, with the larger means at her disposal created those institutions of charity and redeeming love that accomplished wondrous things. The very sign of the cross has lent a new meaning, a holier pathos to suffering, sickness and sin, so as to offer new practical solutions for the great problems of evil which fill the human heart with new joys of self-sacrificing love.

"All this modern Judaism gladly acknowledges, reclaiming Jesus as one of its greatest sons. But it denies that one single man, or one church, however broad, holds the key to many-sided truth. It waits for the time when all life's deepest mysteries will have been spelled and to the ideals of sage and saint that of the seeker of all that is good, beautiful and true, will have been joined; when Jew and Gentile, synagog and church, will merge into the church universal, into the great city of humanity whose name is 'God is there.' "

"THEY SHALL LOOK UPON ME WHOM THEY HAVE PIERCED AND THEY SHALL MOURN FOR HIM"—ZECH. 12:10

Quite evidently the way is preparing for the fulfilment of this Scripture in the near future. If a few of the Jewish "common people" are already "looking unto Jesus," despite the opposition of their leaders and the violent persecution, and generally disinheritance, sure to follow the acknowledgement of him, what may we not expect soon—when the changed sentiments of their leaders begin to be widely understood.

Let us not forget, however, that every such evidence of the return of divine favor to fleshly Israel—every evidence that their blindness begins to pass away—is an equally sure evidence and proof that the Gospel age is closing, and that its mission (the selection of spiritual Israel) is nearly accomplished, that the time in which we may make our calling and election sure is gradually closing.—Rom 11:25.

IN THE PARADISE OF GOD

Rev. 21:1-7, 22-27.—June 23.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God and he shall be my son."

Paradise, the garden of God, was applicable as a name to the garden of Eden, in which our first parents resided while they were still in harmony with God, before their disobedience; and the same term is Scripturally applied as a name to the new earth when restitution blessings shall, during our Lord's second presence (the Millennium), be brought to perfection as the fit abode of those who, under divine favor, shall then prove worthy of life everlasting. It was to this paradise that the Apostle Paul was in vision "caught away" when given a glimpse of various features of the divine plan, not then due to be understood by the church in general—"things not lawful to be uttered." (2 Cor. 12:4) John the Revelator was similarly caught away in vision, and shows some of these wonders of the paradise epoch; but only in symbols, which he was permitted to report, and which have been comparatively misapprehended until now, in the Lord's due time, the holy Spirit guiding his people into the truth on this subject, as well as others, because it is now nigh at hand, and "meat in due season" for the "household."

Our Lord refers to this paradise in language which identifies it with the first paradise of Eden, saying, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Rev. 2:7) It will be remembered that all the trees in Eden were trees of life, but that the one in the midst of the garden was then a forbidden tree, the disobedient eating of which brought death on Adam and his race. That tree in the midst of paradise was called the tree of knowledge, and our Lord's promise is that the overcomers of this present age shall have full liberty to partake of that tree of knowledge, and under most blessed and satisfactory conditions, when the knowledge will be of benefit to them under divine approval, and not bring a curse. It is this same paradise of the future on this earth that our Lord referred to when addressing the penitent thief, he said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee this day, Thou shalt be with me in paradise."

This paradise, we recall, is elsewhere referred to by the Apostles as "the third heaven"—"a new heavens and a new earth." (2 Cor. 12:2; 2 Pet. 3:13) They are not referring to new worlds, nor to heavens ranged one above another, as many have supposed, but, as already shown,* what is termed the first heavens and earth or order of things, passed away at the flood; and that the heavens and earth "which are now," the present order of things, are reserved of God to pass away with a great fire of trouble, revolution, etc., which shall utterly destroy them—the present spiritual powers and the present earthly or social arrangements. "Nevertheless, we according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This will be the third heavens, and third earth, or the new heavens, and new earth, which will differ from the present condition of things in that it will be righteous, whereas the present is unrighteous, imperfect. The "new heavens" will consist of the new spiritual ruling powers of the future, Christ and the glorified church, as the present heavens consist of the nominal religious systems, which, claiming Christ for their Head, in a very large degree bow to Antichrist, the god of this world, the prince of this world, "who now worketh in [through] the children of disobedience," and who is captivating and blinding the whole world with the exception of the few, the eyes of whose understanding have been opened, who are under special blessing and leading, and are taught of God,—the "little flock," "heirs of the kingdom."—Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4.

It is to this new heavens and new earth condition, this paradise, that our lesson introduces us. As the "new heavens" does not mean a new place of God's throne, and a new throne of God, but new conditions, and signify the spiritual power and control of Christ and his Church in glory, so the "new earth" does not mean another planet, but a new social order on this planet. The declaration is that the former heavens and former earth (which are now) will then have passed away and be no more. All present institutions are to utterly perish in the great time of trouble with which this age is very shortly to end. "And there shall be no more sea." As we have already seen, the sea is a symbol of the masses of people in a restless and unstable anarchistic condition, just as the land represents the social order, and as the mountains represent the kingdoms of the present time. As there is no reference to the physical earth and physical heavens being destroyed, so there is no reference to the physical sea being obliterated. The symbol signifies that under the new arrangement, under the control of the new heavens or spiritual powers, the reconstructed social order will be so satisfactory, so complete, so thorough, that there will be no more sea-class, no more restless people, no more dissatisfaction, no more anarchists; everything will be reduced to law and order; and law and order will under the new regime secure justice to every creature, obliterating the differences of wealth and power as they now exist.

THE NEW JERUSALEM

In the symbolism of Scripture a city represents a government; as for instance, symbolic Babylon is denominated "that great city [government] which ruleth over the kings of the earth." The New Jerusalem, as a symbol, represents the new spiritual government of the Millennial age. It is not earthborn, it is not reared by men, but, as here pictured, it descends from God out of heaven—it is spiritual in every sense of the word—of God and not of men. It is for this kingdom, this government. that our Lord taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come—thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." The declaration that the city is adorned as a bride for her husband implies its grandeur and beauty and perfection, as a bride's adornment on such an occasion is particular and elaborate to the last degree. But additionally to this it reminds us that in the government of the future, the judges of the world are the saints, now being selected through faithfulness in trial and tribulation, and that these are frequently called the bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir in the kingdom. The Revelator elsewhere strikingly bring this thought to our attention: the angel calls to him, "Come hither, and I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God."—Verses 9-11.

We are not to think of this holy city as being composed of literal stones, coming down through the air; we are to remember, on the contrary, that the saints of this present time are "living stones," as the Apostle Peter explains. (1 Pet. 2:4-7) This glorious city will not be visible to the natural eye—neither Christ nor the saints in glory can be seen of men; only those "changed" from human to spiritual nature see these matters in the full; but the whole world will be quickly made aware of the fact that a new government has been instituted,—a government of righteousness, and with all power, and that thereafter whosoever doeth righteousness shall be blessed, and whosoever doeth evil shall be punished.

THE GLORIFIED TEMPLE

The third verse of our lesson associates this city with the other figure of a symbolic Temple, which the Lord is now preparing, of which the saints will constitute the "living stones" and "pillars," for it is declared that the tabernacle (dwelling) of God shall be with men in this city (government or kingdom). God will dwell in this glorious city or government—it will be his Temple, and the world of mankind will approach God in it to receive the divine blessings, as Israel approached the typical Tabernacle and the Temple in their typical religious services. Thus God, represented in his church (the Christ, Head and body) will dwell with men (the world of mankind during the Millennial age) and they shall be his people,—all mankind will be treated from the standpoint of reconciliation, the propitiation price for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2) having been paid at Calvary, and the due time having then come for the manifestation of divine favor, all peoples shall be treated as the Lord's people; none of them shall be treated as aliens, strangers, foreigners from God and his promises and his blessings.

While the Millennial kingdom will be the kingdom of God's dear Son, it will also be the kingdom of God, because God's dear Son and his joint-heir, the church, will be in absolute accord with the Father, and all that shall be done under their control will fully and completely represent the divine will respecting men. Nevertheless, it will be a separate kingdom from that of the remainder of the universe, as the Apostle Paul indicates. (1 Cor. 15:24, 25, 28) "He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. . . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also be subject to him that did put all things under him. . . . . Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,"—at the close of the Millennial reign.

Since God is the Author of all the blessings of redemption and restitution, and since every good and every perfect gift cometh down from our Father in heaven, it is with appropriateness that the record declares that "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes"—from the eyes of mankind. Tho it will be Christ and the church who will be doing it, nevertheless, the heavenly Father will be recognized as the first cause, the fountain of every blessing. The wiping away of tears implies a gradual work, such as we see will be the process of that glorious time. Man will not be exempt from every weakness and trial and difficulty at the beginning, but if he will conform to the laws of the kingdom, all cause for distress will gradually pass away, as restitution blessings will lift him out of death into perfect life. "They that hear [obey] that prophet [teacher, the Christ, Head and body] shall live; but it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hear that prophet [not render hearty obedience to his requirements] will be cut off from amongst the people [in the second death]."—Acts 3:23.

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* Millennial Dawn, Vol. i, pp. 66–70, 318.

Other Scriptures show us that the work of the kingdom will begin with those who remain over at the time of its establishment, and that these, under condemnation of death, will at once be blessed with the knowledge and opportunities provided through the ransom, and if they accept these they will immediately be released from condemnation, that they may at once go on and upward on the way of holiness, toward perfection; and subsequently those who "sleep in the dust of the earth" shall come forth to more or less of shame and lasting contempt, as they begin to realize their mental and physical decrepitude, the results of their depravity. (Nevertheless, these also, under the blessings of the kingdom, may make progress up to perfection, losing their sin-blights, and simultaneously losing the "shame and contempt,"—whose lasting will be only so long as their cause continues. Thus these may progress in the way of righteousness, so that only those who sin wilfully shall die, and then each for his own sins only, and not the father for the son's sins, nor the son for the father's sins.—Jer. 31:20, 30; Dan. 12:2.

The whole work of the Millennial age is summed up in few words, and we are brought to its culmination in the declaration, "There shall be no more death; neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." What a glorious sun-burst of blessing is in these words! What a grand fulfilment will be there of the Apostle's declaration respecting "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began!" This declaration, however, applies to the very end of the Millennial age, and not in full to any previous time in that age, for other accounts show us unmistakably that there will be imperfections and chastisements and stripes throughout the age, while mankind is being *lifted up;* or as our Lord expressed it, the raising up of mankind throughout the Millennial age, step by step, will be a "resurrection by judgment." chastisements, disciplines. (John 5:28, 29) And even at the close of that age we are shown, in another pen-picture of that time, that there will be a severe trial and testing to demonstrate to what extent the enforced obedience of that age shall have rightly affected the hearts of those who experience its blessings, so that their love will be for righteousness, and that they will hate iniquity. (Rev. 20:7, 8) All who in that final test shall manifest that his heart contains anything aside from full loyalty to the Lord and the principles of righteousness will have his part in the second death.

"BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW"

The fifth verse of our lesson comprehensively grasps the entire Millennial age; our Lord Jesus, then in the throne of earth's dominion, declaring, "Behold, I make all things new." This expression does not relate merely to rocks and trees, etc., but to the great work which our Lord undertook; *viz.*, the regeneration of humanity—of so many of Adam's race as would, under favorable conditions of knowledge, experience and assistance, develop characters in full accord with the divine will. The end of the Millennial age will see the work completed;—all the wicked destroyed, all who will not hear the voice of that prophet, teacher, governor, cut off from amongst the people in the second death, and all the willing and obedient made new, brought to the complete perfection contemplated in the original divine plan.

John was to write this matter, because the testimony is true, is faithful, as is the one who has promised. This asseveration of faithfulness and truthfulness implies what we see to be the case; *viz.*, that present conditions seem so contrary to all this grand restitution outcome that it cannot be fully believed and trusted by any except those who have learned to walk with the Lord, and in their weakness to lean upon his might,—to trust to his power to accomplish all the exceeding great and precious things which he has promised. To all others these things will appear untrue, and God will appear unfaithful, and the matters which we are here discussing will seem "idle tales," as fables and golden fancies: but to us who believe these promises are precious, and he from whom we receive them is precious, correspondingly as we know him and trust him.—1 Pet. 2:7.

The one enthroned (the Christ) declares at the conclusion of the Millennial age, "It is done;" my great contract is accomplished; "I am the Alpha and the Omega [the A and the Z], the beginning and the end." It was the Father's good pleasure that the blessed One, the Only Begotten of the Father, should accomplish the entire program of redemption and restitution; and that incidentally, by his obedience in the things which he suffered that he should prove himself worthy to be forever the associate and representative of the Father, through whom and by whom all things should continue, as he was the one through whom all things were made that were made. It is this one who, during the Millennial age, will extend to all the willing and obedient the water of life, everlasting life—the privilege of perpetual existence. But they must thirst for it, must desire it; and this desire must be manifest in obedience to the terms, the laws, upon which it will be supplied freely. Our Lord declared to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life," and that anyone believing him, trusting him, tho he were dead, yet should he live,—attain to perfect life, escaping from death conditions, until at the close of the Millennium he shall have life in the full, unrestricted sense. And he who thus liveth (attains to life) and still believeth, trusteth in the Life-giver, and is obedient to his directions, *shall never die.*

Our Lord adds, "He that overcometh shall inherit *these* things, and I will be to him a God, and he shall be to me a son." Those addressed are not the bride class, selected during the Gospel age, but the sheep class of Matt. 25,—such of mankind as during the Millennial age become the Lord's sheep and obey his voice. To these at the end of the Millennial age, in harmony with the Father's plan, he says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." They are not invited to inherit the kingdom prepared for us, in joint-heirship with the Lord, the heavenly kingdom. But they shall inherit the earth, the purchased possession—they shall come back into all the good estate of father Adam, which he lost for himself and his children through disobedience, but which Jesus redeemed with his own precious blood, and will restore at the close of the Millennium to all the children of Adam who shall have accepted his gracious favors and been regenerated by him, and thus become his sons, and he their God—their "Father."—Isa. 9:6.

THE HEAVENLY CITY RESPLENDENT

Here our lesson turns to a consideration of the city, the glorified church, the kingdom class, who, during the Millennial age, will be "kings and priests unto God, and reign upon the earth," "a thousand years." (Rev. 5:10; 20:4) This city, class, the glorified church, it is declared will have no need of the sun or the moon. Nothing in this statement indicates that the world will not have and need both sunlight and moonlight during the Millennial age, and subsequently, "as long as the sun and moon endure." (Psa. 72:5) And while it will be true that the church, as spirit beings, will not have need of literal sunlight and literal moonlight, nevertheless, this is not the thought. The sun and the moon here are symbolical, as in Chapter 12:1; the sun signifies the light of this Gospel age; the moon signifies the typically reflected light of the Gospel in the law and the prophets of the previous dispensation. The glorified church will have no need of the light which in the present time she so much enjoys through the Word and Spirit, and the law and the prophets. She will have, instead of these, a much more excellent glory to which the Apostle refers when he says, "Now [with all the light, privileges and opportunities which we enjoy, both as respects the representations of God through the law and the prophets, and through the instructions and leadings of the Spirit in the present] we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part; then we shall know even as we are known."—1 Cor. 13:12.

The church, the temple of God, will be so filled with all the fulness of God, when made like unto the glorious Lord, that nothing could add to their blessing of knowledge and divine favor;—will be so filled with the glory of God that from her, as from the Sun of Righteousness, shall proceed the light of the glory of God, which shall heal and bless the world during the Millennial age. This is the Sun of Righteousness to which our Lord referred in Matt. 13:43, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father"—our Lord Jesus, the Head of the church, of course being included. The same Sun of Righteousness is mentioned by the Prophet, saying, "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams." (Mal. 4:2) Nevertheless, while so filled with the Lord's glory we are not to lose sight of the fact which the Apostle impresses upon us saying that Christ is the Head of the church, even as the Father is the Head of Christ Jesus. Hence the Lord Almighty and the Lamb will always be an inner Temple in this great Temple, which God has provided for the world's blessing during restitution times.—Verse 22.

When this Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth, its blessings of healing, refreshment and life, mental, moral and physical, upon the world of mankind, the nations shall walk in the light of it. (The words "of them that are saved" are not in old MSS. Indeed, it is because they are *not saved* that they need this special light during the Millennial age, in order to their enlightenment, their salvation, their restitution.) "And the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it." The words, "and honor" are not found in old MSS.) The expressions "nations" and "kings" are not to be understood as signifying that the world of mankind during the Millennial age will be divided into nationalities and kingdoms as at present: the word "nations" here signifies peoples, and is intended to show that all peoples, and not merely the people of Israel, will be thus favored under God's kingdom. The word "kings" represents those princes or chief ones of the earth who, during the Millennial age, will be the chief representatives of the heavenly, spiritual, invisible kingdom of Christ. These princes, as we have already seen, will be Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the faithful prophets of the previous dispensation, who, loving God before the call to the kingdom and to the bride class, cannot be of it, but because of their faithfulness will be the princes whom the Lord will establish in all the earth—first making them perfect individuals, and qualifying them for their office, as a reward for their faithfulness to God in the dark times in which they lived—their manifestation of love for righteousness and trust in the Omnipotent One.

The bringing of their glory into the city, the kingdom, signifies their acknowledgement of the heavenly kingdom, their rendering of tribute of praise, thanks, worship and obedience to it as God's agency. And this rendering of glory to the kingdom will continue throughout the entire Millennial age, as the princes throughout the earth will make known to the people that not in their own names or authority do they rule and execute judgment and establish righteousness, but in the name and as the ministers and representatives of the glorified Christ. The result will be that all the people will ascribe honor and praise and majesty and glory to the Lord's Anointed, through whom their redemption and restitution was and is being accomplished; and this is indicated in Verse 26.

Then, in consideration of the fact that this book of symbols, while relating to the future, is addressed to God's consecrated elect church in the present time, and in view of the fact that this message would be communicated to and more or less understood by those who would seek to make their calling and election sure to a part in the glorious city, the 27th verse is added, declaring that "In nowise shall there enter into it anything common, or he that doeth abomination and falsehood—but only they who are written in the Lamb's book of life." The Lamb's book of life we must understand to include those, and only those, who attain to position of joint-heirship with Christ, whose names are written in heaven during this age, and who are faithful to their covenant. What a glorious incentive we have here to faithfulness! What a warning against the slightest sympathy with anything unclean, untrue, or in anywise contrary to the divine standard of holiness! If we appreciate the glorious things of the divine provision for the church and for the world, these promises and offers will have their influence upon us, and under their influence we are expected to keep our garments unspotted from the world; to be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; to hate every contamination of the flesh upon our robe of righteousness; and to seek immediately in prayer for the removal of any spot or wrinkle or any such thing from our wedding garment,—that thus we may abide in the Lord's love, and in the due time be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

GOD THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS

Gen. 1:26; 2:3.—July 7.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."—Gen. 1:1.

Genesis, as a word, signifies creation, beginning,—the act, process or mode of producing or originating. The Bible points out Jehovah God as the great first cause of all things. It addresses its counsels and promises only to those who recognize their Creator with the eyes of their understanding, and declares that those who do not recognize this great first cause, God, are so degraded, have their intellects so perverted, that they are *non compos mentis*—fools. (Psa. 14:1) It further declares that God will not in the present age deal with any who are so depraved; but that "He that cometh unto God [acceptably] must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Heb 11:6.

Amongst those who acknowledge a Creator there has come to be a wide difference of opinion respecting his Word and his work. Some accept the Bible testimony as a divine revelation, relying upon it accordingly. Others, with a larger amount of self-confidence, deny that the Bible is God-inspired, go to the rocks and study them,—forming their conclusions in harmony with their findings. Both acknowledge God and that his power and wisdom are manifest in his creation, yet the latter, leaning more and more to their own understanding (Prov. 3:5), tend to question the personality of God, and seek, if possible, to prove that there are what they term "Laws of Nature" in operation now which have been in operation from time immemorial, and they query whether or not these laws must of necessity have had an author. They see life in its various manifestations, and admit intelligence, but claim that this intelligence was attained through a process of evolution,—attained without a Creator, as evolutions from inert matter. In other words, they have been seeking for some time to see whether or not in their theory a God is absolutely necessary, with a view to dropping him entirely from their theories, if possible.

However, the learned, worldly-wise, do not generally reach that "fool" condition, for the majority, admitting that while they could reason out all manner of changes as respects conditions, admit that they cannot produce a satisfactory theory of the origin of matter, nor of the origin of the first spark of life, nor of the origin of the first gleam of intelligence. Hence scientists as a class still admit that there must be some kind of a God, but the Scriptures assure us that, looking in the wrong direction, they fail to see the real God, fail to discern his real character and plan. "The world by wisdom knows not God."—1 Cor. 1:21.

While the leaders amongst natural men are searching for God and for truth in the rocks and in the sands, the children of God, begotten by his Spirit, are seeking the wisdom that cometh from above, and are finding and knowing him whom to know is life eternal. Yea, and more than this, the "spirit of a sound mind" which they receive, and the guidance of the holy Spirit, enable them to see "the deep things of God," in those things which were written aforetime for their admonition—in the holy writings which by divine arrangement have been gathered and cemented together, and which are known to us as the Bible—the Book of all books. In thus doubting their own wisdom and the ability of themselves and others to master the deep subject of creation and the divine will and plan associated with it, these whom the world counts unwise are really wise, in that they look to the Lord for their instruction respecting these things; they manifest a faith which is pleasing to him, and put themselves into a position of heart in which they may be "all taught of God," and thus know things which the natural man cannot know—thus seeing and appreciating things which "eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, neither hath entered into the hearts of [natural] men, ... but which God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter;
And he will make it plain."

We are not meaning to say that God has given great revelations respecting the earth and its creation; yet while admitting that the things that are revealed to God's people by his spirit pertain chiefly to the things that are to come, we hold, nevertheless, that in respect to the things that are past, the creation, etc., the Word of God is *sufficient*, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. —2 Tim. 3:17.

THE ADVERSARY'S OPPORTUNITY

The opportunities afforded by this lesson in various Sunday Schools and Bible classes of the civilized world are sure to be taken advantage of by many ministers, superintendents and teachers to introduce the unscriptural views which have for some time past been imbibing from various quarters, especially from the colleges and seminaries of Christendom, respecting what is known as the Evolution Theory of Creation. It is the taking theory—the theory which commends itself to the natural mind—the theory which will seem to best fit all the facts of history in the judgment of those who look at the question from the outside, not from the inside—from the natural standpoint and not from the standpoint of the spiritual new creature, instructed by the inner light of the "golden candlestick." However, we are to remember that the light which the priests enjoyed in the "holy places made with hands" represented the enlightenment of the holy Spirit; which is granted during this Gospel age, only to the consecrated "royal priesthood." And as this light in the "holy," could not be seen by those outside, we must not be surprised that the "natural man receiveth not the things [the light, the instruction] of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. 2:14.

For centuries natural men have looked to the teachings of the church, the Bible, for instruction; because in the "dark" time practically no other course of information was open to them. But now, in the dawn of the "morning," when light is becoming more general on every subject, the natural man is not only disposed to repudiate many of the teachings of priestcraft and superstition which he had received as truths, but additionally he is disposed to doubt that there is, and always has been, a truth-center to Christianity;—around which, we admit, there were heavy incrustations of error and darkness which have to a very large degree misrepresented the truth to the world in general.

We are now come to the time when the battle of books which has waged during the past half century amongst professors and school-men is reaching the masses of the people. The leaven of doubt as respects the whole Bible, and Genesis in particular, is gradually permeating the entire mass of Christendom; and its progress will be increasingly rapid because it is already accepted by the learned; and the ignorant who are now being approached will feel that they can safely follow, blindly, these blind guides who are preaching "another Gospel," of which the atoning sacrifice of Christ is not the centre.

WHAT SELF-STYLED "BIBLE EVOLUTIONISTS" CLAIM

We well know that many Christian people who have adopted the Evolution theory will dispute the foregoing statement, because of the source from which they have accepted it, and because of the insidious form in which they received it, and because they are not thoroughly furnished in a knowledge of the Scriptures, and because they have not reasoned the matter out—have not had their "senses exercised by reason of use" on this subject. (Heb. 5:14) Their argument is: "We do not dispute the Scriptures, nor is it necessary so to do, in accepting the Evolution theory. If asked to explain their position they would say: We still believe in God, a personal intelligent God, and have no sympathy with those who attempt to claim or to prove that life and intelligence could come spontaneously and without a Creator's power; we merely hold that our God, as Creator, produced the world gradually, and not in six twenty-four-hour days; we claim also that the creation of the fish, birds, beasts and man were gradual evolutions, but nevertheless under divine supervision, and during long periods. We claim that the monkey and the ape were not direct creations, but sharers in this evolution; and that in due time the evolutionary process which God started reached the point where a new and higher type of creature was evolved from the ape, a type having some degree of moral sense, that was man. We Bible-evolutionists claim, that in this *first gleam* of moral sense was man's image or likeness to his Creator; and that during the past six thousand years this moral sense has been growing, expanding, developing, until by the grace of God the race has reached its present high altitudes of intelligence,—moral, spiritual, intellectual.

"We claim further that under divine-providence the reasonable thing to expect is that this evolutionary process will continue throughout ages to come, perhaps forever, etc. We do not deny the Bible nor th Lord nor the apostles, altho we certainly do give less weight to their teachings than we formerly did,—being now inclined to believe that Jesus and the disciples either withheld some of the truth in their teaching, or else that they shared with mankind in general the lower planes of thought and less intelligence of their day; that they are to be respected for their good *intentions* and valuable service, but not to be regarded as competent to teach us who live under the more favored circumstances and enlightenment of this twentieth century civilization, taught by such lights as Prof. Briggs, Mrs. Eddy, Prof. Haupt, Darwin, Huxley, Tyndale, Spencer, *et. al.*"

In the foregoing we have given what we believe to be as fair a statement as could be made of the views of the great mass of intelligent people, especially of the educated class. And what does it mean? To us it means infidelity—a total denial of the divine Word and plan of God. And we will show why.

"IF THEY SPEAK NOT ACCORDING TO THIS WORD IT IS BECAUSE THERE IS NO LIGHT IN THEM"

If the above theory be true, the Bible theory must be false; but if the Bible be true, the above theory must be false. We hold that the Scripture teaching as a whole is in violent conflict with the foregoing in nearly every point. The Genesis account of man's creation, in the image and likeness of God, is quite distinctly different from its account of the creation of the lower animals, and must necessarily mean something much higher than evolutionists admit;—it declares a direct creation. The words "image" and "likeness" signify a great deal more than a mere first glimmer of moral sense. To us these words signify a likeness of mental conception, a harmony of sentiment—that man was, in the flesh, a copy of his Creator, who is a spirit—that he was not a brute with a mere glimmer of intelligence. Nor could we imagine how such a being but one remove from the brute could be justly placed on trial for life, eternal life, so that by one act of disobedience he could be justly sentenced to death; nor could we see how such a being could with any propriety be said to fall, without losing the little spark of intelligence possessed, and becoming again a mere brute. The fact that the fallen man was possessed of such character and qualities as possessed by various of the patriarchs before as well as after the flood, as described in this very book of Genesis, proves conclusively either that the monkeyman and his posterity fell upward at a very rapid rate indeed, and not in any sense of the word downward and into sin and death, or else it disproves totally the Evolution theory, on this subject.

On the contrary, all the Scriptures declare that man is fallen; that he has forfeited his Creator's favor and blessing, and the original grant of life everlasting; and teach us that this "condemnation" upon the first man and his posterity has been inflicted ever since; and that the "wrath of God" as manifested in the sentence of death has been upon the race as a "curse;" and that the only means of removing this "curse" or sentence, and recovering the lost man to the original position of harmony with God and to the right to eternal life, was through the redemption in Christ Jesus. The message of Jesus and the apostles was along this line; *viz.*, that the promise of God that the race should be succored from its fallen condition by a Savior and a great one, able to save unto the uttermost—able to recover out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay of sin and death, and that he made this recovery possible by giving the ransom price, his own sacrifice, and that as a result of the sacrifice he was to be the great King who, during a future age the Millennium, would exercise divine power and authority, binding Satan, and all the evil influences at present operating upon mankind and holding it in subjection to the curse of sin and death, would be removed, hindered, while the great King Immanuel should lift up and bless the race under restitution processes, bringing all the then willing back to the paradise lost, and to all the favors that were lost,—even fellowship with God, the divine likeness and the everlasting life.

These two theories are so antagonistic that there cannot possibly be any sympathy or co-operation between them. If one is true the other is false, and for our part we say, Let God be true, tho it prove every professed scientist a liar! (Rom. 3:4) This Evolution theory of science comes properly under the criticism of the Apostle when he speaks of "science falsely so-called," which contradicts the divine Word, and sets it at naught, preferring the traditions of men and the light of human intelligence rather than the light of divine revelation. Yet, as above stated, we must not be surprised at this great trial and testing of faith, which is to prove all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. (Rev. 3:10) We must not be surprised at the stumbling of those who have failed to use the opportunity granted, of coming into a condition of heart-consecration to the Lord, and begetting of his Spirit, and entrance into the "holy place,"—into the light of the golden candlestick: we must not be surprised if these now reject and repudiate the true light which they see not. Indeed, to our understanding we are in the very testing time which is to *prove* the saints, and ultimately to *reprove* the world and bring to naught its wisdom.

Let us not be misunderstood: We agree that the Scriptures do not teach that the earth and all its creatures were created in six twenty-four hour days. There is nothing said in Genesis respecting the length of these periods called "days," but we have clearly set before us the fact that the term "day" is properly applied in Scripture to various periods. (Luke 1:80; John 8:56; Phil. 2:16) Our Golden Text, rightly understood, indicates that the work of the six days mentioned in Genesis was a work of ordering and filling the earth, rather than a work of creating; for it plainly declares that the creation of the earth was "in the *beginning*"—that it "was" before the matters and affairs described subsequently, but in a chaotic condition. In harmony with this again is the statement, "Now the earth *was* without form and void." (Verse 2) This was before the six creative days began, whatever their length; they merely set the earth in order and supplied it with living creatures.

Neither do we insist that anything in the narrative necessarily involves the thought that the creation of the lower animals, fish, fowl and beasts, was in the same manner as the creation of man; rather, since their creation is merely mentioned in a general way, the inference might be drawn that God used certain (possibly evolutionary) processes in their development up to the point where they reached *fixity* of class, nature, genera. But we do insist that the Scriptures specifically mention man as a direct creation of God, and not as an evolution. We insist that this particularity of statement respecting man's creation is not without significance, and that the special preparation for his reception in a Paradise of God was in full accord with his high rank as an earthly human son of the Highest, an image and likeness of his heavenly Creator. We do insist that the story of the fall as told in Genesis and throughout the prophets and Psalms, and as particularly enunciated in the New Testament, must be held to implicity by those who hold to the Word of God at all. We must insist that unless there was a fall, Christ died in vain, for if the Evolution theory be true then there were no sinners to be redeemed and restored.—Acts 3:19-23.

We stand, on the contrary, with those who have, by the grace of God, attained a knowledge of God's Word, and who see in it Christ the Savior of mankind, and his cross the centre, the fulcrum upon which the entire work of salvation moves, by which alone the race can be lifted out of its present degraded condition, and brought back through divine processes of redemption and restitution to the glorious condition of God-likeness in a new paradise of God, a new heavens and a new earth, from which sin shall eventually be blotted out, and in which righteousness shall prevail. These Scriptural presentations are the best possible answer to the doubts and queries of the scientists. But these clear views of the divine plan can be had only by those whose eyes of understanding have been opened, and into whose hearts the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord has shined. As respects all others, moral and immoral, good and bad, we must surely expect that they will fall away in this time of sifting. "Who shall be able to stand?" Only those who have availed themselves of the mercy of God and who have come into covenant relationship with him;—and they only as they maintain the spirit of their consecration, and grow in grace, knowledge and love toward God and men.

"MALE AND FEMALE CREATED HE THEM"

Our lesson specially deals with the creation of man. Verse 26 tells us of the purpose of God in advance, and we would render it, "Let us make mankind in our image, and after our likeness let them have dominion over the fish of the sea," etc., making the word "image" to apply to the character-likeness of God, in which man was created, and the word "likeness" to refer to the dominion;—that mankind should have dominion over the creatures of earth, even as God has dominion over all things. In a word, man was intended to be the king of the earth, the lord of the earth; and it was to this end that he was crowned with the glory and honor and majesty of the divine image,—in the moral and intellectual features of his being, a flesh image of his invisible spirit Creator. It is to this high exaltation of man, as God's representative in the earth, that the Prophet speaks, saying, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou visited him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; *thou crowndest him with glory and honor*, and didst set him over the works of thy hands." (Psa. 8:4-8) So far from being only a little removed above the beast, the scripture declares that man was created in the very highest position of earthly creatures, but a little removed in intelligence, etc., from the angelic hosts. What we shall subsequently see respecting the fall of man from this grand position and the necessity of his redemption before he could be restored to it, is in perfect accord with the declarations respecting the glory and honor of the image in which he was created.

Verse 27 declares that that which God purposed was accomplished, and that this glory and honor in its full, complete sense, was not represented by one of the sexes alone, but by them both unitedly. This holy, happy pair had the blessing, the favor of God, and, contrary to the views of many, their fruitfulness was not the result of sin and the fall, but, as here distinctly declared, was in the intention of the Almighty respecting them before their disobedience and condemnation to death. The fact that God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth," contradicts the unscriptural thought that the propagation of children was in any sense or degree *a* transgression, or *the* transgression on account of which the "curse" came upon our first parents, and upon all through them. The Lord's people are not to be wise above what is written, nor to permit idle speculations to twist and warp their minds; but, on the contrary, are to rightly divide the word of truth.

The word "replenish" in our common version, is manifestly incorrect, as the word implies that the earth had once been filled, and was now, for some reason, empty and to be *re*plenished or *re*filled. A more correct rendering would be, "Fill the earth." It is in harmony with this original instruction, we understand, that when the earth has been filled with a population, the procreative powers will be eliminated, and eventually, the race be composed of perfect units, such as Adam was originally, before being divided into two persons for the purpose of companionship, procreation, and the preservation of the race as *one*, and under *one* headship. As we have already shown, it is our thought that in that perfecting or unifying process every male being will take on the elements and qualities of the mind and of the heart now peculiarly emphasized in the female; and every female will take on those elements of mind and heart now peculiarly manifest in the male; and yet we should here guard ourselves lest we should think of either the coarseness or the frailties of the fallen race (male and female) being in any sense of the word a part or feature of the perfect earthly creatures of the future. We should also bear in mind that the church, now being selected from the world, will have no part in this restitution process, but will become, as the Scriptures declare, members of a new creation, a new order of beings—spiritual—not only superhuman, but also "far above angels, principalities and powers."

The vegetarian idea respecting what would constitute the proper food for the perfect man is clearly set forth in Verse 29, the Lord declaring that he had given his creatures the herbage and fruitage of the earth for their meat—their food. It was not until after the flood, and the peculiar changes of conditions resulting therefrom (which we cannot here take time and space to discuss) that the Lord specially sanctioned the eating of animal food. (Gen. 9:1-4) We understand the reason to have been that the conditions were so changed as not only to shorten human longevity, but to greatly impair human strength, making necessary the nerve strength obtainable from animal food. Since animal food was thus sanctioned by the Lord it behooves the Lord's people not to become erratic and dictatorial upon this question of vegetarianism, nor to condemn those who find, or think they find, that animal food is necessary to the maintenance of their physical strength: on the other hand, let them remember that whatever was originally intended, and whatever may be the order of things in the Millennial age, there is no Scriptural sanction for condemning the eating of animal food in the present time. Whoever, therefore, advocates it, let him take heed that he does not make another gospel of it, and permit time and thought and voice and energy to be thus estranged from the service of the Gospel truths committed to us by our Lord; let such, on the contrary, remember that our Lord ate meat and fish, both before and after his crucifixion, and that the apostles ate meat, and that in no sense of the word was the eating of it condemned or evil spoken of; and that none of the Lord's people today have any higher authorities or examples than these. And let those who eat meat not mock those who eat "vegetable only," believing this course to be more healthful for them.

The fact that for beast and for fowl the Lord originally provided the same vegetarian diet, is in perfect accord with some of the prophetic statements which seem to imply that under the new conditions of the kingdom even the lower animals will return to vegetable diet, when "The lion shall eat grass like the ox." and when "Nothing shall hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain [kingdom]." (Isa. 11:6, 7; 65:25) Thus we learn that the animals which at present are carnivorous (flesh-eaters) are not now in their original condition, but have been sharers with mankind in the results of the catastrophe which came upon our earth in the flood; likewise that they will be sharers with man, their king, in the great uplift which will come to him and to all nature when God's kingdom, in the hands of the Sons of God, shall be established, and shall bless the groaning creation.—Rom. 8:19-22.

All that God did was in full accord with what he had purposed, and in his sight was very good; but we cannot think that man and the general conditions of the world today are in God's sight "very good," but, according to his own declaration, very bad—sin has marred all; and, as the Apostle expresses it, nothing is very good in God's sight now. "There is none righteous, no, not one." This is another testimony, therefore, to the effect that the fall of man was decidedly downward, and that the Evolution theory of a gradual and persistent rise is a fallacy.

The creation of man was just in the close of the sixth day or epoch. It was the crowning feature of creation, and finished it. Having finished his creative work God blessed the seventh day (or epoch) and set it apart, and rested therein from any further creative work—foreknowing, however, that during this seventh day, which has lasted from then until now (and will last yet another thousand years), sin would enter through disobedience, and his sentence of death be executed against Adam and his race, and the whole creation be caused to groan; knowing also that while he would thenceforth withhold his creative power, he would provide for the necessities of the fallen race, in the person of Jesus, "a Savior and a great one," who, by giving the ransom-price for man's sin would become his Redeemer, his Lord, and thus obtain the *right* and the *power* to rescue him from death and to lift up all the willing and obedient by restitution processes to all that was lost in Eden.

This seventh day, in which God has rested, to the intent that Christ may accomplish the great work of redemption, reconciliation and restitution has already lasted six thousand years, and altho this time has been an evil time under the reign of sin and death, the Redeemer is, according to the divine program, shortly to take unto himself his great power and reign for a thousand years, until he shall complete the work of restitution of the willing and obedient, and finally shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be the all-in-all throughout eternity.*—Heb. 4:4-10.

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* Further reading matter upon the subject of the Sabbath free to the interested.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT

We are loth to utter one word of personal criticism in these columns: we much prefer to discuss doctrines rather than persons. And yet at times it seems absolutely to the interest of the Lord's flock to identify persons with false teachings. But even in such cases we seek to deal with the doctrines of the persons and not with their personal affairs. This rule has Scriptural precedent. See the references to Hymenæus, Philetus and Alexander.—1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17.

A man styling himself "Rev. John Alex. Dowie" has come prominently before the public during the past ten years. His specialty until about two years ago was the healing of the sick, in which he was to a considerable extent successful, according to his own accounts. We are informed that he used neither hypnotism nor medicine, but prayed for the sick in the name of our Lord Jesus. Being as sympathetic with every good work done in Jesus' name as we are opposed to every such work done by sorcery, hypnotism and other Satanic influence to deceive—such as Christian Science, Spiritism, etc. —we watched Mr. Dowie's career with a very friendly interest.

Appealed to by Watch Tower readers for advice as to whether or not Mr. Dowie's work were of God, and whether or not it would be proper for them to seek divine healing as he proposed, we were obliged to answer them, and now think proper to summarize our reply for the benefit of all our readers and their friends, as follows:—

We are expecting, according to the Scriptures, that our day will abound in deceptions specially prepared by the adversary to "deceive if it were possible the very elect;" and that in his extremity Satan will even cast out Satan, and heal the sick, with a view to perpetuating his hold of power, and to deceive God's people and turn their attention away from present truth. We must remember our Lord's words, "Many will say unto me in that day, Master, Master, have we not taught in thy name? and in thy name expelled demons? and in thy name performed many wonders? And then I will plainly declare to them, I never approved you. Depart from me, you who practice iniquity." (Matt. 7:22, 23, *Diaglott* translation) This implies that Satan will have not only false teachers, but also false miracle-workers who will deceive themselves, as well as others, as respects the source of their power and teachings,—and only awake to a realization of their true position—that they are rejected from membership in the elect church—that they have failed to make their calling and election sure to a place in the kingdom class, when "the harvest is past and the summer is ended."—Jer. 8:20.

Nevertheless we are not to hastily assume that Mr. Dowie is of this deceived class;—let us wait a little, and not hastily decide, lest we think or speak evil of a servant of the Lord. However, there are a few very unfavorable symptoms in this case—foreign entirely to the Spirit of Christ as we understand it. (1) Mr. Dowie's very apparent vanity and boastfulness—so different from the Lord's example followed by the apostles—manifested in his continual reference to himself in laudatory, boastful terms and in the publication of sundry photographs of himself in his own publications. (2) The gentleman uses extremely harsh, vulgar language in referring to any and all who oppose him;—manifesting a hatred rather than a love for his enemies. (3) One of the charges against the Pharisees was that they were covetous or literally "money-lovers"; and this seems to be one of Mr. Dowie's weaknesses. The poor were drawn to the Lord and got most of his favors, but the poor have very small chance of participating in Mr. Dowie's favors. If they cannot pay $20 to $25 per week to stop at the hotel, Zion's Headquarters, they have little chance of contact even with the great man's shadow as he steps from his palatial hotel into his carriage. The occupation and salary of Mr. Dowie's followers are inquired about considerably too; and each is given to understand that the only way to live at peace with God and Mr. Dowie is by faithfully giving one-tenth of his income to the Lord—to Mr. Dowie. These are unfavorable symptoms, and unless they are outgrown we can hope for nothing as respects Mr. Dowie and the harvest work; for it is written that "The Lord resisteth the proud but showeth his favor to the humble."

As respects the Lord's people expecting miraculous healing in answer to prayer: we do not think that they should expect miraculous healing, or pray for it. All of God's people are surely welcome at the throne of grace, and they are invited to bring all their burdens and cares there and to obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. But the *saints* are never invited to pray for their own physical healing. They are, however, assured that it is the Father's good pleasure to give the *holy Spirit* to them that *ask it.* And the intimation clearly is that physical ailments, sorrows and pain work out for God's people the graces and fruits of the spirit if properly received and patiently endured. It is to those so afflicted that the Lord speaks as to St. Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee." With this assurance the Apostle could glory in *afflictions;* and so may we also learn to do.—2 Cor. 12:7-10.

This one prayer of the Apostle, repeated, he tells us, three times, is the only prayer for physical healing by any of the apostles, so far as the Bible-record shows. It was offered early in the Apostle's experience, before he had learned that his high calling was not to health and wealth and earthly blessings and ease in their enjoyment, but to *sacrifice* all these, that thus becoming a sharer in the sufferings of Christ he might attain to the heavenly condition—glory, honor and immortality—by and by. Thus also our dear Redeemer prayed not for earthly blessings for himself, and used not his powers selfishly. He could have commanded the stones to become bread, but he would not, and fasted forty days. He could have asked, and would have received for his defence and deliverance from his persecutors, twelve legions of angels; but he would not do so—instead he would endure whatever the Father might permit to be poured into his cup of bitter experience; accepting only the common blessings of nature open to all mankind. When weary he *rested,* or became so weak that he could not carry his cross, and sank under it. But he would not pray for strength. It would have been in opposition to his covenant or *consecration unto death* to have thus sought divine aid in resisting death.

But while there are no evidences of the apostles praying for relief from physical ills (except the one instance above mentioned) we have records of their illness, and the illness of others whom they loved. In one instance the Apostle declares of Epaphroditus,—"He was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy upon him; and not on him only, but on me also; lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow." (Phil. 2:27) Can we doubt that if his recovery had been miraculous the thing would have been so declared to the glory of God? It is evident, then, that it was as stated, of divine *mercy* and not of prayer that the recovery took place. And so it is with us now: "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of" and fulfils his promises of love and mercy, that all things, even *sickness,* etc., shall work for good to those called according to his purpose.

Physical healing in answer to prayer, as described in the Bible, was performed upon the public, not upon the church, except (as in James 5:14-16) the saint had gotten into sin and into sickness as a chastisement for sin and so could not go to God in prayer for himself. Such should send for the elders of the church, and they should pray over him, for the forgiveness of his sin; "and though he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and God will raise him up."

Although we are chronologically in the dawn of the Millennium we incline to doubt that any special restitution blessings will be dispensed to the world until the Gospel church, the elect royal priesthood, is completed and glorified; for this is to be their very work.

THE LEAVEN OF PRIDE AT WORK

Within the past two years Mr. Dowie's income from "tithes" of his followers (one-tenth of their incomes) has amounted to a handsome sum, so that he is now rated a millionaire. He has started a bank, purchased land and laid out a city, and embarked in various commercial enterprises. He has also taken the title of "Overseer" (bishop), and has ordained assistants to represent him in various cities, and the gatherings of his faithful are called churches of Christ;—though they show no sign of recognizing Christ as their Head. Rather, since they are ruled by Mr. Dowie in every particular, and their preachers are appointed by him at his pleasure, they have Mr. Dowie, and not Christ for their *head* and ruler, and in all propriety should be considered Mr. Dowie's churches.

Even to thus lord it over God's too credulous people (Col. 2:18; 1 Pet. 5:3) does not seem to have satisfied Mr. Dowie, but rather to have still further intoxicated his pride; until during the past six months he has represented himself as being—

THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT.—MAL. 3:1.

Although quite a number of his followers left him when this was fully understood (for it was broached carefully to "feel" how it would be received before stating it bluntly), yet the majority of the poor "sheep" under his influence seem to be thoroughly deluded—entrapped by his pomposity, which, on the contrary, they ought at once to have recognized as alien to the Lord's Spirit, had they known and given close attention to the voice of the true Shepherd, who declares,—"My sheep hear my voice and follow me. A stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." We still have hope, however, that the delusion will not last long with many of the distracted and deluded ones, who in many respects give evidence of being of the Lord's flock.

Whoever will refer to Mal. 3:1 should have no difficulty in seeing what Mr. Dowie evidently has not discerned, namely, that *two* messengers are referred to in the verse: first the antitypical Elijah to prepare the way, and second Jehovah's special servant, "the Messenger of the Covenant"—the Lord, the Christ. A New Covenant had long been promised, more favorable than the Law Covenant. Its Mediator would be greater than Moses—his antitype—Messiah. (Heb. 8:5-13) Israel delighted to think of this coming Messenger of the New Covenant and of the blessings which would then be theirs.

ELIJAH THE PROPHET

Emboldened by his success with *his people* under the title "Messenger of the Covenant," Mr. Dowie made great preparation for a public declaration of his greatness. He rented the immense Auditorium, made previous announcement that something great and unusual was to be expected, and thus gathered several thousand people including newspaper reporters, who give the following details of the speaker's words, etc.:—

"I am Elijah, the prophet, who appeared first as Elijah himself, second as John the Baptist, and who now comes in me, the restorer of all things. Elijah was a prophet, John was a preacher, but I combine in myself the attributes of prophet, priest and ruler over men. Gaze on me, then; I say it fearlessly. Make the most of it, you wretches in ecclesiastical garb. I am he that is the living physical and spiritual embodiment of Elijah, and my coming to earth a third time has been prophesied by Malachi, by God himself, by his Son Jesus, by Peter, and three thousand years ago by Moses. All who believe me to be in very truth all of this will stand up.

"(Over three thousand people rose to their feet and greeted the blasphemous declaration with cheers and hand-clapping.)

"Understand well what I mean (he continued, striding down to the edge of the platform), I will take no counsel in my methods of government. I have come to proclaim theocracy pure and simple, the government of God by God, and for God, and I will never rest till all other forms of government have been driven from the earth.

"You talk about your democracy. Bah! I tell you democracy has been tried in the balance and has failed. The government of the people, by the people, and for the people is twaddle. I stand loyal to the flag and countenance no revolution, but I demand, here and now, that the name of God must be placed foremost in the Constitution of the United States, and the supreme authority of God over all things must be recognized.

"Listen to the first message of the prophet: You must pay your tithes and offerings into the storehouse of God. Accursed be ye if ye would seek to rob his house of its fulness by not obeying this, his will, sent through Elijah. I am come among you to fight the worship of mammon in all its forms."

CONSIDERS ELIJAH AND THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT ONE AND THE SAME PERSON—HIMSELF

Poor man! The kindest view of his course is to presume that his reason has become unbalanced;—in a manner, by the way, that is extremely common. A large proportion of the inmates of insane asylums have the organ of self-conceit too largely developed, and reason is unbalanced. Some think themselves Jesus, some apostles, some Mary, some kings and queens of earth, and dukes, etc., etc. Others of an opposite cast of mind accuse themselves of sins never committed, or imagine themselves given over to devils for torture.

Mr. Dowie's reasoning is faulty: that John the Baptist was not the Elijah because he did not have faith enough to believe it, and to so proclaim himself. Was it a proof that Jesus was not the Christ because he did not so declare until near the close of his ministry? Then, he asked the apostles, "Whom say ye, that I am?" and Simon Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father. . . . Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the *Christ.*" (Matt. 16:15-20) How different from Mr. Dowie's course!

Our Lord's words respecting John the Baptist explain the matter much better than does Mr. Dowie. Jesus told his disciples after John was dead that John was the Elias—thus contradicting Mr. Dowie's statement that he had failed to comprehend his privilege and never became the Elijah. (See Matt. 17:12, 13) However, our Lord intimates that John did not do *all* that is to be done by Elijah, and hence that a greater Elijah is to be expected, when he said,—"*If ye will receive it,* this is Elias which was for to come."—Matt. 11:14.

John's work as Elijah did not fail because of his own lack of faith, but because of the Jews' unreadiness of heart to be influenced by him. Not many had faith to receive the message, and hence not many were ready to receive Messiah.

The fact that Jesus came to the Jews as their Messiah in the flesh and was introduced by John *as* a forerunner or introducer (in the power and spirit of Elijah—Luke 1:17) does not hinder the fact that the Messiah (Head and body, 144,000) is shortly to be presented to the world in spiritual power and great glory. And as the man Christ Jesus was introduced by the man John doing an Elijah work of preparation, so the great and glorious Christ must be preceded by a great Elijah who will make ready for the second advent, by testing the people whether they will receive the King in peace and joy, or whether the earth must be smitten with the curse of a great time of trouble in order to make ready for the heavenly kingdom.

This *great* antitypical Elijah is greater than Mr. Dowie and John the Baptist, as the glorified Christ is greater than Jesus of Nazareth in his humiliation. This antitypical Elijah, as we have already shown, is clearly proven to be the entire Gospel Church (Head and body) in the flesh. For nearly nineteen centuries this Elijah has been *coming*, and been doing his work in the world. Had men received the message joyfully the world would now be longing for the Lord of glory as do we, praying, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." But as John's message was heeded by but few in nominal fleshly Israel, so also but few have heard the message of the antitypical Elijah. As a consequence the earth must be smitten with a *curse*, a blight—a terrible trouble of anarchy to make mankind ready and anxious for the kingdom. On this subject see our detailed proofs that the church in the flesh is the antitypical Elijah.—Millennial Dawn, Vol. ii., page 249.

ORIGINAL SIN AND ITS PENALTY

Gen. 3:1-15.—July 14.

"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."—Rom. 5:20.

Sin is in the world; the fact is indisputable, All intelligent people recognize the fact, but only such as accept the Scriptures have an intelligent idea respecting its origin. True, the narrative of Eden and its first perfect pair, and their fall from perfection under divine condemnation, is more or less held, in a legendary way, in heathen religions; but none of these attempt to connect up and philosophically state the relationship between the disobedience, the fall and the penalty, the redemption and salvation from it, as do our Scriptures—the Bible. To the Bible student who is meek and lowly of heart the explanation is most satisfactory; only to the worldly wise and those who hold to the traditions of men, and neglect the inspired revelation, is there anything obscure or unsatisfactory in connection with the narrative of the fall, the redemption and the restitution, which constitute the Bible story from Genesis to Revelation.

We are to think of Adam (consisting at the time of two parts, male and female) as perfect, in the sense of being mentally and morally fashioned after the likeness of the Creator—well poised, well balanced—not "prone to sin as the sparks fly upward," as he subsequently became, and as his children now are. We are not, however, to think of him as perfect in knowledge or in character; knowledge must be acquired, but he was fully equipped with all the mental and moral apparatus for a rapid acquirement of knowledge. As for character, in an intelligent being it is a fixity of the will; and such a fixity can only come with knowledge. In other words, the perfect Adam was ready to acquire perfect knowledge, and had a perfect Creator, able and willing to give him the requisite instruction; and as this right instruction would be received, and this perfect knowledge be attained, character (good or bad) would be established;—either in favor of the principles of righteousness already established by God, or in opposition to the will of God, in unrighteousness.

We are not to think of Adam's condition and trial as an experiment on God's part, the result of which would be doubtful; but, on the contrary, we are to remember that the results were fully known to the Almighty before the trial began, and that he saw the end of his work from the beginning, else he would never have undertaken it. Divine foreknowledge is conceded by a large proportion of professing Christians, who, nevertheless, are sadly confused by certain false theories which imply that the Almighty's foreknowledge was to the effect that the vast majority of the posterity of Adam would spend an eternity in most horrible suffering, and that God prepared the arrangement for their suffering in advance of their creation. This view is untenable amongst those who combine any measure of knowledge of God's character with any measure of reasoning ability. In this lesson we shall see conclusively that our Lord had a much more just, reasonable and loving plan than that,—that he foresaw beneficent results before creating our first parents.

There are two methods of giving and receiving instruction. One through precept and example; the other through experience. Man was not the first of God's intelligent creatures—previously God had created the angels, we know not of how many different orders or ranks—angels, cherubim, pricipalities and powers, as the Apostle enumerates. These had all been instructed in the first named manner, by good *precepts;* they had not even had instruction through *example,* except on the side of good example: they had no illustration of evil and its pernicious consequences. The divine purpose was to bring into being a new order of creature, humanity, whose instruction, it was fore-arranged, should be along the lines of experience;—which would incidentally add to the instruction of God's angelic creatures, by way of giving them an example of sin and its consequences, and of the divine attitude toward sin and toward sinners; and incidentally give an illustration of the operation of divine justice and wisdom and love and power.

ADAM'S ORIGINAL FREE AGENCY

Man was intended from the first to be "a spectacle unto angels" (1 Cor. 4:9) as well as to be himself a miracle of divine mercy and love. It was in harmony with this feature of the divine plan that the perfect but inexperienced pair were subjected to a trial under which the Almighty knew beforehand that they would fail through lack of knowledge. The Almighty did not compel their disobedience; yet neither did he forefend them by minute explanations, warnings, guardings, and assistances against the wiles of Satan; nor was he bound to do so by any principle of justice. His creatures were perfect and were placed in comfortable, well-adapted conditions, with every reason to trust in their Creator and to implicitly obey his commands. But, as we shall see as we progress, while they had this sufficiency of information, their *knowledge being limited,* they were proportionately weak.

SATAN A MURDERER FROM THE BEGINNING OF HIS INTERCOURSE WITH MAN

We have mentioned Satan as the tempter, and this is the testimony of the Scriptures throughout; the same kind of reasoning and logic that would relegate Satan to oblivion as a myth, merely a figurative representative of wrong or sin, and not an individual—this same kind of logic and reasoning, if applied to the Creator himself, would similarly make of him merely a good principle, and deny his personality; and this, indeed, is the course of reasoning adopted by some, "Christian Scientists" and others. But we are writing for those who believe the Scriptural statements, and who are neither seeking to get rid of God nor seeking to deny the personality of Satan, but who are ready and anxious to believe what the Lord has revealed respecting him, his present triumph as "the prince of this world," and his soon-coming overthrow and binding, and eventual destruction by the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Nothing in the Scriptures indicates that Satan assumed any evil disposition or opposition to the Almighty previous to this incident of our lesson—his seduction of our first parents into disobedience to the Almighty's commands. This was the time of Satan's own temptation and fall into sin; previously, holy and in harmony with his Creator, he was one of his honored agents and servants; but now as he beheld the newly created pair in Eden, and saw that in them the Almighty had implanted the powers of procreation, which eventually were to fill the world with a human race, Satan beheld certain possibilities before himself, by which he might set up a separate, and to some extent, a rival kingdom. If he could gain control of this first pair and their posterity he would have an empire of his own on the earth, similar to the empire of Jehovah amongst the spirit beings. He would thus grasp a position higher than the other angels, though not as the equal of Jehovah; he would be like him, an emperor, a ruler, and above the others.—Isa. 14:12-15.

We are not to suppose that Satan comprehended in advance the evil results which have followed his course. He could not know any more than others to what extent his own evil course and the communication of it to humanity would bring in all the degradation and sin and misery and pain and trouble and death which have resulted. He became the murderer of our race (John 8:44), though, like many another murderer, he had not probably intended to commit murder at first, but only robbery; but the wrong course led on and resulted in murder, death.

The serpent in the garden evidently differed somewhat from serpents in general today, and apparently this is implied in the curse which came upon it. The testimony is to the effect that originally serpents were very wise, sagacious, evidently not at all repulsive, as at present, to the human family. It was this animal that Satan concluded to use as his decoy in bringing temptation to our first parents. We may or may not think of the serpent as addressing mother Eve in an audible voice; it is possible, we think highly probable, that the serpent spoke by his actions—that under the direction of Satan its actions aroused certain thoughts, feelings, intentions, in mother Eve; indeed, this fact is so clearly recognized that it has become an adage, that "Actions speak louder than words;" yet we would not consider it an insurmountable difficulty to believe that it spoke with an audible voice. But no matter how the questions and implications were suggested to Eve, they came through the serpent, and from Satan, who was the real tempter, bent upon captivating Adam and Eve and making of them his servants, as he indeed succeeded in doing; for the Scriptures inform us that the entire race was "sold [into slavery] under Sin," father Adam and mother Eve receiving but a small and highly unsatisfactory price in the transaction.

To appreciate the situation and the nature of the temptation, we must remember that the garden of Eden was full of trees of life;* trees bearing fruit suitable to the perpetuation of human life; so that by continuing in the use of these life-giving fruits all tendency to decay would be counteracted, and the eaters of these, under their favorable surroundings, would have lived forever. While there were many of these trees of life, there was one kind, and one only, whose fruit they were forbidden to eat. This was really not a hardship, as they had an abundance and to spare. They should have reasoned that the Almighty had some wise purpose in objecting to their partaking of the fruit of this one kind of tree. It was no more a tree of life than were the other trees in the garden, but it was forbidden. Our first parents had probably lived in the garden for some time, partaking of the trees of life and enjoying their surroundings, at the time the temptation took place. They had probably wondered frequently why the Almighty had forbidden the use of the fruit of that one particular kind, but could find no answer; and it had been sufficient to them to consider that God, in his wisdom, had a good reason, and that ultimately, no doubt, that fruit would be theirs, as well as others, by divine permission.

It was at this juncture that the serpent, which had previously been seen to be superior in wisdom and intelligence, was noticed going to and eating regularly, of the fruitage of the forbidden tree; and with this observation would naturally come the thought, Why is it that the serpent is the wisest of all the lower creatures, if it is not that he gains from this tree some valuable quickening mental influence which gives him his superiority? And with our higher organism, if we should eat of the fruit of that tree would it not make us still more intelligent, still more wise, than we are? Then came the evil suggestion, Can it be that God has a selfish purpose in forbidding us the use of this fruit? Can it be that he wishes to restrain us from proper liberties and powers? If not, why did he ever forbid the use of this tree which might give us the increased wisdom? Might it not be that if we were to partake of its fruit we would not only be as we now are, greater than the beasts, but be as gods,—even as the serpent is wiser than the other animals?

The suggestion that knowledge was to be attained in that direction, and that the Almighty was not acting justly and disinterestedly in his counsel and laws, and that the penalty attached was evidently a falsehood, since the serpent did not die—these considerations, these evil suggestions thus instigated by the Adversary, had their desired effect upon the mind of Eve, and she concluded that, without informing Adam of her decision, she would risk putting the matter to the test. She ate. We cannot know in what respect the fruit of that tree affected the intellect and the passions, but very evidently it did have a powerful influence which engulfed our first parents in sinful passion, and introduced them thus into a possible *misuse* of a knowledge of which previously they had not been entirely ignorant; the result of which was their realization of their own shame and nakedness. We are to remember that much is here told in a few words, yet all, we may be sure, that is necessary for us to know.

THE WAGES OR PENALTY OF SIN

How strange it seems that this simple narrative, which contains not a word respecting eternal torment, should be made the basis of all the fears which have tormented millions of Christian believers respecting a future of unutterable woe entailed upon father Adam, and through him upon his race, because of the disobedience set forth in this lesson. How simple the statement of the Lord respecting what the penalty would be—*death;* margin, "dying thou shalt die." How fully this is in agreement with the experiences which have been upon the race for now six thousand years—dying they have died, to the number of something like forty thousand millions. We would not make light of the original sin; we would have it appear in its full force as a deliberate, wilful disobedience of the divine command on the part of those who were not weak through a fall, but who were strong because fresh from the Creator's hands, in his likeness, mental and moral; and yet we assert with all confidence that no reasonable mind can find anything in this language indicating eternal torment as being the wages of sin. Nor could any reasonable mind admit that if eternal torment had been threatened it would have been a *just* penalty for the crime mentioned—disobedience in the eating of forbidden fruit.

We have heard of the vindictive farmer who maimed a boy with a shot gun for robbing his orchard; and we know how public sentiment properly condemned his course as harsh and unjust; yet that poor, fallen man was merciful and generous as compared with God according to the theory of "Orthodoxy," that for the theft of one apple Adam and Eve and all their thousands of millions of children were condemned to an eternity of torture.

Comparatively few seem to understand that the "orthodox" teaching is that it was on account of this *"original sin"* by father Adam and mother Eve that not only they, but all of their posterity were sentenced of God to an eternity of torment at the hands of devils, fully commissioned and empowered to injure and torment them in every conceivable manner throughout an unending future. It is the claim, further, that *every* member of humanity would surely have gone into that torture, had not Jesus come into the world and died for our sins; and that now only such as believe in Jesus, and lay hold upon him through faith and obedience, can hope to escape this universal catastrophe. Is this reasonable? Do sane people believe it? Do those who claim to believe it act in harmony with such teaching? Are they so unjust to their children or to their servants? Would they consider that such a character on the part of God would be worthy to be copied by any intelligent creature, either as respects its justice, its mercy or its love? The fact, we believe, is that the vast majority of Christian people have never had their senses exercised by reason of use in connection with such matters. They are blindly following blind leaders, who have received and adopted as truth "traditions of the elders," doctrines and theories promulgated during "the dark ages," and who do not investigate the *Bible* for themselves.

Surely this lesson of original sin and fall and penalty, taught by over two million Sunday-school teachers throughout the civilized world to over twenty-three millions in Sunday-schools, using the International Lessons, should be productive of great good, should open the eyes of understanding of many, and help them to see wherein they have so greatly erred and misunderstood the sentence, and hence misunderstood also the redemption from it, set forth in this lesson. But we cannot hope for much, seeing, as the Apostle declares, that "the god of this world has blinded the minds" of so many;—some more, some less. They will read over the sentence, and where they read "die," will think, "live in torment." They will take the part of Satan as against God, and with him declare, "Ye shall not surely die;"—ye cannot die, ye are immortal by nature, and because so, ye must live forever, either in bliss in heaven, or in eternal torment in hell. Thus Satan has for six thousand years opposed God, opposed the truth, and enslaved many in sin, and blinded others my misrepresentations of the divine character and plan, and his entire effort has been worked out in harmony with his declaration of this lesson, contradicting God, saying, "Ye shall not surely die;"—the wages of sin is not *death,* but *life* in torment.

HOW OTHERS VIEW THIS LESSON

A little curious to know what some of the so-called "theologians" would say respecting the matters of this lesson, and its statement of what the penalty of sin is, we looked up some of their opinions, and give two of these. One says: "Death as the wages of sin includes, not only temporal death, or the death of the body, with all the ills attendant upon a state of mortality, but also spiritual death, or the alienation of the soul from God, who is the only source of spiritual life, and lastly, everlasting death, or final exclusion from God and holiness and blessedness." The doctor of divinity, whose words we quote, has overlooked entirely the very essence of the sentence against sin expressed by the Lord in the words, "The

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* A grove or "woods" or orchard seems to be the thought of the original.—See Gen. 3:24; Rev. 2:7.

*soul** that sinneth it shall die." The reason undoubtedly is that he does not believe that souls can die; it is contrary to his theology, and hence he treats the subject from every other standpoint than the divine standpoint. From God's standpoint the soul is the entire being; it includes the mental and moral powers as well as the physical: and implies a degradation, a corruption, a destruction, of all these in death. And so we find it; man has not only died physically, as a result of his penalty, but the same dying process prevails in his mental qualities and in his moral qualities, so that when death has completed its work all is gone; the soul, being, is dead; and that beyond any power of recovery, so far as man is concerned—a recovery, a resurrection, being only possible from the divine standpoint, by divine arrangement, and the exercise of divine power. In the quotation we are criticising, notice that the claim is made that Adam died a *spiritual* death; but nothing in the Scriptures informs us that he was a *spirit* being. On the contrary, the Scriptures tell us that he was of the earth, earthy,—not a spirit being, but an animal being, a human being. He could not, therefore, die to what he did not possess.—1 Cor. 15:45, 47, 48; John 3:6; Gen. 3:19.

Nor was man redeemed to a spiritual state or condition. On the contrary, the Scriptures assure us that *restitution* is to be the result of the ransom to whosoever will accept it on God's terms: a restitution, not to spiritual conditions, because these were never enjoyed, and never lost; but a restitution to all that was lost in Adam's disobedience—to the perfection of human life, under blessed conditions, in full harmony with the Almighty and in his image and likeness. As to spiritual life, we find the Scriptures teaching that the natural man has nothing whatever to do with it; that to the new creature, the church, alone has it been offered as a *change* of nature: that only the Gospel church of this present age is begotten to this spiritual nature, and is to experience a change from human to spirit beings in the resurrection. The remainder, even of the obedient, will not be "changed," but will be *restored.*—Acts 3:19-23.

The above expression which we are criticising declares, finally, that the ultimate meaning of the death sentence was, "lastly, everlasting death." We agree with the statement, but not with the meaning which the reverend gentleman expects his readers to attach to his words. He wishes them to think of everlasting death as never being attained, but always being approached. It is a mild way of putting the eternal torment doctrine, and probably nine out of ten of all who have ever read his utterance have so understood him. He was hindered from making his statement more definite by reason of the fact that he had not a single word in the Scriptural account whereon to hang any doctrine of eternal torment; he must hang everything on the word death, which is the declared penalty; he must, therefore, presuppose that his readers have been well indoctrinated according to the false standards, and have learned from theological instructors how to twist language to mean its opposite; how to make *death,* the Scripturally stated penalty, to mean *life everlasting in torment,* and this in the face of the declaration that life is the gift of God, and will be granted only to those who receive the Son. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God [the pronounced penalty for sin, the curse, the sentence, death] abideth on him." "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—John 3:36; Ezek. 18:20; Rom. 6:23; 1 John 5:12.

Another doctor of divinity writes on this subject as follows: "It is not sufficiently borne in mind that man's exclusion from the tree of life, which could have conferred immortality, was the carrying out of the sentence." How confused are the ideas of theologians in general upon this subject! Note in this expression the thought that the eating of the tree of life could have given man *immortality.* Is it supposable that any kind of fruit could produce such a change in man as to make him immortal? It is not supposable; it is unreasonable. But, on the other hand, let us remember that this same doctor of divinity would in the same breath claim that man was already immortal; and that he, like all other theologians, bases all of his doctrines respecting the eternity of torment for the damned upon their assumption that man was *created immortal,* and therefore could not die. How absurd then, everyway, is this statement, that Adam was excluded "from the tree of life, which could have conferred immortality!"

The narrative should be taken as it reads. All the trees were good for food, and desirable to the eye;—all trees of life—not trees of immortality, for no tree could give immortality; God alone had immortality inherently, and he hath given it to the Son, and hath promised it to the bride, the Lamb's wife, and to no others. Immortality is the prize set before the Gospel church of overcomers, and none others. Had Adam remained in the garden of Eden forever, and partaken of all the trees of life therein, he would not have attained immortality, though he would have possessed everlasting life thereby. His disobedience resulted in his exclusion from all the trees of the garden,—from all the trees of life: and he was thenceforth compelled to labor with sweat of face in the unprepared soil (outside the specially prepared garden, in which his trial took place), that thus dying by inches the penalty—death—should finally be accomplished to the full.

"THE WOMAN WAS FIRST IN THE TRANSGRESSION"

We cannot share in the general disposition to think of father Adam from the ignoble standpoint of "blaming the transgression upon his wife, and seeking to shirk his own responsibility." As a perfect man, unskilled in deceptions and the telling of "white lies," he would probably feel, especially when addressing his Creator and Judge, and in answer to a direct question, that he must tell the exact truth, and he neither felt shame in telling the truth, nor do we feel shame for him in respect to his testimony. The difficulty is that the majority of those who read the account have not appreciated the grandeur of father Adam's position in respect to his wife and the transgression. To our understanding of the narrative, mother Eve's disobedience and involvement in transgression was wholly apart from her husband's knowledge or complicity; and he, when he learned of her course, was so full of sympathy and so full of love for her, as a member of his own body, that his affection quite overcame his proper sense of duty and obligation toward God.

Concluding that his wife's disobedience had forfeited her life, and that the result to him would mean the everlasting loss of her companionship, he deliberately chose to be with his companion in sin rather than to be separated from her, and to enjoy divine favor and blessing everlastingly without her: therefore he ate knowingly, to share her penalty—he suicided. To our view, in reporting the matter to the Almighty, Adam did not state his case in his own favor, did not state how he was overcome by the pressure of his own heart-love for the one whom the Lord had given him to be his companion; but in the simplest form he explained, as the question properly demanded, how he had partaken of the fruit at his wife's instance. We are not defending Adam; we hold that he sinned wilfully and deliberately, and came justly under the sentence; but we hold also that it was his lack of knowledge that lay at the foundation of his disobedience, even as lack of knowledge and a desire to gain the same lay at the bottom of Eve's disobedience. Had Adam appreciated the divine character, as the Lord's consecrated people may now appreciate it, in the light of fuller knowledge and revelation, his course might have been a different one. He might have trusted the matter to the Lord, that he was able to recover mother Eve from the terrible condemnation under which she had fallen through her disobedient act. It was his despair as well as his ignorance that led Adam to the disobedience that brought the death-sentence, otherwise called "the curse" and "the wrath" of God upon our race.

THE WAGES OF SIN SEVERE

If to some it may at first appear that death is not a severe sentence, not a manifestation of divine wrath, not a curse, let them reflect further; let them note how all of the dying processes are only parts of death, and that as insane asylums mark those who become mentally dead before they are physically dead; and as hospitals mark those who become physically decrepit before they are mentally decrepit; and as prisons mark those who become morally dead or decrepit before they are physically dead; so all of the experiences of our race, "groaning and travailing in pain together," mark "death working in us." All sicknesses, pains and sorrows are parts of the dying process, in the fifty thousand millions of the human family who have come into the world during six thousand years. The "curse" or sentence of death has resulted in blighted hopes and loves and ambitions, and is rapidly placing the entire race in the great prison house of death—the grave. Surely, the true penalty of sin was a heavy one, though we must admit it was a just one. Surely, it involved all of the race of Adam in the most natural manner, because all of his children are partakers of his sentence; because sharers in his weaknesses, his imperfection, resulting from his transgression of the divine law.

THE SERPENT SHALL BITE THE DUST

The Lord's curse or *sentence* came upon all who were involved in the transgression: upon the serpent, the active agent of Satan; upon the woman, first in transgression; and upon the man, in whom centered the responsibilities. As to the expression, "Dust thou shalt eat," we incline to consider it as figurative, since we are not aware that the serpent includes dust in its food any more than do the other animals. The expression, "Lick the dust," has long stood for a demeaned, degraded condition, and as a matter of fact, serpents are despised of all and made to "bite the dust" (die) whenever and wherever found, and just such an enmity as is here described, between humanity and serpents, is notorious.

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* See tract, *What is the Soul?* Sample copy free.

THE ULTIMATE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST OVER SATAN

Our first parents must have understood the concluding sentence of our lesson as a ray of hope—"It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." It was a very indefinite, vague promise of a future triumph of mankind over the adversary, over sin, over all the evils connected with sin and its penalty, death; but we do not yet see such a victory. We see the race still blinded by Satan; we see him still "prince of this world," working in the hearts of the children of disobedience, who, alas! are vastly in the majority. But the faith enkindled by the Lord's word of promise has since grown and developed and been added to. The promise to Abraham, that his seed should bless all the families of the earth, was a further declaration of the statement made in Eden. Christ is this seed. Begotten of a new life, through the seed of the woman, he has indeed triumphed over sin and death, and declared that he will finally vanquish the Adversary; he has paid the penalty, the very penalty that was originally pronounced, death. "Christ died for our sins." We were thus "bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ."

We have this assurance, then, that God's plan is continuing to operate, to unfold, and we have good reason to hope for the promised ultimate consummation, in which Satan shall be utterly destroyed. The plan of God during this Gospel age is taking another step forward, in that it is selecting a special, "elect" class, to be members of this seed (Gal. 3:29), to be members of the body of Christ; and in harmony with this is the Apostle Paul's statement, "The very God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly"—under the church's feet, for the feet are the body of Christ, and he is the Head of the church which is his body—hence, under the feet of the Christ.—Rom. 16:20.

Not very long, now, we may hope, will it be until the elect seed of Abraham, the elect seed of the woman, shall be complete, and the work of treading down evil and ultimately destroying it, and eventually destroying Satan himself, with all who intelligently and wilfully are coworkers with him in his rebellion against divine love and justice, will be accomplished. (Matt. 25:41) Meantime the thousand years, the Millennial age, is set apart for this work of crushing evil, of stamping it out, of bringing in everlasting righteousness. Praise God for such a Gospel, such good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, as a result of the redemption accomplished by our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and of the great deliverance which by and by, in due time, he shall bring to pass.

Our Golden Text is the key to all of our hopes. Sin abounded as against not only our first parents, but all of their posterity, unto sentence of death. But God's grace abounded still more, and toward all, in that he provided, through Christ, not only a recovery of all who will of mankind from the penalty of sin and death, but also that the restored and perfected race shall have all that was lost in Eden, full and complete, and that *everlastingly.* Additionally God's grace abounded to the extent of taking out of the world of sinners a little flock to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, whose nature is to be changed, so that they, instead of longer being of the human nature, will become partakers of the divine nature, sharers of the divine glory and honor and office with their Lord Jesus—far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named.

O, for such loving kindness and tender mercy which abounded towards us while we were yet sinners, and which much more abounds towards us in Christ, now that we are accepted in the Beloved one,—for this let the Lord's people give thanks continually, and let the thankfulness of heart extend and manifest itself in words and conduct, in all that we do and say, that all may be to the praise of his glory who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light!

THE STORY OF THE DELUGE

Gen. 8:1-22.—July 21.

"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."—Gen. 6:8.

"Higher critics" pick at and find fault with the record of the deluge given in Genesis, yet they are unable to gainsay the fact that there was a great deluge. They find its record written in all parts of the world, in some places indicated by the erosion of the rocks and the deposit of shells and gravel in high altitudes, and in other parts by immense alluvial deposits. Moreover, every nation and people throughout the world (the black race alone excepted) has its traditions and records of the great deluge and of Noah. The fact being so well authenticated, the critics have been obliged to content themselves with minor objections—finding fault with the Scriptural account of the Ark—considering it impossible that the flood should have been throughout the whole world, and probable that it was merely upon some portion of it.

"Higher critics," amongst theologians and schoolmen, are disposed to criticise the text and to claim that the Bible narrative gives evidence, as do other parts of Genesis, of the consolidation of two originally separate accounts, combining the features of both. Many of them are disposed to consider that the book of Genesis was written by Ezra only a few centuries before Christ, and claim that Ezra got his account from the Babylonians during the captivity, and that he merely attributed it to Moses to give it the greater force and reverence before the people. Other critics, however, are forced to admit that the Genesis accounts of the creation and of the flood are immensely superior, in order and in every detail, to any and all accounts ever found elsewhere; and that the reasonable theory would be that the ampler and clearer accounts of Genesis were the first written, and that the accounts of surrounding nations were written subsequently,—legends and traditions. Prof. G. F. Wright says respecting the Babylonian records of the flood, which are meager indeed as compared to the Bible record:—

"It is proper to observe that the cuneiform tablets (in their account of the deluge, copied from Babylonian records of 1800 to 2000 years before Christ) combine in one account, and in substantially the same order as that of Genesis, both the elohistic and Jehovistic documents, supposed by many critics to have been united into one only after the exile. In this comparison, therefore, we have well-nigh scientific demonstration that these critics are wrong in their inferences from literary analysis. And," he adds, "the attempt to make out that there are two combined accounts of Genesis containing irreconcilable chronologies is little more than a gratuitous supposition, for they can readily enough be arranged in one continuous chronological scheme. While we need not maintain that science demonstrates the truth of the Biblical account, we can say that it presents no insuperable obstacle to the account when properly interpreted, while it does add plausibility to the study by bringing clearly before our minds a period of geological history since man came into the world, during which there was great instability of the continents and a succession of catastrophes, startling in their magnitude and short in their duration, which may well have culminated in the Noachian deluge."

One of the pronounced higher critics, President Harper, of the Chicago University, admits the general correctness of the Scriptural account of the deluge, viewed even from the hypercritical standpoint, saying: "We may regard the deluge as a historical fact, preserved in a multitude of forms; 'an actual and terrible event which made so powerful an impression upon the imaginations of the first parents of our species that their descendants could never forget it. This cataclysm took place near the cradle of mankind, and previous to the separation of the families from whom the principal races were to descend.' The deluge was a fact; it was a part of a great plan; its record, as handed down to us in the Hebrew Scriptures, is the one clear, distinct account, and when compared with the other accounts bears on its face indications of its divine origin."

To the Christian mind it is quite sufficient attestation to the truthfulness of the account of the deluge, as given in Genesis, that our Lord, the great Teacher made no criticism of it, but by referring to it clearly implied its truthfulness and general correctness. And the evidence is still further strengthened by the fact that the Apostle Peter refers to it, and under the guidance of the holy Spirit shows that it marked the close of the first dispensation,—as a great cataclysm of trouble, anarchy, symbolically called "fire," will mark the termination of the present dispensation, and prepare the way for the new era, called the new heavens and the new earth.—Matt. 24:37-39; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:6, 7.

Considering then that the truthfulness of the narrative is abundantly established, a first foundation for those who have the eye of faith and the ear of faith, we proceed to the examination of the lesson. Although there are evidences that the whole world was at one time under water, pebbles and shells being found in the tops of the highest mountains in all parts of the world, nevertheless it would not be essential to the truth of the narrative that we should assume that the entire earth was covered with water in Noah's day; it may have been, or it may not have been. Apparently western Asia was the cradle of our race, and the whole world at that time was of very limited dimensions. That part of the world could very easily have been submerged, and again elevated, by forces not fully comprehended as yet by anyone,—for this is admitted to have occurred in various parts.

The Ark, according to the measurements given, was an immense structure, with a storage capacity probably at least treble that of any vessel afloat today. Its length, three hundred cubits, would be about five hundred feet; its width, fifty cubits, about eighty feet; its height, thirty cubits, about fifty feet. Let us compare these dimensions with those of a great vessel of today, the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse.* Its length is 648 feet; its breadth 65 feet; its depth 43 feet. We are to remember, however, that the Ark was not built for navigation, but merely as a float, like a covered raft; hence it needed not to be pointed at either end, and toward the bottom, as are modern ships. We are told that it had three floors; and when we estimate the difference as respects the width at bow and stern, its capacity would be at least twice as large as the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse;* and when we omit the motive power and steering apparatus it would practically give it at least three or four times the storage capacity of the latter vessel.

This peculiar and enormous vessel had an immense cargo of animals, and food for their sustenance during the long period of confinement. Nor need we suppose that all the wild animals of today were wild and troublesome in the Ark; many may have become wild since then. The mention of animals taken into the Ark as being "clean" and "unclean" would rather seem to refer specially to the useful animals, as for instance, the cow and the sheep are clean—proper for human food, as provided by Jewish law, while the horse and the dog would be amongst the unclean, unsuitable for food, but nevertheless useful servants of mankind.

Scientists have indulged in amusement as respects the poor ventilation, claiming that the Ark had only one little window, one cubit, twenty inches square; but rather we should understand that this window, twenty inches high, extended around the Ark on all sides under the eaves. The particulars are not given us, but from our standpoint Noah and his sons, the contractors for the building of the Ark, were not stupid men, only one degree above the monkey, but men of good mind, only a few degrees below the perfect man, as they had maintained to a considerable degree the original image of God, conferred upon Adam and transmitted by him. It was not many centuries after the construction of the Ark that the great Pyramid of Egypt was built, which likewise gives abundant evidence of skill. We can reasonably suppose that the architects and builders of these were sufficiently skillful to know how to provide for the necessary ventilation. Indeed, the Great Pyramid was for a long time a marvel in respect to its ventilation, which later was found fully provided for.

Those who claim that evolution has been the process of mankind's development, find a serious obstacle to their theory in this record of the flood;—not only those who attempt to ignore the divine Creator, but those as well, who recognize Jehovah, and who claim, contrary to the Bible, that he has been developing mankind out of a brute stock. It goes against all evolution theories to claim that the race of Adam became so grossly corrupt that it was just and proper that it should be blotted out of existence, only a remnant being carried over for a new start. If Adam in Eden was but one remove above a monkey, what shall we say of the condition of the world of mankind after 1,656 years, and the Lord's declaration respecting them, that instead of evolving into greatness and dignity, they had corrupted their way and were not fit to live?

SONS OF GOD AND DAUGHTERS OF MEN

The Scriptural account of the condition of mankind previous to the flood, is that the earth was full of giants and full of violence, and the explanation of this condition of things is that the giants had been born as a result of marital union between a class called "sons of God" and certain "daughters of men." Commentators in general have, we believe, fallen into grievous error as respects the meaning of this statement, supposing it to signify that the expression "daughters of men" refers to Cain's daughters, and that the so-called sons of God were the children of Seth. According to this claim, the wickedness of Cain descended to all of his daughters, and the supposed righteousness of Seth descended to all of his sons, for a certain time, and that the blending of these two families opened the flood-gates of wickedness. This supposition seems to us very untenable, for several reasons. First, there is nothing in the Scriptures respecting the posterity of Cain to imply that they were under any curse, because of their father's sin. To suppose such a law would be to suppose that it prevails still, and that heredity would entail upon the children of all murderers the guilt of their parents, and upon the children of all thieves, marauders and evil-doers the direct guilt of their parents. We admit that evil disposition is transmissible, and that to a certain extent it follows to the third and fourth generation, but we deny that there is any special curse of God after the fashion that is here claimed. Furthermore, according to this very theory, the sons of Seth retained his righteousness and favor with God for a time, and then suddenly lost it all—except Noah,—an unreasonable assumption. Furthermore, it would be difficult for those who take this position to explain to us why the evil seed of Cain intermarrying with themselves would not produce giants, and men of renown, and how a blending of these two families would produce that which neither of them could or did produce alone. The theory is lame and inconsistent in every particular.

The Apostle Peter gives the key to the real solution of the matter when, in reciting the events connected with the flood, he tells us of the fall of the angels at that time, who "in the days of Noah" "kept not their first estate." (1 Pet. 3:19, 20) Those angels who were permitted to have a measure of control of the fallen race, with a view to helping them as much as they might be able, and who, for the purpose of rendering such assistance to mankind, were permitted to appear in human form, became enamored of the human female, and preferred the human or animal form to their own state as spirit beings. They thus left their original estate, as Jude also explains. (Jude 6) These angels are the ones denominated "the sons of God," none of the human family being given that name after the fall. Adam, we are told, was originally a son of God (Luke 3:38), but none were so called subsequently until the Gospel age. We are told that at our Lord's first advent those who received him received privilege or liberty *to become the sons of God.* (John 1:12) And so the Apostle declares respecting the Gospel church, "Now are we the sons of God [prospectively], and it doth not yet appear what we shall be," when perfected as sons, when our adoption shall be completed, as members of the body of Christ. (1 John 3:2; Rom. 8:17) On the contrary, the term "sons of God" is a general name applied to the angels.—Job. 1:6; 2:1; 38:7.

From this standpoint the whole matter is clear—every feature of it. Mankind, impoverished in vitality by fifteen hundred years of toil in the condemned earth, battling for his bread with thorns and thistles, was considerably weaker than in his perfection, the image of God, before the dying process began; while the angels, assuming human bodies, would possess completeness of vitality and virility, and in consequence of this, the children born to them by the daughters of men would not only be physically giants in strength, but also mentally—as declared in the record, "men of renown"—superior to other men in qualities of cunning, skill and ingenuity. Thus the agencies which God had permitted for the benefit of mankind became a snare to his spiritual governors, and a test of their loyalty to righteousness, to purity, to fidelity to God. And to our understanding God foreknew, foresaw, this fall of "those angels which kept not their first estate," even as he foreknew the fall of our first parents in their trial in Eden. And from our standpoint both of these falls were permitted to give instructive lessons, useful not only to those more particularly involved, but to all of God's human creatures who should afterward be born, and ultimately be brought to a knowledge of the truth, and additionally instructive to the holy angels who maintained their loyalty to God, to righteousness, to purity, to their first estate.

The Apostles Peter and Jude clearly mark out the punishment visited upon those "sons of God" who thus betrayed their trust and fell into sin, "leaving their own habitation," their own nature, and affiliating with the human nature. Their punishment has been their deprivation of all such liberties, and their separation from God and from the holy angels: and this restraint is called, by the Apostle, "chains of darkness," while the restrained ones themselves, instead of being recognized as "sons of God," or angels of light, were thenceforth known as "angels of darkness," "demons," "wicked spirits."

Incidentally we remark that these are the "spirits in prison" mentioned by Peter (1 Pet. 3:19), and that although restricted as respects their powers of fellowship with the holy angels, and with mankind, being no longer privileged to appear as men, they still seek human fellowship, endeavoring to gain possession of human beings who yield up their wills, and who are then said to be possessed of devils or "obsessed." It is but a preliminary step toward thus getting possession of the individual that these wicked spirits appeal to humanity to become their mediums (spirit mediums), through whom they to some extent communicate. And they personate dead human beings, because they know well that humanity would shun them and fear them if their real identity were discovered.*

"NOAH WAS PERFECT IN HIS GENERATION"

From this standpoint, which we hold is the only reasonable, consistent and Scriptural one, the reason and necessity for the deluge is quite apparent. The reason is Scripturally given, that the whole world had become corrupt—the original Adamic stock had become confused and intermixed with another life. The divine purpose of redemption, blessing and *restitution* was confined to Adam and his family; that as by one man's disobedience sin came into the world, even so through the obedience of one many may be justified to life. Although foreknowing the condition of things God made no provision for the mixed progeny of the angels—that was out of his order, out of harmony with his arrangement, and hence as soon as it had demonstrated itself and taught its lesson the flood swept all away, except the one family of Noah, of whom it is declared, "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generation." (Gen. 6:9) Not a perfect man, for he was a fallen man, as were all of Adam's children, but he was perfect in his *generation*—he was not of the mixed seed, he was pure Adamic stock. The Hebrew word here rendered *generation is toledaw* and signifies *descent, family.*

The lesson taught by this failure of the angels and its result to mankind was that any deviation from the divine plan and arrangement would work injury instead of good to those participating in, as well as to those affected by it. The angels who fell from their noble work and condition, and became groveling and sensual, manifested clearly in their own course the downward tendency of all transgressions of the divine law. Then their children, who might have been expected to be brilliant, talented, able, and who were all these in many respects ("men of renown") possessed their abilities in connection with a sinful and alienated condition; and it was proper that both angels and men should see that the greater the ability possessed, out of harmony with the divine arrangement, the greater would be the injury instead of blessing which would result. Thus we see that these renowned men, with their great abilities, physical and mental, tended, not to the promotion of godliness, peace, joy, happiness in the world; but to strife, to oppression, to violence.

It may be thought by some that we are straining the illustration, when we affirm that we see today in the world something that is in many respects analogous to this evil condition which led to the dissolution of the first world or dispensation; that we see that somewhat similar conditions producing somewhat similar evils are leading on rapidly to the great catastrophe with which "this present evil world" shall pass away, in a great commotion, symbolically called "fire" of anarchy,—giving place to the new order, the Millennial kingdom. The analogy is as between humanity and the new creatures in Christ, who are Scripturally called "the sons of God." The influence of these sons of God upon the world of mankind should be instructive, elevating, helpful, showing forth the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light,—transformed by the renewing of their minds, etc., they should be letting their light so shine before men that men would see their good works and glorify the Father in heaven. But the influence of mankind upon the church seems to have been stronger than the influence of the new creatures upon mankind—not in all cases, but in some cases, just as it was with the angels. The sons of God (the church), enlightened beyond their fallen and unregenerate neighbors, are men of renown, and the civilized world of today, Christendom, represents the influence of this combination of the spiritual with the natural in Babylon—Confusion. It has lifted up humanity wherever it has gone; it has sharpened, it has broadened, it has civilized; but instead of this combination working for the highest benefit of mankind in all cases, we find, rather, that the tendency is to combine the higher intelligence with human selfishness, and the result of this union is the bringing forth of giants in the earth,—corporative giants—which very shortly will give mankind a great deal of trouble and fill the earth with violence.

Are not the trusts and combines, now rapidly developing throughout the world, the offspring of this union of heavenly light and intelligence with the selfish depravity of the fallen race? and what hope can mankind have when once these giants have reached their growth and strength, and when their necessities combined with their selfishness, shall influence them to exert their power in the world? Will it not lead to violence? Will it not bring about the time of trouble which Scripturally is described as being a period when "every man's hand will be against his neighbor"—when selfishness will be in control in every direction and amongst all classes except those who, like Noah and his family, are in the Ark of safety —under the Lord's special and protecting care? We would not press the figure too far, but we do see some analogy as between the end of the first world or dispensation and the end of the present dispensation, the second world.

The printed lesson deals particularly with the going forth of Noah, his thankfulness to God, his worship, as expressed in the building of the altar, and the offering of the sacrifice, typifying man's reliance upon God and the great sacrifice for sin securing the return of divine favor which would be accomplished in due time by Messiah. The offering was accepted by the Lord, who declared that the earth should nevermore be visited by such a catastrophe, and that nevermore should every living thing be smitten; and in this we see another evidence that the coming trouble will not destroy all human life, although it is represented symbolically as fire: the fire of that day will burn against all wickedness, against all sin, to destroy it root and branch, yet the Lord, through the Prophet, declares that after the fire of his anger shall have burned in fierceness against the world of mankind, he will subsequently turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent—thus indicating that while the symbolical fire of that day will destroy the institutions, arrangements, peculiar to this time, it will not destroy all the people, but prepare them for the reception of the Lord's message of favor and blessing, for it is written, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Zeph. 3:8, 9; Isa. 26:9.

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* See *What Say the Scriptures About Spiritualism? Proofs that it is Demonism.* 10 cents, this office.

DAWN VOL. V, IN GERMAN

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"BEHEADED FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS"

"And I saw the souls [persons] of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."—Rev. 20:4.

All constituting the kingdom class are here referred to as beheaded—every member of the glorified church must, eventually, have this experience, whatever it signifies. But we reflect that our Lord was not beheaded and, so far as history shows, few, if any, of the apostles were literally beheaded; indeed, very few, if any, of the Lord's saints, from Pentecost to the present time, have died by decapitation. We are to remember, however, that this statement is from the symbolical book, and is therefore a figure of speech, a word-picture, and its meaning must be sought for accordingly.

The Apostle gives us the key, saying, "The head of every man is Christ; the head of the woman is the man;

and the head of Christ is God." (1 Cor. 11:3) As a woman who becomes a wife accepts her husband as the head of the family, so the church accepts Christ as its Head, and each member of the church thus comes into relationship with the Lord as a member of his body—not the Head; and all of these, to be acceptable as members of the figurative body of Christ, must be will-less, headless: their own wills must be surrendered, so that, like their Lord, they san say, "Not my will, but thine, be done." They must be headless in the sense of ignoring their own wills, being dead to self and actuated henceforth by the will of the head of the body, Christ Jesus. His will, his mind, his Spirit, must dwell in each member of the body, and abound, if it would abide a member of his body, the church. Thus, as the wife loses her own name, and accepts the name of her husband and his headship, so each member of the bride of Christ must lose his or her individuality in order to be accepted as the bride of Christ. It is this self-surrender to Christ on the part of his church that is represented in the symbolism of the text before us.

One of the prime hindrances to Christian growth is the failure to discern the completeness of the sacrifice requisite in those who would be accounted as members of the elect church, the body of Christ. No one can be of this elect number, to live and reign with Christ in his Millennial kingdom, who has not been thus beheaded. We often think of this when we hear well-meaning Christian people say, "I have a mind of my own; I do my own thinking." It is certainly better, in many instances, that one should do his own thinking than that he should let another man or another woman do it for him; than that he should allow a body of men to make a creed for him, even tho that body of men, professing to be his head, be called a Synod or a Presbytery or a Conference, and desire that the individual shall submit himself to its headship, and become a member of some earthly church. Such sectarian systems—heads and members—are false bodies of Christ, which the real Head never recognized.

It is required of every one who would be counted in as a member of the true church, that he should be not only beheaded (lose his self-will), but that he shall be *united to the true Head* of the church and recognize himself as a member of the *true body of Christ*—"the church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven." Membership in the Presbyterian *body*, or in the Methodist *body*, or in the Lutheran *body*, or in the Baptist *body*, or in any other human institution, does not count anything, for the simple reason that Christ never recognized any of them, never founded any of them, never joined or agreed to join any of them as *their head*. There are not *many* bodies of Christ, but only *one*, the church of the living God—there is one body, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. The Lord is not the head of these human institutions, which call themselves his bodies, and membership in them will avail nothing as respects the reward of joint-heirship with Christ in the kingdom; but rather (as intimated in the words of this verse which we have omitted), the worship, reverence, of these human systems, when once they are seen to be counterfeits of the true body, would be a barrier to a place in the true body and in the kingdom glories.

As Jesus was not the founder or institutor of these bodies, neither is he their head; neither were the apostles members of any of these human sects or parties, and all of the Lord's true saints who, under Satan's misrepresentations, have been led to consider these human institutions as bodies of Christ, and to join them, while really in heart holding an allegiance to Christ as far above them, as the only true authority and Head—these are now urged to come out of all these various systems; and the light of present truth is for the purpose of showing them where they are, and permitting them to renounce their allegiance to the human systems, and to declare their allegiance only to the *one* Head and to the *one* "church which is his body." These systems are so numerous, and their theories so diverse and confused, that the general term "Babylon" (confusion) is applied to them as a general or family name, and God's true children are admonished, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." —Rev. 18:4.

In Israel God gave a typical representation of his church in Aaron, the high priest, and his sons, the under priests. So, says the Apostle, we are "a royal priesthood," and again, "Consider the high priest of our profession [or order of priesthood], Christ Jesus." Now, be it noted, that in the type the beheading of the under-priests was fully illustrated in the fact that the under-priests were required to wear "bonnets," while the high priest alone was without the bonnet and wore the mitre. The high priest was thus proclaimed to be the *head* of the priesthood; and in covering their heads the under-priests said in the type, We are headless; look to the high priest; he is our head. So, in the antitype, the spiritual royal priesthood must all be headless, must all, in the language of the hymn, say:—

"O to be nothing, nothing,
To him let all voices be raised;
He is the fountain of blessing,
He only is most to be praised."

And this headless or will-less condition is not merely a sentiment; it must be a reality, so far as the new creature is concerned. All those who are really "members of the *body* of Christ" must in their hearts reach that condition where they can say with the greatest sincerity of heart, The Lord's will be done. Teach me thy will, O Lord. They must reach that attitude of relationship to Christ that will be continually seeking to know the will of the Head, and seeking to do it. True, the new creature must operate through, and think with, the human organism; and the latter being imperfect, through the fall, the result may frequently be an imperfect apprehension of the will of Christ, as well as an imperfect doing of that will. However, the imperfections of the *flesh* are not imputed against the *new creature*, if the heart be loyal in seeking to know and in seeking to do the will of Christ.

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," and the intimation of our text is that it will be fidelity to this Spirit of the truth, the Spirit of Christ working in us, in conjunction with the Word of God, the "exceeding great and precious promises," that will work upon us to effect the change from our own wills to the will of Christ—beheading us, making us dead to self and alive toward God through Jesus Christ our Lord. There is no intimation here of dependence upon sectarian arrangements and institutions; each *"soul"* (individual) must be beheaded for himself, and must be individually united to Christ, the Head of the church. There is no intimation of the acceptance of sects and parties. On the contrary, sectarianism, in every sense and degree, is opposed to the Scriptural arrangement of union, direct and complete, between the Lord and the individual alone.

What an honor and dignity are thus given to the Word of God—and the testimony of Jesus,—not in his own words only, but especially in his life and example, the spirit of which all members of the body must partake of, ere they can have fellowship in his sufferings, walking in his footsteps in the same narrow way of self-sacrifice—thus to be made meet for a share with him in the kingdom. However, nothing in this should be understood to imply that there are no helps, no assistances, to be rendered and to be accepted and appreciated in the body of Christ, as between the various members: indeed, other Scriptures show us that if one member of the body rejoices, other members are comforted; and if one member suffers the others share the injury. And the Apostle makes very clear to us that our Lord, the Head, communicates with the members of his body by using certain of their own number as his representatives—so that one member may serve the body as an eye, another as an ear, another as a mouth. (1 Cor. 12:12-31) Nevertheless, we must always consider the headship of the Lord; and the provision which he makes for the body is what in every instance is to be sought, and not what men may scheme or do in self-exaltation and as would-be teachers in the body of Christ.

Dear brethren, let us consider well the force of this strong symbolic statement. Let us ask ourselves, (1) Have I in obedience to the spirit and example of Jesus, and the testimony of God's Word, given up my own self-control, self-will? (2) If I have, to whom did I give it?—to a large denomination, professing to be the body of Christ, or to a little denomination professing the same? (3) Am I looking to these as my head, my instructors, guides to my conscience, the directors of my spiritual energies? Or have I renounced my own headship and fully accepted the headship of Christ Jesus,—to the ignoring of all other contrary heads and authorities—to be taught of the Lord, guided of the Lord, used of the Lord, and given such experiences as his infinite wisdom sees best for me? (4) And am I fully content to be thus a member of *his body*, cut off from all others, and to be used according to his will as I find it recorded in his Word? Or am I, so to speak, a double-headed man, seeking to go through life acknowledging the headship of Jesus, but at the same time having another head or will of my own—and thus what the Apostle James called "a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways," attempting to follow my own inclinations at times, and the Lord's directions at other times, and thus unstable, unreliable, as a member of his body, and unsuitable to be used by him, but in a condition to be ultimately repudiated if I do not become entirely beheaded as respects my own will? (5) Or, have I, still worse than this, three heads, or parts of three heads,—some of my own head, or will, not fully cut off; some of the head or will of Christ, incompletely attached; and some of a sectarian, man-made head—a confusion worse confounded, which renders me utterly unfit to comprehend and obey the mind of the Spirit?

Dearly beloved, the time is short, the great prize we seek is near, the "mark" or standard of character to be attained is plainly set before us, and the Scriptures are luminous with illustrations of the necessity for complete consecration to the Lord,—showing us that it means deadness to self. Shall we not each see to it that by the grace of God every other head and authority is completely cut off and cast aside, and that henceforth, as the Apostle expressed it, "For me to live is Christ"—as a member of the body of Christ, guided by his will as discerned through his Word and providence and example? This is another picture of full completion of character-likeness to our Lord. Did he not fully give up his own headship, his own will, to the Father's will? He surely did; and as that full consecration was rewarded by the Father, so we have the assurance that our full consecration (and nothing less than this) will be fully rewarded by our Lord and Head in the kingdom.

ABRAHAM CALLED OF GOD

GEN. 12:1-9.—JULY 28.

"I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing."

Abram received his special call about four centuries after the deluge. The three sons of Noah became the roots, so to speak, of the different branches of the human family—spreading out in different directions. In the words of another, "The world was populated in three different lines by the sons of Noah: Shem, from whom were derived the Jews and other Semitic races; Ham, the ancestor of the colored races; and Japheth, amongst whose descendants are the European nations. To these three, the diverging races and the languages of men converge, as rays of light to their sources."

The four centuries had undoubtedly accomplished much in the way of populating the immediate district which is called the "cradle of the race," in the vicinity of Babylonia. During these four centuries the downward tendency of our fallen race was farther manifested; for altho Noah was evidently a man of faith in God, and his sons and their wives, saved in the Ark with him, were doubtless firm believers in Jehovah God—their experiences attesting his greatness and his wisdom—nevertheless, in a comparatively short time their posterity, lacking faith in God and in his promises that there would never more be a flood, undertook the erection of the Tower of Babel as a protection, little realizing, apparently, the folly of such an attempt to outwit the Almighty.

It was here that the oneness of the race, exercised injuriously, was effectually broken up by the Lord, by confounding the language of the people. Just how he accomplished this division of language is not explained, nor is such as explanation necessary. The fact is that language is split up not only into great divisions, but into minor dialects, notwithstanding the fact that, as surely as the whole race was originally one, the language at first must likewise have been one. This divergency of language tended to the disintegration of the race and its scattering into various bands or tribes—ultimately into every corner of the world, as at present. And such changes of conditions, in temperature, habits of life, etc., have undoubtedly had much to do with the great variety of types amongst men which we see today—these racial changes coming in gradually during the past 4000 years.

Abram, and so far as we may know from the Scriptures, his father and all of his brethren, maintained to a considerable degree a faith in Jehovah; and in harmony with this, enjoyed divine favors similar to those which operated in, and brought blessings to, Noah. But during those four centuries, so far as the records show, the world in general had become idolatrous and morally corrupt.

During all those four centuries there was no preaching of the Gospel, because there was no Gospel to preach, no good tidings authorized to be proclaimed. Nor was there any threatening of men with an eternity of torture, because no such thing is true. The world simply moved along, taking its own course, which, as we have seen, is a downward one. We may safely say that while an individual might for a time hold himself from a moral decline, or might even take a few upward steps toward a better condition, mentally, morally and physically, yet we cannot surmise, from what we know of the race and the tendencies of sin working in its members, that any number would make upward progress: on the contrary, experience proves that the tendencies on the part of the whole is continually downward, in response to some moral force corresponding to gravitation. Observation of the Scripture records as well as observation of life teach us that any particular and extended uplift of our race or its members must come through a power from on high—a power outside of mankind. And this power of God operates chiefly through the mind, and is conveyed generally through divine promises, which the Apostle declares are designed of God to work in us both "to will and to do God's good pleasure."

Here we find Abram, the youngest son of Terah, living with his father and with his brother Nahor. His elder brother Haran was of the same family group, and is supposed to have left two children when he and his wife died—Lot and Sarah. It was at this time that in some manner, not explained to us, the Lord manifested to Abram his favor, calling him to separate himself; to leave his own country and his father's house, and to expect, in so doing, increased manifestations of divine favor and blessing. Apparently this call, while given before his father Terah's death, was understood by Abram to be a preparatory admonition so that he might respond, as he did, directly after his father's death. Meantime he had reached the age of 70 years, had married Sarah and had considerable possessions in the way of flocks and herds, with quite a retinue of servants and assistants necessary to the care of these. Abram, for his name had not yet been changed to Abraham, was what is called in that country a sheik, and his change of abode in response to the Lord's call meant a great deal in the way of breaking up of established usages, sundering of family ties, etc. How large his camp must have been may be judged from the fact that a little later on (Gen. 14:14), the number of his armed servants born in his own household was 318—implying a general household at least 1,000 persons. Abram was thus a sort of king according to the conditions of that time; or a feudal lord or baron according to later conditions and usages in Great Britain; a sheik, father or ruler, according to his own time and country.

Few seem to get the proper thought respecting the call of Abram: he was not called to escape hell and eternal torment, nor was he called to go to heaven. He was called to leave Chaldea and go forth whithersoever the Lord in his providence might direct. Terah, his father, was not called, nor was Nahor, his older brother. Sarah, who had become his wife, shared with him in the call, of course, but altho he took with him his nephew, Lot, the latter was not included in the call; altho a sharer in God's favors to Abram, he had neither part nor lot in the call and the subsequent promises and covenant connected with it; and this was all right. It implied no injustice on God's part. God had a great and wonderful plan for man's salvation which he purposed to work out largely through human instrumentality, and it was his own business, and no one else's, whom of the fallen race he would elect to use as his servant and as the channel for these proposed blessings—the character of which will be more clearly delineated in future lessons.

During the five years between the time God first called Abram and the time when he started for Canaan, after his father's death, there was abundant opportunity for doubt and fear to do their work in his heart, and to hinder his obedience. Undoubtedly he thought the whole matter over carefully; and from what we know of his general character, we must assume that he decided the matter speedily—his confidence in the Lord being so great he could not question the wisdom of following such a guide. Nevertheless, the time must have come when it would be necessary to inform his friends and relatives respecting his departure and respecting his call of God. We may reasonably surmise their opposition, their lack of faith in the matter, and how they would endeavor to dissuade Abram from going, telling him he was deceiving himself, and that his chances for becoming great were far better at home than in his proposed emigration. No doubt they taunted him with a call which did not clearly specify where he was to go;—for we have the assurance of the Apostle that he obeyed God, "not knowing whither he went."—Heb. 11:8.

Abram's call very much resembles the call of the elect church. Neither are we called to escape eternal torment. Neither do we at first comprehend the leadings of divine providence, but are to follow and be led and taught of God day by day. Our friends also are in Babylon, in confusion, and they, like Abraham's friends, would dissuade us from the exercise of full confidence in the divine promises—they would persuade us of the folly of leaving Babylon, its comforts and associations: they assure us that our opportunities for greatness, etc., will be distinctly lessened by the course of obedience which we take. Nevertheless we, like Abram, go forth taking all of our possessions with us, great or small—nothing must be left behind to be a treasure in Babylon and to attract our hearts thither again. All things must be brought with us so that not our own lives and talents only, but our influence upon others, must all be made to count—every item of it—in harmony with the Lord's promises.

The Lord's promise to his elect church, designated Israel and children of Abraham, is very similar to the promise made to Abram, as recorded in this lesson. To us the Lord says, "Ye are . . . . a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;" yet these promises belong in such a large degree to the future, that only by the exercise of faith like Abram's is it possible for us to appreciate the situation and rejoice in and live up to the privileges of this position.

To us who are united to Christ, the Father's words specially apply, "I will bless thee and make thy name great and thou shalt be called blessed." The fulfilment has already commenced in our hearts, but that is not the end, not the fulness, not the ultimate meaning of the promise; for by and by this holy nation (the body of Christ, the church), shall be great indeed when filled with the divine blessing and power as God's glorified kingdom. We realize, too, that while it is our blessed privilege to let shine upon others the light which the Lord by his Spirit has graciously shined into our hearts, nevertheless, our time for bestowing the great blessing is still future—that it belongs to the period for which we pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth." We reason that, altho our name may be now cast out as evil, and the reproaches bestowed upon the Head of the body may fall also upon us, his members, nevertheless, the time is surely hastening when the name Christ, shall be great throughout all the earth, and that being the name of our Bridegroom it will also be our name as his bride and joint-heir. We look forward with joy to the time when the holy nation, now so misunderstood and considered a peculiar people, shall recompense the poor, blinded, Satan-deceived world and nominal church for all the evils inflicted upon the Christ, head and body, by blessing them, returning good for evil in the highest degree—instructing and uplifting all who will to return to divine favor.

It is also true of the spiritual seed of Abraham that the Lord defends their cause, and that those who afflict or injure them, figuratively injure the apple of the Lord's eye, while those who bless them are sure to be compensated. Whosoever shall give a cup of cold water to one of the least of the Lord's disciples shall eventually receive a great reward for the kindness—if not in the present life, then, in the life to come.—Matt. 10:42; Zech. 2:8.

Abraham's experience is recorded as an evidence of his faith. It would have been vain for him to have pleaded great faith in the Lord and to have said, The Lord is as able to bless me and to use me in Chaldea, Babylonia, as in any other place; and since what he seeks is to know my faith, he can just as well see that I have it here. Some who class themselves as spiritual Israel, seem to reason after this manner, but they make a great mistake. It is true that the Lord looks upon the heart, and that it is our faith, and not our imperfect works, which commends us to him, but he assures us that if we have the faith it will speedily manifest itself in works; and that if we have the faith and fail to act in harmony with it, to the extent of our ability, the faith will die out. Perfect works are not demanded of us, because we are imperfect through the fall; but any who would maintain a justified standing before the Lord, through faith, must manifest works in harmony with their faith to the extent of ability, for faith without works is dead—has lost all its vitality, all its virtue, all its life. It is thenceforth dead, worthless.—James 2:17.

Justification is a free gift, "not of works, lest any man should boast"—it is God's *gift* through Christ, based upon the ransom. But as it is accounted unto us only for the purpose of permitting us to go on—to sanctification—to self-sacrifice, such results or works must be forthcoming, or it will prove that we have received "the grace of God in vain."—Eph. 2:9; 2 Cor. 6:1.

After Abraham had thus proven himself obedient, showing his faith by his obedience, the Lord revealed his purposes to him much more specifically than at first, saying, "Unto thy seed will I give this land." This promise must have seemed quite improbable at that time, for the land was already peopled with strong nations, whose posterity would undoubtedly increase greatly, while Abram, on the contrary, had as yet no child. There was room for doubt in Abram's mind, but there was also room for faith. His faith accepted the promise, and he ratified it by building there an altar, on which we presume he offered sacrifices to the Lord, typical of the great sacrifice of Christ, through the efficacy of which all of God's promises will be fulfilled. Let us carefully notice that the special promise of God given to Abram ignored Lot and his family, and ignored the thousand or more persons of Abram's household. It is proper to call special attention to these matters in view of the very erroneous conceptions of God's elections, which have gained access to nearly all minds, and which need to be gotten rid of it we would rightly understand the divine plan of the ages. Those non-elect were "passed by" and not associated in the Abrahamic call and election, but not therefore sentenced to eternal torment; but, just like the non-elect of this Gospel age, they must wait for divine blessings until Abraham's seed shall bless the world during the Millennium.

There is no suggestion in this promise neither that Abraham was to preach the Gospel to any of his 1,000 camp-followers, and herdsmen, nor that any of them were in any danger of an eternity of torture by reason of such a commission not having been given to Abram. The fact is that the wages of sin is death—including trials, weaknesses and sufferings of the present life incidental to the dying process. The whole world was in danger of this penalty,—more than this, the danger feature was past, for they were already in death;—dying under the original sentence passed against father Adam, and shared by all of his progeny.—Rom. 5:12.

The whole race therefore, including Abram and Lot and the servants and all the families of the earth, were going down into the great prison house—death. No way of escape had yet been provided by the Almighty on any terms or conditions, and hence there was no Gospel to preach; hence, too, altho the Lord subsequently made known to Abraham that the blessing of all of the families of the earth would in due time come through his seed—the Christ—nevertheless, the proclamation of this Gospel or good tidings of a resurrection—of a recovery of the dead through the merits of the great atonement sacrifice—could not be made, could not be authorized of God, till first of all our Lord Jesus had paid the ransom price with his own life, purchasing the whole world of mankind, and the right in due time to resurrect such of them as will come into full accord with the divine law. It is appropriate, therefore, that the Scriptures tell us distinctly that this great salvation from death "*Began* to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."—Heb. 2:3.

ABRAHAM'S AND LOT'S TESTINGS

Gen. 13:1-18.—Aug. 4.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."—Matt. 7:12.

Development of character implies a variety of experiences and tests. In choosing Abraham as his agent and channel through whom he would bring to the world his purposed blessings, God chose a good man, but not a perfect one—for there was not a perfect man to choose, as there has not been since, of all Adam's posterity. While God called Abraham, he made him only partial promises until he had manifested faith by obedience. And it was appropriate that various and severe tests of faith should come before the fulness of divine favor should be guaranteed him. One of these faith-tests came through a drouth in the land of Canaan, and, as a result, a food scarcity, a famine, in the region where Abraham had settled, flocks and herds.

It would naturally be a severe test of faith for him to see his cattle lean and dying, and to think of the fertile country which he had left, and that this drouth-stricken land was the one to which the Lord had called him. He must go somewhere to find water and sustenance, and concluded not to go back to Babylon, but to journey south-westward into the country bordering Egypt. Egypt was well advanced in civilization, and like Chaldea, his former home, was a heathen land—to the extent that the people had considerably lost sight of the one God and his worship, and had become worshipers of various deities. It was a dangerous experiment: Abram might have become enamored of the civilization, etc., of Egypt and have lost his respect for the Lord's promise in regard to Canaan; yet it did not have this effect, but apparently, on the contrary, became a blessing to him; for his experience there convinced him more and more that he could not have true happiness under the prevailing conditions: he would rather wander about and have no continuing city, and not be bound by any of the customs and rules of the world which recognized not God. His experience taught him to look for, to hope for, to wait for, the New Jerusalem city or government, which has not yet been established, but for which the Lord's people still pray: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth."

Abraham little realized how much he needed to pray, "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." On arrival he, as a great man, was brought to the attention of the king, and Sarah, his wife, was introduced—but as his sister, or niece, not as his wife. Abraham heard probably about this time of an incident which had occurred with one of the Pharaohs, of which we now know through recently discovered papyrus records—that at the instance of his princes he sent an armed force and took a beautiful woman from her husband for his harem. Sarah was a beautiful woman, and Abraham feared that Pharaoh might kill him in order to have his wife. This difficulty probably did not occur to him when he started his journey, nor until he had arrived there and was called before the king. Thus the Lord's people always find it: if they leave the land of promise, seeking better things in the world, they find their difficulties and trials greatly increased.

Abraham determined that as an expedient for the preservation of his life he would tell but a part of the truth and speak of Sarah as his sister, without acknowledging her as his wife. The transaction was an ignoble one every way, and quite unworthy of the man; but the Lord did not forsake him, but, as the record shows, returned Sarah to him with a rebuke from the heathen king which must have stung Abraham severely, and have served as a lesson for the remainder of his life. Thus all things work together for good to them that love God—even their mistakes and slips become lessons and blessings under divine providence. Having learned his lesson, Abraham quickly retraced his steps to the land of promise, returning again to Bethel where first he had built an altar to the Lord and formally consecrated himself: there again Abraham called upon the name of the Lord. The prompt retracing of his steps is also a lesson for the Lord's people of this Gospel age. If we find that through lack of faith or weakness of the flesh a wrong step has been taken, contrary to the Lord's will and our best spiritual interests, no time should be lost in retracing the steps and in calling upon the Lord. We have an altar consecrated with the precious blood of Christ, far superior every way to that which Abraham consecrated with the blood of typical animals; and the Apostle exhorts us, "Let us come boldly [courageously—full of faith] to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need."—Heb. 4:16.

One of the strongest evidences of the truth of the Bible records, and that they are not the work of priests or knaves, is the fact that the weaknesses and frailties of its grandest and most luminous characters are depicted with as free a hand as their virtues and strong qualities. Had the story of Abraham and the story of David, both men full of faith and after God's own heart, and acknowledged to be his friends, been concocted, they assuredly would have omitted all the blemishes of the present narratives. As it is, the weaknesses of these men, and divine compassion toward them notwithstanding these, and their faith and repentance and reestablishment in divine favor, have been lessons of incalculable value to the Lord's saints throughout the age, many of whom have at times found themselves more or less similarly entrapped, and to some extent stumbled by the great temptations of the world, the flesh and the Devil.

Abraham's flocks and herds increased, and the number of his servants. Likewise also did Lot's—tho he was by no means as wealthy a man as his uncle. Prosperity seems as likely to bring trouble as adversity, or more so; and it does not surprise us to find that a strife broke out between the herdsmen of the two masters, and that apparently the strife extended to Lot. The land at that time was not thickly settled, nor was it owned and controlled by syndicates; hence Abraham and Lot moved hither and thither through the grazing country, merely seeking to find unoccupied pasturage, and as the Canaanites (Lowlanders) and the Perizzites (Highlanders) dwelt in Canaan, it necessarily meant that migratory bands, such as Abraham's, would find the pasturage at times somewhat restricted. Abraham's prompt course for the maintenance of peace is worthy of emulation. His words to Lot on the subject would make a good motto for the home or for the shop; "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee. . . . for we are brethren." The Lord's people are not all peaceably disposed according to the flesh, but peaceableness is a prominent element in the new nature, the new mind, the new will, the new heart; hence peaceableness is to be cultivated and more attention is to be given to it in proportion as we find our natural disposition to be contentious. This is one of the ways the Lord's people are to be renewed in word and in deed;—"By the transformation of their minds."

Abraham was not only peaceable, but generous, as his proposition to Lot shows; for altho he was the richer of the two by far, and his larger herds and flocks required more abundant provision, he nevertheless gave Lot the choice. Here is another lesson for all of the Lord's people: generosity, not an unreasoning and unreasonable generosity which would give away everything, but an even-handed, fair generosity which is well represented in our Golden Text; *viz.*, the golden rule that we should treat others as we would reasonably wish them to treat us: whoever follows this rule, will, like Abraham, find that in the end it will be profitable—even tho it may at first seem unprofitable.

It would appear that Lot was less generous than his uncle—more selfish; and taking advantage of the latter's liberal proposition he chose the rich, fertile valley of the Jordan—the land of Sodom, of which the record is that it was "like the garden of the Lord" (the garden of Eden), and like the most favored portion of Egypt. Lot was a keen business man apparently, for his choice signified not only the richest of the grazing country, but additionally the best market for his flocks and herds; because the Jordan valley seems to have been a commercial highway frequented by traveling caravans, etc., the best of customers for sheep and cattle. Abraham and Lot together might have taken the Jordan valley at first, seeing its suitability to their occupation: no doubt the reason why Abraham avoided it is found in the fact of the wickedness of the people there, and that he did not wish to bring either himself or wife or servants into close contact with such people, preferring the less fertile district because of their separateness from such associations, with which he could not feel in harmony or fellowship.

Lot possessed much less faith and much less character than his uncle, but was also a good man, and his determination to make the country of the Jordan his home does not signify that he had fellowship with the Sodomites. On the contrary, the record is that their course "vexed his righteous soul." (2 Pet. 2:8) He evidently was deluded, as many of the Lord's people of today are deluded, into association with evil influences for the sake of worldly prosperity. He no doubt persuaded himself that he could live separate from the contaminations of Sodom, and even exercise a moral influence over the unrighteous. How unwise, very unwise, his course really was may be seen in the light of his subsequent history. The wisdom of Abraham stands out in striking contrast, and the two experiences furnish valuable lessons for all who are seeking the heavenly city and praying, Thy kingdom come. Abraham's course illustrates our Lord's words, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness and all these [needful] things shall be added unto you." Lot's course illustrates our Lord's words, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world!" Lot's quest for wealth, etc., no doubt brought rich returns, for he became a wealthy and influential man in Sodom, but his wealth and influence cost too much; first, they cost his peace of mind, for "his righteous soul was vexed;" he had no real happiness. Second, it cost him his children, sons and daughters, all but two unmarried ones, and even they apparently were blemished through their contact with evil example. And it cost him also his wife, whose sympathies for her children over-balanced her interest in the Lord and righteousness. It cost him additionally, in the end, all his flocks and herds and wealth, all of which went down in the fire from heaven upon the city of destruction.

There is a great lesson here for us all, especially for such lovers of righteousness as have the care, the guardianship of children: the lesson is that they should think less of earthly advantages, social, political and financial, and think more, much more, of the moral and spiritual influences and advantages obtainable through isolation from the evil which is in the world,—so far as possible "make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame [blemished through sin] be turned out of the way [of righteousness]."—Heb. 12:13.

Abraham did not attempt to coerce his nephew; but, properly no doubt, after having advised him to the contrary, he let him take his course, contenting himself with giving the admonition and example to the contrary. Here is another good lesson for the Lord's people; very many who like to have their own liberty are disposed to use force and coercion in dealing with others, and the results are generally bad for both parties. Lack of faith lies at the bottom of such difficulties; self-will attempts to regulate our own affairs, and branching out attempts also to regulate the affairs of others; whereas a consecrated will, resting by faith upon the Lord's promise, permits the Lord to have the helm; to control not only in respect to the believer's personal interests, but also in respect to the interests and affairs of others. Abraham had manifested his faith in God, not only in respect to the future blessings promised, but also in respect to the incidental details of his every-day life. Hence he could afford not only to not interfere with Lot's liberty, but could be generous to the extent of giving Lot his choice, knowing that the Lord would take care of him, and fulfil to him all the gracious promises incidental to his call. And in proportion as we are children of Abraham by faith we should have and should continually exercise similar faith, that we may experience similar blessings under God's providence.

While Lot's choice led him farther from the right, Abraham's blessing was increased by his course; for again the Lord appeared to him, in a manner not explained, and gave him renewed assurance respecting the original promise, telling him to look in every direction and to know assuredly that, while this land at the present time was under various rulers, it should in time be given to him and his posterity everlastingly. Yet with this renewal of the promise must have come another testing of faith, because Abraham as yet had no child. How improbable, therefore, the fulfilment of the Lord's word, that his seed should ultimately be very numerous, hyperbolically "as the dust of the earth!" Yet Abraham's faith wavered not. Likewise the faith of the Lord's people today wavers not respecting his promise—for it has not yet had a fulfilment, as the Apostles Paul and Stephen both declare.

Abraham lived in the land many years and died there, yet was a pilgrim and stranger; a sojourner and not an owner to the day of his death. (Heb. 11:13) Stephen's explanation of the matter is very explicit. (Acts 7:5) He declares that God never gave him so much of the space as would be covered by his foot; and points out that the time for the fulfilment of this promise is future—during the resurrection, the Millennium of Christ's reign, after the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, the glorified church, the bride with the bridegroom, shall have been established in the control of the world as God's Kingdom.—Dan. 7:13, 14; 1 Cor. 15:24.

With each manifestation of obedience on the part of Abraham came fresh blessings from the Lord, fresh repetitions and expanded declarations respecting the divine purpose, strengthening and encouraging him. Nevertheless he understood that the realization of his hope lay in the future, and this was clearly indicated by the Lord's words, "Arise, journey through the land, in the length and in the breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee." In compliance with this instruction, that he was to be a pilgrim, moving from place to place, Abraham only removed to Mamre, and, doubtless in harmony with his custom at each new stopping place, he built there another altar unto the Lord—another typical acknowledgement of sin, of his own unworthiness, and of the fact that his standing before God, his acceptance with him, was in the merits of a great sin offering which had not yet been made. So with us who are the Lord's people, wherever we are; we are under divine care, and may rest, and may have the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts: nevertheless, we are not to be at home, nor to seek to feel at home under present imperfect conditions. We are to continually remember that the Lord has promised us a heavenly inheritance, and we are to seek for and wait for it, assured that it will be ours if we remain faithful to the end of life's pilgrimage.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother Russell:—The article on "Patient Endurance," in April 1 Tower seemed most opportune, as we heard a number of our people speak of it particularly; and I may say it is most highly appreciated by myself. Indeed, dear Brother Russell, every number of the blessed Tower seems fraught with the spiritual refreshment most needed at the time, and my heart is continually lifted in deep gratitude to our Father for the heavenly food furnished through your instrumentality. That you have been enabled to so empty yourself as to be filled with God's precious messages so richly, is a cause of deep gratitude from all the household of faith. In reading over recently the first and second volumes of Dawn, I am astonished at the many things that had previously escaped me, or failed to leave their impression—probably through the pressure of worldly cares. The last three years have brought me riches of knowledge and experience, yet with them such an overwhelming sense of my utter unworthiness and incompetency that I would surely sink, but for clinging to the cross.

I ask your prayers that I may not receive the grace of God in vain, but forget the things that are behind, and press forward to the mark—with patient endurance.

With earnest desire for the continuation of His rich favors to you, and all needed strength, both physically and spiritually, and trusting in the merits of our great Redeemer,

I remain, yours with Christian love,

Alice E. Bourquin,—*New York.*

Dear Brother Russell:—We have heard several times from you through Sister Giesecke in Germany, and received your greetings and sent our regards to you. But I feel as tho I should write directly to you this time, to inform you that the Lord has a people even here in Poland, and that a goodly number have been found here in a comparatively short time. There were only three of us when I first came here; but the Lord has blest the testimony and the circulation of the tracts and booklets to such an extent that now we number fifteen, nine brethren and six sisters. And the opposition on the part of those who claim to be faithful Christians, but who do not grasp the truth was, and is still, very severe, not only in this place, but in the entire vicinity, into which the truth has been carried in a wonderful manner, through various agencies, showing that it is the Lord's work.

We are so thankful that the Lord has counted us worthy to see present truth, delivering us out of the gross darkness of Babylon, and translating us into his marvelous light. And we cannot help feeling that the Lord has condescended greatly in calling us, who in so many respects are much more unworthy than many others whom we know to be blinded and prejudiced against the truth, but who naturally seem to be much more qualified for service if their eyes were only open to the truth.

We have great difficulty in getting literature from Germany, and in fact from anywhere outside the Russian border, especially so of late, on account of the recent ecclesiastical and social troubles, but we are thankful for what we have already received, and are feeding with delight at the richly decked table of present truth. We are glad that you have not decided to discontinue issuing the German Tower, even tho it comes so seldom and not nearly with the quantity of food the English brethren have furnished them. We earnestly hope that the fifth volume of the Dawn may appear in a German translation, and until then we will endeavor to be satisfied with the grace already bestowed upon us.

We wish you the Lord's richest blessing in your ministries of love, and remember you in our prayers, hoping and praying that we may be remembered also in your petitions. We would be delighted to receive an acknowledgement of the receipt of these lines. And finally we send you hearty greetings. May the Lord bless you! Yours in the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

Johann Weinz,—*Russian Poland.*

The following is from the Bandera, Texas, *Enterprise* of April 11, 1901. We commend the Brother's method of announcing in his home paper the reasons for his withdrawal from a system, whose doctrines he could no longer support, and believe the temperate and careful manner in which he has stated the reasons for his action should be helpful in its influence upon any whom he may hereafter endeavor to interest in the "good news."—Editor.

"WHY I WITHDRAW FROM METHODISM.

"Having recently withdrawn from the Methodist church, of which I have been a member for more than thirty years, and knowing, as I do, that some will be wondering at my motive in doing so, and knowing, also, that of the various motives which will be imputed to me, some are likely to be suggested by those who have not investigated the matter for themselves, and hence will be incapable of rendering a fair judgment, I desire to occupy enough space in my county paper in which to give my true reason for the step I have taken, and then leave it to the public to approve or disapprove as they may feel inclined.

"My reason for leaving the church was not that I had any dissatisfatcion with, or the slightest ill will towards, a single member of this or any other church, but simply because my honest convictions as to the true interpretation of God's Word had become too much at variance with the doctrines taught by all the churches with which I am acquainted to admit of my longer remaining therein with justice to the church, to myself or my God.

"Whether by chance or by divine intervention the MILLENNIAL DAWN series of Bible helps, consisting of five books, was recently placed in my hands. I confess it was with no little prejudice that I began to investigate the doctrines taught in them, but to my surprise I have found that:—

"1. They teach nothing which is not in the very strictest accord with the New Testament code of morals.

"2. I find that the author of said books 'reasons together' with his readers in the most fair, liberal and logical manner, giving quotation after quotation and reference after reference to the Bible in support of his construction and understanding thereof.

"So logical, patent and convincing are the theories advanced (if you chose to call them theories: for my part I call them truths) that I cannot resist them. With such beauty and grandeur do the books depict the power, wisdom, justice and love of the great Father, the Creator of all the world, as well as the beneficent character of Christ, the blessed Redeemer of all the world, that my mind has been opened to a far more vivid realization of the actual existence of God and his glorious plans and purposes concerning his creature, man; also the height and depth and length and breadth of the love of Christ, and the far-reaching efficacy of his sacrificial death on the cross, are so apparent that my heart has seemingly enlarged manifold, and my respect, reverence, love and admiration for God and Christ, as well as my love and good will towards my fellow creatures, have reached a point far, far beyond anything I ever before experienced.

"Hence I have determined to throw off the shackles of church creeds and prejudices, and with God's help let the new light shine forth in my daily life; to present the MILLENNIAL DAWN doctrine to as many as desire to hear it, and to help those who hunger and thirst after truth, to the very best of my ability, trusting God for direction and help. So, then, in the fear of God, I heartily recommend every one to procure these books, and with receptive mind and earnest prayer to God for his guidance, read them with Bible in hand.

WILLIAM HUDSPETH."

A SPECIAL EDITION OF THE LINEAR BIBLE

A short time ago we proposed arranging for a wide-margin Bible, and selected the new Linear Bible as being in every way the best, most up-to-date Teachers' Bible published—possessing an excellent Concordance, and giving in the text the readings of both the Common Version and the Revised Version in good readable type, and of a size not extremely bulky. On the adjoining page we lay before our readers what the publishers have to say in favor of the Linear Bible, and their regular prices for them; also a sample page, showing style of type, etc. By special arrangement we can procure a large quantity of these Bibles for WATCH TOWER subscribers at a very much lower rate than the prices at which they are usually sold. And additionally we can have inserted eighty photographs of the Holy land and vicinity; and have the outer margin made 1 inch wide.

At first it was proposed that TOWER readers should in this margin make reference memoranda to the five volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN, and the last six years' issues of the WATCH TOWER,—opposite each verse, throughout this Bible. Subsequently, however, considering how much labor this would mean—how many hours and days would thus be spent, and how many would fail entirely to secure the desired results, and how many others would blot and blur, and only secure unsatisfactory results, we concluded to see what could be done in the way of *printing* these references in the margin. We find, as hinted in our last issue, that it will be quite an expense, both of labor and of money, to publish the Bible in this manner. But we reflect that when complete it would be one of the greatest blessings to the Lord's people interested in present truth that could possibly be prepared for them; and this would compensate for much trouble. It would be a Bible Commentary arranged in the most satisfactory manner ever designed. It would give the dear friends, as they meet in various parts of the world for the study of the Lord's Word, an opportunity of having the Editor present with them at each meeting, to offer suggestions respecting the meaning of the texts. This would not mean, of course, that his suggestions would be considered indisputable or infallible, but merely that he would be present with the little companies of the Lord's people throughout the whole world, to discuss with them the Father's Word and to assist as much as possible in throwing a correct light upon its meaning.

We have already received a large number of responses on the basis of our first announcement of a blank wide margin, and unless countermanded we will understand these to be for the Bible as now proposed. But now we invite *postal cards* from all subscribers who have *not responded*, who would like to have the Bible as it is now proposed it shall be; namely, with the references in the margin. It is quite possible that we would never get out another edition, and we believe that every WATCH TOWER reader who can afford it at all should have the Bible proposed, in the cheaper or better binding.

We now propose that if we receive responses from 2,000, we will proceed to publish the Bible as stated, charging the following prices: In "French Seal," divinity circuit, gold edges, linen lined, $2.00, including postage. In "Persian Seal" (Morocco), gold edges, leather-lined, $3.00, including postage. These prices will apply only to those who place their orders in advance and thus guarantee us against loss. We may publish a few more than will be represented by the orders, but they will be sold at higher prices. It is our opinion that every WATCH TOWER reader who secures one of these best books, will consider it worth $10—that he would not sell it for $10. We invite postal cards *at once*, that the matter may be determined upon, We expect to have them all alike, none with thumb index, which would spoil the references. Send your *postal cards* at once, but send no money until the books are announced as ready,—which will probably be not much before Christmas.

VOL. XXII ALLEGHENY, PA., AUGUST 1, 1901 No. 15

BALANCING EARTHLY GOOD WITH DIVINE FAVOR

"Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee."—Psa. 63:3.

Loving-kindness, in our text, has the signification of favor. The Prophet, in speaking, represents the church—the Christ, Head and body. The words are applicable to no others. None but the saints esteem divine favor more precious, more valuable, than the present life—than earthly good things. If we ask the world to balance this matter, to weigh on one side of the balances earthly interests, earthly pleasures, family ties, social position, pride, worldly aspirations, and to put on the other side of the balance divine favor, the reply would be that the earthly good things have all the weight; and that divine favor has none, for the worldly know little or nothing respecting divine favor. They have indeed heard that some people believe in a God, believe in his providential care, believe in his love, believe in a future life, etc., but as for themselves they conclude that such things *may be*, while the earthly things are certainties; and they would not think for a moment of exchanging present certainties for unknown and intangible matters, called divine favor.

If we even ask the average nominal Christian to weigh this matter, and tell us if willing to exchange,—putting in the one side of the balance all the good things, hopes, ambitions, family ties, social position, churchianity, petty office and esteem of men, and putting into the other side of the scale Gods' favor,—he will hesitate and eventually decide that he will do nothing of the kind. The reason with many is that they do not appreciate divine favor. They have heard and believed certain things respecting the Almighty, some of them true and some of them false; and the misrepresentations of God's character have so neutralized and offset and made non-effective the truths which they have learned, that they lack *confidence* in the unseen: with such, worldly interests outweigh appreciation of divine favor ten to one. The truths they learned were respecting God's love and his gracious provision for his fallen creatures through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; and that he willeth not the death of him that dieth, but would that all should turn unto him and live, in the enjoyment of endless blessing.

These truths are found in the sure Word of God; the untruths which they have learned came from a human source, or rather more remotely, from the great Adversary himself, Satan, "the god of this world," as the Apostle calls him. As he tells us, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not"—blinded them to the real character and plan of Jehovah, and deluded them into thinking of him most unkindly, most disreputably we might almost say most blasphemously. He has blinded them into thinking that the Almighty, while declaring that he has all power, has declared also that he will exercise this power beneficially only over a mere handful of earth's teeming millions—that he will take out this sample to show his power and what he could have done for all if he had wanted to, and exercise his power in hurling the great mass of his creation into eternal torment;—that he made provision to this end before the creation of mankind,—prepared a great and awful place of torture,—prepared the fuel for eternity,—and prepared the devils to see that nothing was lacking in the worst form of torture.

Is it any wonder that those who have thus received human traditions instead of the Word of God, those who believe such terrible things respecting the Creator and his plans, things which outrank in cruelty the doctrines of the heathen, received from the same Satanic source, should doubt the love of such a God? It is no wonder that such find themselves unable to reconcile such human theories with the plain Scriptural declaration that God is love, very pitiful, very merciful, and that his mercy endureth forever; and that he doth not willingly afflict the children of men. The two thoughts are in violent conflict; the one represents God as loving and kind; the other represents him as a demon of the worst imaginable character; and it is no wonder that those who have in their minds this mixture of human traditions which make void the Word of God, are unable to see God from the right standpoint implied in our text—unable to see his loving kindness, so great, so good, so beneficent, toward all of his creatures,—unable to reconcile such human theory with the Scriptural declaration, that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man, and that this grace of God in Christ is yet to be testified in due time to every creature, and that thus all are eventually to come to a knowledge of the truth, and thus all eventually to have an opportunity for life everlasting.—1 Tim. 2:4:

Is it any wonder that those who entertain so mixed a conception of the Almighty's character, when they attempt to balance the loving favor of God with earthly good things, find that the scale weighs down toward the earthly things, because, altho they appreciate some features of the divine character, these are practically neutralized by such misrepresentations of the adversary through false theories. Well does the Apostle explain the object of this blindness on the part of Satan, saying, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:4) Ah yes, here it is! The goodness of God, the loving kindness of God, God's favor, does not shine into the hearts of many, and while it does shine a little into some hearts, thick darkness of error hinders their hearts from receiving the full benefit of the light, and its blessing and joy. Such as are in this position find it impossible to love the Lord with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their being, with all their strength; because from all that they know of him, through this false representation of his character, he is not worthy of much love. The fear of the Lord might operate upon them under such circumstances, and might be balanced against the world and its good things, but his "loving kindness" has comparatively little weight in their lives.

Are we to suppose, then, that there were no saints in the past, because in the past these false ideas of God held full sway amongst his professed children? Are we to suppose that Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, the Wesleys and others, were not saints, and not joint-inheritors with Christ in the kingdom? No; on the contrary, we presume that these were saints, and that they laid down their lives in the Lord's service; and we merely mention these prominent names as illustrations, and not by way of saying that they were the only saints of their times, and not disputing either that there were saints before them, all through the dark ages, as well as in the primitive church.

What we do claim, however, is that the mixed theology, which represents God as half love and half devil, never produced the sanctifying effect which we see in the lives of the class we have mentioned. We hold that all those who reached the point of saintship described in our text, and who were able to balance the present life and its earthly good things with the loving favor of God, and to prefer God's favor rather than life, so that they were willing to sacrifice earthly interests, that they might have the divine favor, both as respects the life which now is, and that which is to come,—these never reached this position through their mixed theology, but attained this grand position only in proportion as they were able to forget or ignore the human and Satanic blasphemies respecting the divine character, and to think of God from the standpoint of pure justice and love. Some of them have told us in their writings how terribly this devil-inspired theology weighed upon them; how they found the theory so antagonistic to all their conceptions of divine justice, mercy and love, that the only thing they could do under the circumstances was to shut the eyes of their minds to the nightmare of hell and devils and torments, and to say to the Lord, O Lord, I cannot understand this, but I accept thee as a very God of love and justice, and I know that when I shall see thee as thou art, and when I shall see all the works of thy great and wonderful plan, then I shall realize, as I cannot now realize, wherein divine justice and love are compatible with this awful theory of eternal torment for all except the little flock, the elect.

Thus by shutting their eyes to the error, and opening their eyes by faith to the real character of God, substantiated by so many declarations of his Word, the class we refer to, through all the darkness of the dark ages, was indeed enabled to love God supremely, so that they counted not their lives dear unto them, that they might have his favor; they were willing to lay down life and earthly advantages and hopes and favors, that they might have the divine favor now and everlastingly. And if God's people in the past were enabled to triumph in spite of blindness, what shall we say respecting our position today, now that the due time has come for this vail that was spread over all nations to be taken away, so that the true light of the knowledge of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, should shine into our hearts and give us to see through his Word, and freed from human tradition and Satanic misrepresentation, the justice and the loving kindness of our God!

How shall we today balance this question of earthly life and its advantages and privileges and hopes and aims with the favor of God? Well, it will be a test to us, as it has been a test all through the ages. Those who are merely glad to find out that there is no eternal torment, and whose hearts are not touched with the "loving kindness" of God, will go on in the world, rejoicing that they have been delivered from a bondage of error, but not returning to give glory to God and to offer themselves in his service. And these, alas! are the majority; like the ten lepers who were cleansed by our Lord, of whom only one returned to give thanks and to become a follower of Jesus. Thus the test goes on today, as ever; for the Lord is now seeking only the kingdom class, only the little flock, and he wishes to have in it only such as love him supremely—only such as, having tasted that the Lord is gracious, desire to and do feast upon his favor, enjoying it, relishing it, appreciating it far beyond any earthly pleasure, any earthly hope, any earthly ambition, any earthly love.

This class today and at all times has been the same,—of one spirit with their Head. The Apostle Paul voices their sentiments: speaking on this very subject, and weighing the earthly life with the divine favor, he says: "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ and be found in him. . . . That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain to *the* resurrection of *the dead*." (Phil. 3:7-11) The Apostle's sentiment is that of all the saints; it is that of all who will be accounted "overcomers," and who will be accounted inheritors of the promise of joint-heirship with Jesus. Nothing short of this will do. We must appreciate the loving favor of God as *better than earthly life*, else we are not worthy of him and not of the kind he is seeking. And it is with all who have the Lord's spirit just as it was with the Apostle; the moment they begin to weigh and contrast fellowship with God and the eternal hopes associated therewith, in contrast wth earthly loves and family ties and earthly ambitions and pleasures, the latter all seem to be quite insignificant in comparison, dross as compared to pure gold. And from this standpoint they gladly renounce all, giving up life itself for the favor of God.

ATTAINING CHRISTIAN MATURITY

But this full development is not at the beginning of the Christian experience with us, nor was it at the beginning of Paul's experience. It is development attained by growth. At the very beginning, however, it was necessary, before either Paul or we could be accepted at all of the Lord, as begotten to the new nature, that we should first balance the loving favor of God with the earthly good things, and the balance must be settled on the side of divine favor, so that we would give up the other,—earthly life, earthly hopes, earthly aims, earthly pleasures, *consecrating* them to sacrifice, in such measure as may be necessary in order to maintain divine favor and blessing. From the time the scale was thus turned to the Lord's side, and our hearts were consecrated to him, earthly things began to lose their weight and to lose their value, to lose appreciation in our eyes, as our eyes began to open the wider to the heavenly things; and the latter became more and more weighty with us, more and more real, until we could see with the eye of faith him who is invisible to the natural sight, and the crown of glory, and the exceeding great and precious things which God has in reservation for them that love him, and be more and more strengthened thereby. And so with some it may have been after weeks or months or years that they reached the position attained by the Apostle when he wrote, as above, that all earthly things were henceforth but as loss and dross when weighed in comparison with Christ and God's loving kindness or favor toward us in him.

This loving favor of God, so much appreciated by the saints that they consecrate their earthly all to obtain it, is not merely a favor as respects future prospects and hopes—not merely as respects the kingdom to come and the glory and the honor and immortality then to be granted to such as are in divine favor, but it extends to the present life. Gradually we come to appreciate fellowship and communion with the Father to such a degree as to produce misery of soul if this communion is interrupted. And this sentiment is beautifully expressed in the hymn which we sometimes sing:—

"Sun of my soul, my Father dear,
I know no night when thou are near;
O let no earth-born cloud arise
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."

The true child of God will be in such close fellowship with the Father, and with the spirit of truth and righteousness and love, that anything which would interrupt or hinder this fellowship would be esteemed a calamity, however sweet or precious it might be to the natural man. The new creature is willing rather to cut it off, if it were dear as a right hand; to pluck it out, if it were precious as a right eye; than to allow any earthly thing to intervene between him and the divine loving-favor which he has learned so to enjoy that he considers it better than all the rest of life.

"THEREFORE WILL MY LIPS PRAISE THEE"

Many Christians, confused wth the Babylonian din of false, contradictory theories, have felt that they would desire to show forth the Lord's praise; but then to offset this there arises in their minds the terrible errors which, as a great nightmare, darken their souls and hush their lips, so that as a rule few are found ready to speak of the Lord and his matters except those who speak either from a sense of *duty* or from a love of money and position. And so it is that today, were the emoluments of honor and salary taken away, and were it necessary in order to be a minister of Christ to follow the example of the Apostle Paul, and to labor, working with their hands, in some sort of tent-making, nearly all of the ministers of Babylon would cease preaching. As it is, the ablest and most intelligent of them can only be retained in the service by making it pay them better in money and honor of men than any other occupation which they know of.

On the other hand, those who have tasted of the Lord's grace, those who have come to realize his favor as *better than life*, and who have joyfully laid upon his altar every earthly good thing, and hope and ambition, rejoice to tell the good tidings to others; they rejoice to tell forth the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. The message is too good to keep. they not only do not require to be hired to tell it, but they are willing that the telling of it, and the enjoying of God's favor in connection with the telling, shall cost them something—cost them trouble, cost them money, cost them the loss of earthly friendships, cost the straining if not the breaking of some of home ties, cost the frown of the world and of churchianity;—yes, they rejoice, saying, in the language of the Prophet, "He hath put a new song into my mouth, even the *loving-kindness* of our God!"

Some one, perhaps, will say this is exaggeration; it will not cost earthly friendships nor home ties; it will bring with it respect and honor of men, and a salary. We answer, No! The Lord's Word is still true; he is still the example to all who will walk in his footsteps. For what did the Master suffer the loss of social position? Why did the doctors of divinity of his day, and the notables of the religious people, hide as it were their faces from him? Why did they finally become so embittered against him, and so hate him, that they crucified him? Was it because, of evil-doing on his part? Nay, but "he went about doing good." It was because he told the truth—truths which they believed in great measure, but with which they had mixed "traditions of the elders," which blinded them and made them children of darkness. Our Lord gives us the key to the situation when he says, "The darkness hateth the light." The darkness does not hate the light so that it will not wear a garment of light to deceive, and so the adversary, in inculcating the darkness of misrepresentation of the divine character, takes care that this false doctrine shall always have associated with it, to some extent, as a sugar-coating, a garment of love and charity also. He associates a blasphemous misrepresentation of the divine character, which teaches that God is hurrying the masses of poor, frail humanity into the hands of demons for eternal torture, with moral platitudes and churchwork, and on the other hand satisfies the human cravings for better lives by instituting hospitals, asylums, orphanages, etc., thus giving mankind the suggestion that they are really better than God, for they would care for and assist the poor and the weak and the fallen, while the Almighty would deliver them over to demons and torment, and foreknew and purposed it so from the beginning—this is their theory.

Those who were deluded by Satan at our Lord's first advent so hated the glorious message which he brought, and so hated his purity and truthfulness, that they called him the prince of devils, Beelzebub, and he told his followers that if he was thus treated they must not marvel if they shared a somewhat similar experience. And as his persecutions and oppositions came not from the world, the Gentiles, the heathen, but from the professed holiness people of his time, so all through the dark ages, and at the present time, those opposing the Lord and the truth are not worldly people, but sectarians whom Satan has more than half blinded with his false doctrines and misrepresentations. We are not, therefore, to be surprised that we find it as the Lord declares, that wherever his truth goes it will be like a sword to separate, and that especially in the home and the family. And as he declared, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my sake."—Matt. 10:22.

These experiences are for the very purpose of testing us, as the Lord's experiences were for the purpose of testing him. He consecrated his life fully and completely at the beginning of his ministry, when he reached thirty years of age, and symbolized his consecration in baptism. So fully did he appreciate the heavenly Father's loving kindness and favor that it required not a moment's hesitation for him to decide that it was better than life—to decide to sacrifice the earthly life; and immediately he began to proclaim the truths respecting the divine love and provision. And well he understood from the beginning how this would bring the hatred of nominal professors of Judaism, and that in thus letting his lips praise the Lord he was doing so at the *cost* of his earthly life, and all the blessings and privileges associated therewith.

Likewise with those who walk in Jesus' footsteps in the narrow way; however much it may surprise them, they find that the proclamation of good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people—the loving favor of our God, manifested in Jesus Christ our Lord—told in its fulness, brings the hate, the scorn, the persecution of nominal Christendom of today. Those who love the present life close their lips and refrain from speaking his loving kindness; but those faithful to their covenant, and appreciative of the Lord's favor, as "better than life," will show forth his praise at any and every cost of an earthly kind.

The "harvest" message of good tidings which is now revealed to the Lord's consecrated people, by which they discern the loving kindness of God, which they feel they must tell forth to others, not for money, nor for reputation, but at the cost of worldly reputation, at the cost of financial loss, at the cost of home trials and difficulties—this message is the "new song" mentioned by the prophets, that the Lord has put into the mouths of his consecrated ones. It is the same new song that is mentioned by our Lord in Revelation, which none others might sing except the elect 144,000, who have the Father's name in ther foreheads—publicly professed. If others hear of the song they cannot sing it, because it costs something to sing this song. "Because thy loving favor is better than life [more esteemed by us, more than all of earthly life and its good things] *therefore* will my lips praise thee."

THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT

Our issue of July 15 contained an article on this subject which should be put into the hands of all of "Rev." John Alex. Dowie's followers, who give evidence of sincerity;—peradventure they might be recovered out of one of Satan's snares. Remember the words of the Apostle.—James 5:20.

We printed an extra edition of that issue in order to give you this opportunity for service. Order *free,* as many as you will promise to use judiciously. Or send us the addresses and we will mail them direct.

GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM REITERATED

Gen. 15:1-18.—Aug. 11.

"I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward."

Lot had not lived a great while in Sodom when King Chedorlaomer descended upon the Sodomites with an army and took away many persons and great spoils of flocks, herds, etc., including Lot and his family and possessions. Word of this affair reached Abraham, who armed his own servants, 318, and with two associates pursued the victors, who, doubtless expecting no army or night attack, were careless as to their defenses, and being surprised by a night attack were routed; and Lot and his family and goods, and the Sodomites and their goods were released. The conduct of Abraham in connection with this matter was most noble and unselfish. Not only did he inconvenience himself and all his affairs for the sake of others, but subsequently he refused any share of the booty which he had saved. Would that the children of God could fully appreciate such benevolence and copy it more in the little affairs of life! Much of the distress prevailing in the world is the direct or indirect result of selfishness, and all of the Lord's people should be on the alert to practice and to exemplify the opposite spirit of benevolence in the little things as well as in the great things of life; and should remember that selfishness is a depravity, which needs to be fought against, and to be, so far as possible, overcome by the new nature.

One would have supposed that Lot's vexatious experience in Sodom, and after experience in his capture and subsequent deliverance by his uncle, would have led him to desire a reunion with his uncle, wth a keener appreciation than ever of the fact that God was with his uncle, blessing him and guiding his affairs and interests. But this does not seem to have been the case; he was still willing to cast his lot with the ungodly. He reminds us of the words of the Psalmist, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." (Psa. 1:1) Lot did not pursue this course, and hence failed of a blessing. It was not sufficient that his righteous soul should be "vexed" continually by the misconduct of those about him; his love for righteousness should have beeen such as to lead him to the sacrifice of temporal interests on behalf of his own heart and on behalf of the interests of his family. Let all of the Lord's people who may find themselves in a similar position remember the Apostle's words, "Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."—Heb. 12:13.

It was directly after his experience in the delivery of Lot and the defeat of Chedorlaomer, and while Abraham was evidently feeling somewhat disheartened or discouraged, that the Lord again manifested himself to him. We do not know the cause of the discouragement, but may infer that he realized that in his attack upon, and defeat of the army and the military forces behind it, he had probably incurred a displeasure which could not be wiped out by anything short of the destruction of his own camp. As ever, Abraham was peaceably disposed: and the battle he had just won implied the straining of his whole nature. He had done what he considered to be his duty in the interest of justice, and especially in the defense of his own ward, Lot; but now that the excitement was past the reaction set in, and with it certain gloomy feelings and forebodings. So also some of the Lord's people today have moments in which for various reasons the flame of faith and hope smokes, and darkens the eyes of their understanding and the clearness of their perception of the divine character and plan; but if they still hold firmly by faith to the hands of divine providence they will find, as Abraham did, that even the trials and difficulties and discouragements of life will be overruled for good to them.

It was while Abraham was downcast that the Lord appeared to him in vision and said to him, in the language of our Golden Text, "Fear not, Abraham: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Apparently this was the great lesson that God was teaching him and which he was learning by the experience permitted, much better than had the Lord not delayed some of the promised favors. Abraham was now 84 years old; and, altho wealthy and highly favored of the Lord, he was a pilgrim and a stranger, away from kindred and home through his respect to the divine call and promise. He had no children to cheer and enliven and comfort his home, and even his nephew, Lot, whom he had not detained unwillingly, had preferred the companionship of the wicked and had left him, and even when rescued from his enemies, at the cost of danger and sacrifice, he had not appreciated the matter fully, and still preferred the strangers.

No wonder poor Abraham felt as tho his life, passing quickly by, was a comparative failure—no wonder he felt discouraged. How the words of the vision must have brought new thoughts, new sentiments to his heart; God was his *shield*—to protect him, to guard him from the anger and power of all the kings of earth and their armies, and able and willing to make all things work together for his good. What a comfort was in this thought. How it reminds us that God is our shield also; our protector from every evil thing and power. The thought is beautifully expressed in one of our hymns:—

"Shield of my soul, tho tempests rage,
And 'gainst me hosts of foes engage,
My refuge and my fortress thou;
Before thee every foe must bow."

The latter part of the message is no less striking: the fact that, not flocks nor herds nor servants nor children nor friends, were to be the *price* upon which his heart should be set; but that God himself was to be his *reward;*—the having of God for a friend and counselor and guide was to be esteemed far beyond every earthly interest and blessing. And so it is also with the church of the Gospel age. We may have blessings or adversities or both, as respects the present life. We have promises which pertain to the life that now is and also to that which is to come; but all of these together are inferior, subordinate to the one great thought that God, the great Creator is ours,—our Father, our God, our Friend.

Undoubtedly Abraham's heart was comforted by this message; and yet his reason was still operative, and hence his inquiry of the Lord, How can you bless me and fulfil to me your gracious promises, seeing that I go childless—seeing that my servant Eliezer and his children are the only heirs apparent for my estate? Is it wonderful, Lord, that I should feel discouraged, seeing that apparently the most indispensable part of your promise is unfulfilled for now fourteen years, and that Sarah and myself are growing old; and that even my nephew, Lot, who might have perpetuated the family and been the heir of my estate, cares not for me and has gone from me? The Lord was not displeased to have Abraham use his reason in this manner, for it was not a reasoning of skepticism or doubt as respected the divine power, but merely the proper questioning of faith as to how the promises on which he had left his home could be fulfilled; and a request for guidance in understanding. And so may we inquire of the Lord respecting his gracious promises. Indeed, he invites us to reason, saying, "Come, let us reason together." In Abraham's case the Lord merely repeated and amplified previous statements to the effect that he should have a child of his own who should be his heir; and leading him out from his dwelling in the starry night, he assured him that his children would yet be multitudinous as the stars of heaven. This feature of the promise evidently applies to the spiritual seed—the Christ, the elect of God, Head and body, as explained by the Apostle. (Gal. 3:29; 1 Pet. 1:2) The other expressions,—"as the dust of the earth," and "as the sands of the sea," represent not the natural children of Abraham, but the whole number of the human family who, under the blessing of the spiritual seed, during the Millennium, shall ultimately attain to the *faith* and *obedience* of Abraham, and full human restitution and the Lord's reward for these—life everlasting.—Rom. 11:12, 15, 32.

The record is that Abraham believed on the Lord—his faith in God triumphed over every obstacle and rested securely, confidently;—his doubts and fears fleeing away. The faith of Abraham is the particular point of his character prominently set before us in the Scriptures for the encouragement of our faith, for our example. Abraham was not perfect, even as others of our race are imperfect,—"There is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10) But we are told that God so highly esteemed Abraham's faith that he counted it as making up for his natural blemishes and imperfections. "It was counted [reckoned] to him for righteousness." (Rom. 4:3) He had faith in what God had told him, and, as James (2:22) points out, he manifested his faith by his general conduct. We of the Gospel age are also justified by faith—righteousness is reckoned to us through the exercise of faith —but not faith in the same promises.

God does not promise us earthly children nor an earthly inheritance in the land of Palestine as he did promise to Abraham; hence we are not to have faith in the same things. As the Apostle says, God has given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises"— promises much greater than those given to Abraham: heavenly, instead of earthly promises. We are to believe the promises given to us and to act upon them as implicitly as Abraham believed the promises given to him and acted upon them. The promises made to Abraham were attested by the Lord's word and by his oath, and similarily, tho on a still higher plane, the Lord has made known to us, has attested to us, his love and power, and his willingness to perform for us all the good things promised.

In answer to Abraham's request the Lord attested his promise in connection with sacrifices, after a manner that was probably customary at that time as described in our lesson. The sacrificed animals, part over against part, were separated by a narrow path along which between the parts passed a small furnace enveloped in smoke, out of which shot a flame of fire. In connection with the weird scene the Lord revealed to Abraham that his posterity would not come into the land of promise for some four hundred years after his son should be born, but would have affliction as a people, even as Israel experienced this in Egypt. The four hundred years being a statement in round numbers, otherwise more explicitly stated as four hundred and thirty years, included the wanderings of Isaac and Jacob before going down into Egypt, as well as the captivity in Egypt. The revelation further pointed out the fact that the deliverance of Israel from Egypt would be with great wealth, and that in connection with it judgments of the Lord would come upon Egypt, and that meantime the Amorites, who then resided in Canaan, would fill to the full the measure of their iniquity, and fully deserve to lose the land of promise; and at that time Israel would be brought in to inherit it.

As God's favor and faithfulness toward Abraham were attested by the sacrifices and revelations of the divine plan, so do they testify to his faithfulness in this Gospel age, that we also may have strong consolation, and full assurance of faith. He testifies to us the fulness of his favor and love by showing us the better sacrifices for sins, through which the New Covenant is sealed, ratified, made operative. He has shown us through his Word that darkness must prevail for a time, and that the Christ (Head and body) must be brought in contact with the fiery furnace of trial and affliction, the smoke of which might well represent the incidental confusion and darkness that necessitates our walk by faith and not by sight, while the flame of light would represent our guidance by the holy Spirit. Being thus assured by the Lord of his love for us, and of the bountiful provision made for our welfare, and of the necessity for trials, persecutions and difficulties during the time of the great darkness, we are strengthened in our faith and enabled to endure as seeing him who is invisible, and to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

It was at this time that the Lord revealed to Abraham that the great blessings already promised him were to have a far distant fulfilment—for it was here indicated that he should die and his children not inherit the land for some four hundred years: and that he would not see the fulfilment of the promises, altho a part of the promise was that he, as well as his seed, should inherit that land, and join in the work of universal blessing and uplifting of humanity. Abraham was thus indirectly taught to hope in the resurrection, for this last revelation clearly implied that he could have neither part nor lot in it except God would raise him from the dead. And this was in full accord with the subsequent words of Stephen (Acts 7:5) It was no doubt for Abraham's good that the Lord did not tell him that it would be about four thousand years before the full blessing would begin; —did not reveal to him that the natural seed could not inherit all of the great promises;—that the likeness of his seed to the stars of heaven and to the sands of the sea were two different figures;—the first representing the spiritual or heavenly seed, and the other an earthly or human seed. It was to his advantage not to know that so long a time would elapse before the completion of the spiritual seed, of which Christ is the Head and the Gospel church the body; and that through this seed, glorified, must come the blessings upon the earthly seed, and through the latter to all the families of the earth during the Millennial age.

But God has revealed these things to us, and we may well feel that we have more advantage every way in connection with the divine promises and plan than even faithful Abraham, whose trustfulness under very adverse conditions is a stimulus to all of God's children. We have not only his example, but many other noble examples, including that of our Lord and his apostles; and we can see, under the guidance of the Word, as revealed by the spirit, that all things have been and are yet working together harmoniously for the development of the Lord's great plan for man's salvation, briefly summarized in his promise to Abraham, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Nothing is more evident than that God's promises to Abraham have not yet been fulfilled. Abraham reasoned that they would not be fulfilled in his day; Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets reasoned that they had not been fulfilled during the Jewish age; and the Apostle declares that the whole twelve tribes of Israel were still waiting for the fulfilment of those promises in his day. (Acts 26:6,7) Those promises have surely not been fulfilled during this Gospel age, as we all are witnesses—the natural seed of Abraham has been outcast, persecuted and without divine favor, while the true ones of spiritual Israel, though possessed of divine favor and rejoicing therein, have been persecuted and caused to suffer for righteousness' sake, and thereby to learn lessons of patience and experience to prepare them for the great work they are yet to do in fulfilment of the divine promises to Abraham.

The Apostle Paul clearly sets this matter forth in Gal. 3:16-29. He tells us that Christ is the seed of Abraham—the spiritual seed; and are not we "members of the body of Christ," over whom, as the Scriptures declare, Jesus Christ is the Head forever under God's blessing? (Eph. 1:22, 23) And so the Apostle declares (vs. 29), "If ye be Christ's [members], then are ye Abraham's seed, and *heirs* according to the promise."

And if the Lord's saints are still heirs of that Abrahamic promise, assuredly it proves that the promise has not yet reached fulfillment. Thank God that we are still privileged to be *heirs* of that wonderful promise, "heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together." Let our faith be strong, trusting in the promise and in him who made it, who is able to do for us, and for all who trust in him, exceedingly abundantly more and better things than we know

how to ask or expect. Let us through patient perseverance, based upon an undimmed faith, complete our sojourning here; and by the Lord's grace make our calling and election sure to a share in the promised glory, honor and immortality and in the opportunity to bless, which the Lord purposes to give to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

ABRAHAM'S AGE ON ENTERING CANAAN

We are in receipt of a number of letters, calling attention to what seems to the writers an error in the chronology given in the Millennial Dawn, Vol. II., relative to the date of Abraham's birth, his entrance into Canaan, etc. For the sake of these, as well as others who may have the same difficulty, we here enlarge upon what is stated in Vol. II., pages 44-47.

Gen. 11:32, says that at his death Terah's age was two hundred and five years; Acts 7:4 says that *then* Abraham removed into Canaan; and Gen. 12:4 states that Abraham was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. Hence Terah's age at Abraham's birth *must have been* one hundred and thirty years.

But is not this out of harmony with Gen. 11:26, which says: "And Terah lived *seventy years* and begat Abraham, Nahor and Haran?" We answer, No. The point of confusion is in the fact that Haran, the eldest, is mentioned last, while Abram, the youngest, is mentioned first—possibly because of his greater prominence in the narrative, or possibly, as a little stumbling-block to hinder us from seeing the facts except as guided by the Lord, in his due time.

That Haran was the eldest of the sons of Terah is quite evident from the recorded facts. His son Lot was old enough to be the companion of his uncle Abraham. Lot and Abraham were probably nearly of the same age, as each had his own flocks and herds and herdsmen. When Sodom was destroyed Lot had two daughters of marriageable age and others already married. This was before Isaac was born, Abraham being then ninety-nine years old.—Gen. 17:24; 18-16; 19:8, 14.

Again, notice the likelihood of Haran's being much the oldest of Terah's sons, and Nahor the second, thus,—Nahor married one of his brother Haran's daughters (Milcah—See Gen. 24:15), whose *grand-daughter*, Rebekah, became the wife of Abraham's son, Isaac.—Gen. 24:67.

Our reckoning as given in the Dawn is, therefore, sustained by all the known facts, as well as by the exact statements of Scripture.

QUESTIONS ON THE RESURRECTION HOPE

WHAT IS GUARANTEED BY THE RANSOM?

Question.—Would it be correct for us to say that our Lord Jesus by his death canceled the sins of the entire human family, so that there is now no condemnation to any?

Answer.—No; this would not be a correct statement. The Scriptural declaration is, "There is now no condemnation *to them that are in Christ Jesus.*" There is still condemnation upon all who have not yet come into Jesus through faith in the precious blood and through a reformation of life in harmony with that faith. This is directly implied by the Apostle's words. Again, he says, "We were children of wrath, even as others [are], but we who believe [who have accepted Jesus] have escaped the condemnation that is on the world." These Scriptures imply that the condemnation was still on the world at the time of these letters, after our Lord's death and resurrection.

Consequently the death of Jesus did not cancel the condemnation, it did not remove the sins, and all the world of mankind not only have continued under the condemnation, but also under its sentence of death, and have died, the same since Jesus died as before—except in the case of the church, whose death is reckoned as being no longer Adamic death, as a penalty for sin, but as "being dead with him," as joint-sacrifices, participators in the sin-offerings.

That our Lord's death did not cancel sin is again attested by the Apostle Peter's declaration to some at Pentecost (after our Lord's death and resurrection, ascension, etc.): "Repent and be converted, that your sins *may be* blotted out when times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ [at the second advent]." This Scripture shows that the blotting out is a future work, just as the Apostle elsewhere shows that the sins of those who are in Christ Jesus are now covered from God's sight, to permit us to have present blessings and privileges, prior to the time when the sins shall be blotted out. The sins of the church will be blotted out, and no more record will appear of them forever, as soon as the first resurrection shall have taken place, for all who have part in it will have perfect bodies, without a trace of sin, blemish or imperfection in them. And as for the world of mankind in general, the blotting out of the world's sins will be during the "times of restitution"—a gradual work, as implied in the word "blotting." Every one who accepts Christ and the kingdom, and endeavors to live in harmony with the Lord under the terms of the New Covenant, will, during the thousand years of Christ's reign, find his sins, his blemishes, mental, moral and physical, gradually giving way, yielding to perfection, and they will thus be in process of blotting out until, at the close of the Millennial age, there shall no sin remain unblotted out for any one who has desired to have them blotted out, and who shall have availed himself of the abundant privileges of that time.

Thus we see, by two lines of demonstration, either of which would be sufficient, that Christ has not canceled the sins of the whole world, nor the sins of any, and that he has merely covered the sins of the church, preparatory to the cleansing time, while the world's sins are not even covered. To make these two proofs the more conspicuous we will state them thus: (1) The fact that God's Word speaks of the world as being still under condemnation, and children of wrath, is a conclusive proof that their sins are not blotted out. (2) The fact that sin, and its wages of death, including pain, sickness, etc., are still inflicted upon humanity, is a second and indisputable proof that the sins are not blotted out, for if they had been blotted out it would be wrong on God's part to punish for sins no longer recognized.

Question.—If Christ's death did not effect the cancelation of man's sins, wherein lies the fault? Does it imply that the sacrifice was not sufficient to cancel the sins, or does it imply that God has not been just toward the sinners, but has accepted a payment from Jesus and is also requiring a payment directly from the individual sinner, as tho he had not accepted Christ's ransom sacrifice?

Answer.—Neither of these is implied by the fact that the world's sins are not yet blotted out. The Scriptural statement of the matter is that our Lord bought the whole world with his own precious blood. (1 Pet. 1:19) There is no statement anywhere in the Scriptures to the effect that the sins of the whole world were canceled by Christ's death, nor that God ever purposed to cancel the sins of the world as an offset to the sacrifice of our dear Redeemer. On the contrary, the Scriptures everywhere hold out the thought that neither the blotting out of sins nor even their covering, is possible, except as the sinner shall first of all accept of Jesus through faith. Thus we read that God arranged the plan as he did arrange it, in order that "he might be just, and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." There is no proposition in this text, or in any other, to justify any others than believers—no proposition to justify the world in sin, but merely to justify those who desire to escape from sin and its penalties, accepting of Christ as the Savior.

The statement of 2 Cor. 5:19 is in full accord with this. It represents a work begun by God *in* Christ, but not yet concluded. The *ministry of reconciliation*, committed to the church, will not be finished until the close of the Millennium; and whoever of mankind shall by that time have failed to accept the reconciliation, proffered by God in Christ, will "be destroyed from among the people."—Acts 3:23.

The statement that our Lord Jesus was a propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world, implies that his death was sufficient in merit to meet the penalty against every individual and to safisfy the claims of divine justice against each individual. However, the canceling of the sentence which Justice had decreed against Adam and his progeny would include and imply nothing of restitution whatever. It was merely a sentence that Adam could not live, having forfeited his right to life. The fact that after this sentence came upon Adam, and while under it, he and his race decayed mentally and physically, and became morally leprous, has nothing whatever to do with the original sentence—the degeneracy of the race is a side issue. It resulted from the sentence of death, but was not a part of it, and the removal of the *sentence* of death need not mean a recovery from the fall.

The sentence of the divine law against Adam and his race, prohibiting them from the privileges of life, having been paid by the Lord Jesus' sacrifice, and the payment having been accepted by the Father, there can be no objection now raised on the part of Justice to hinder the sinner and his race from having eternal life if they can now demonstrate their worthiness of it. Had such an offer been made to father Adam the day after his transgression and expulsion from Eden, he would doubtless have gladly reentered Paradise and stood a fresh trial, and with better hopes of success, having learned something, at least, by his experience. But after six thousand years of falling and degradation under the dominion of sin, Adam and his race are in no condition to profit by the removal of the sentence of Justice which was against them, being unable, in their fallen condition, to comply with the divine requirements, if granted a new trial by the Father. Hence this proposition is set aside at once as infeasible, and instead God turns over the entire race to his only begotten Son, their Redeemer, that the Son may institute amongst those whom he redeemed processes of restitution, which will be helpful to them in bringing them up again to the grand perfection originally enjoyed by father Adam. And when this work of restitution shall have been accomplished, the world, furnished with a large experience both in the fall and their restitution from it, will be ready for final testings or judgments preparatory to acceptance of those who stand the tests to eternal life which were set before father Adam, but which he failed to attain through disobedience.

In order to make this restitution process of the largest advantage possible to mankind, the divine plan is that step after step of the journey upward from degradation to perfection shall be attained only through the coöperation of the restored ones with their Redeemer and Restorer. To this end it is called a period of judgments or discipline, under which every effort for righteousness will bring its meet of blessing, and every dereliction bring its stripes or punishments. Thus day by day and year by year during these "times of restitution" the lesson on the desirability of righteousness and heinousness of sin will be given to the world of mankind, with every encouragement to those who will to do right; but with the rod, and eventually "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," to all those who, under those favorable conditions, love iniquity and serve it rather than righteousness.

Thus seen, Christ's death became the offset and cancelation of the legal sentence against man, but it did not and was not intended to remove his degradation. Man's sentence, recorded in the race, mentally, morally and physically, is still in evidence all about us, and will continue in evidence even after the Millennial reign has begun, and until the gradual processes of "blotting out" these sins shall, by the close of the Millennium, have completely obliterated them. The record of sin is in every human being, and the blotting out of those sins will mean the full restoration of that being to the image and likeness of God. This blotting out of sins, therefore, was not accomplished by the satisfying of the claims of justice and the removal of the sentence of death, but must be accomplished, if at all, in the divinely arranged manner, by processes of restitution to the image and likeness of God—to which none will attain except as they coöperate with the great Restorer—the Life-giver, Christ.

Suppose an illustration of this matter of the canceling of the sentence in respect to an earthly criminal sentence by an earthly court. Suppose a criminal had been sentenced for life, and that fifteen years after sentence he was pardoned and set at liberty. In those years he might have changed quite considerably, might have contracted disease and have become bald-headed and crippled with rheumatism. But no one would suppose for an instant that in pardoning him the court would undertake additionally to give him back his hair, his strength, his health, and the fifteen years of life which he had lost in prison. Neither does the remission of the original sentence by the heavenly court in any sense of the word promise or imply restitution of the things which man lost while under the sentence of death. The promises of restitution through Christ, while all based upon the ransom, are separate and distinct from it—the operation of love and mercy, and not in any sense of the word the operation of justice, on man's behalf.

In regard to Rom. 5:18,19. The world could not be on trial before a court which had already condemned it, unless the condemnation were lifted; but in the case of man there is a transference of the case to a new court, of which not the Father, but the Son, is the Judge; as it is written, God "hath committed all judgment unto the Son." In one sense man starts in his new trial, under the new Judge, free from condemnation, that is, free from the judicial feature of his condemnation; but not free from the actual degradation which, in another sense of the word, is the curse or condemnation which rests upon our race. Justice will have nothing against the culprit, and makes no objection to his being awakened and assisted back to perfection by the new Judge; but neither Justice nor the new Judge will release the culprit from the difficulties under which he labors, called the curse, the fall, etc., except as he exercises both trust and obedience in the new Judge under the terms of the New Covenant; and the new Judge will only release him from this curse or condemnation little by little, as he shall, by obedience, give evidence of transformation of his character from that of a servant of sin to that of a servant of righteousness.

In a word, the sentence or decree of death which came upon Adam, and through him upon us, was merely the judicial sentence, not the degradation which followed it as a consequence; and the removal of the judicial sentence by the payment of a price and the transfer of a sinner to the jurisdiction of Christ, for a fresh judgment or trial, secures merely the release of the original judicial sentence, but secures no release from the fall and degradation which followed the original sentence. The ruined sinner, whom justice would not permit to live, and who has degraded himself since, may now know that through Christ the demands of justice have been met for him, and that if he were back again to the condition in which father Adam was when he fell he would now be able to keep the divine law perfectly. However, having fallen into degradation, and sin, he is now on so low a plane mentally, morally and physically, that altho the sentence be lifted, he is quite powerless to accomplish anything of consequence for himself. He first needed a Redeemer to ransom him, to pay the redemption price for him; he now needs a Savior, a Life-giver, to deliver him from the death-conditions, mental, moral and physical, into which he fell while under the divine sentence, and this will be the gracious work of the kingdom, of which Christ will be the Head and King, and the elect church his joint-heirs in the kingdom, and under-representatives in the work of judging and uplifting the race.

THE FERVENT PRAYER OF ABRAHAM

GEN. 18:23-32.—AUG. 18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."*—Jas. 5:16.

Abraham at the time of this lesson was ninety-nine years old. He was camping at Mamre with his family and household, servants, herdsmen, etc., over 1,000 persons. His faith still rested in the Lord's promise, which he evidently believed would be fulfilled through his son Ishmael, at this time thirteen years old. As he rested in the door of his tent three men approached him, and, after the manner of the sheiks of that country today, he arose to meet them most hospitably, and provided for their entertainment tho they were strangers to him. By and by he ascertained that his vistors were heavenly beings, who for the occasion had assumed human form—one of them being a special representative of Jehovah himself, either one of the chief angels, or, we think still more likely, the Lord Jesus in his pre-human condition. How glad Abraham must have felt when he learned who his visitors were, that he had entertained them so kindly and hospitably. The Apostle calls this matter to the attention of the church and urges that the Lord's people always be on the alert to show hospitality, and citing this case he says, "Thus some have entertained angels unawares."—Heb. 13:2.

True, circumstances are in many respects different today from what they were in olden times, in that now we have hotels and boarding houses for the accommodation of travelers; hence our responsibilities are lessened; this very fact, we fear, inclines us to be more selfish, less hospitable, than would be to our profit. The Lord's consecrated people will do well to cultivate hospitality, and that of the kind which Abraham showed—without waiting for it to be requested. A Scripture statement is, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." (Prov. 11:24) Another declaration is, "The liberal soul shall be made fat." (Prov. 11:25) In practicing liberality we are developing God-likeness, for is not God benevolent? is he not continually giving to his creatures? The greatest of all his gifts was the gift of his own dear Son to die for us—to ransom us. True, all cannot exercise liberality alike—those who are in debt or in poverty are properly to consider themselves hindered, limited in this direction by justice to their creditors, their families, etc. Nevertheless, the spirit of benevolence and hospitality should always abound in our hearts, whether we have much or little opportunity to manifest it; and rarely do those who exercise themselves in this respect fail to profit by this course, even in temporal matters. Where we cannot give all the succor needed, we can at least dispense words of consolation and cheer, which may prove of much greater value than money. Many need the spiritual counsel and advice and encouragement, which every true Christian should be able to give, far more than they need temporal assistance. To have Christ-likeness implies not only a *desire* to be helpful to the groaning creation and "especially to the household of faith," but it means more,—it means the *effort* to assist them, even at the cost of our earthly comforts and pleasures.

It was while partaking of the hospitality of Abraham and Sarah that the Lord and his two companions were made known to Abraham—that they were not ordinary men, and at this time a further promise was made respecting the long-expected son Isaac. "Let patience have her perfect work," says the Apostle, and surely it would seem that this was the case with Abraham, who had waited twenty-five years indefinitely, and now for the first time received a definite assurance of a prompt fulfilment of this part of the promise. Isaac was born wthin a year, when Abraham was one hundred years old. Abraham's faith and patient waiting on the Lord are instructive to us. The Gospel church likewise was called to inherit a promise and to perform a pilgrimage while waiting for its fulfilment. The promise to us is our deliverance as sharers in the kingdom, and ultimately in the work of blessing all the families of the earth, to be accomplished at the second coming of Jesus, who was typified in Isaac, even as Jehovah, his Father, was typified in Abraham. The Gospel church has had great need of patience and endurance, of trust in God, during the nearly nineteen centuries since Jesus suffered in the flesh and was quickened in spirit, and going away, promised to come again to receive us unto himself, and to fulfil all the exceeding great and precious promises foretold respecting him and us. The faith of many has cooled so that they are hoping for the long promised Millennial blessings through other channels,—hoping that earthly churches, human organizations, begotten not of the Lord's instruction, but unauthorizedly, like Ishmael, may convert and bless the world without the second coming of Jesus and the establishment of his kingdom. But all those who have the faith of Abraham will also have the Lord's testimony that the blessing can come only through Isaac.—Rom. 9:7; Gal. 4:28.

At the same time that faithful Abraham and Sarah were consoled and refreshed, at the same time Isaac was begotten, the iniquity of the Sodomites had become great,—the cry of its wickedness calling upon Justice for repression. The Lord and the two angels took their departure from Abraham's tent, going in the direction of Sodom, Abraham accompanying them through courtesy and through a desire to continue in heavenly company. And because he was a faithful servant of the Lord it was revealed to him that the destruction of Sodom and her sister villages was imminent. Thus we see the principles upon which the Lord deals with his creatures—to those who are in heart-harmony with him, full of faith and trust and loving obedience, and yet willing to wait patiently for the various features of his plan,—he reveals his plans not only as respects the coming blessing of all the families of the earth, but also as respects the punishment of the ungodly.

We do not find Abraham rejoicing in the calamities about to come upon his neighbors; on the contrary, we find him generous; and so we should expect to find all who are the Lord's true people, full of generosity, kindness and good wishes toward their neighbors—even toward such as they could in no degree recognize or fellowship. Instead of glorying in the adversities coming upon the Sodomites, Abraham instinctively prayed for them divine compassion. And we are to remember in this connection that he had no thought of their calamity extending beyond the loss of the present life. He knew nothing about an "orthodox hell" with its corps of devils to receive and everlastingly torture them. He merely understood the Lord that the *destruction* of the people and of their cities impended. If he thought at all of their future, it would doubtless be in connection with God's promise, that by and by all the families of the earth should be blessed through his promised heir.

We notice with pleasure the modesty of Abraham as he petitioned the Lord to have mercy upon his neighbors: "Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city, wilt thou consume and spare not the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?" He was not attempting to charge or condemn the Lord by applying his standards; rather he was wishing to ascertain what would be the divine standard in the matter—how much compassion the Lord could justly exercise in behalf of such as sought at all to walk in his ways. Abraham must have known well the unsavory reputation of the Sodomites;—no doubt being in communication with Lot frequently. It is to his credit, therefore, that he was unwilling to think of those people as badly as they deserved. Actually there were only three worthy of being delivered; yet Abraham, with generosity of heart, assumed that there might be fifty. Benevolent people generally are pretty sure to err in their judgment on the favorable side, when they think of the weaknesses and villainies of their neighbors.

The Lord assented to Abraham's proposition, and the latter's faith thus encouraged, he ventured to lessen the number in his inquiry to forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, ten, and with all his earnest desire he could not think of petitioning the Lord to save those cities from destruction if wickedness had gotten such a hold that only ten could be found loving righteousness. We rejoice in Abraham's mercifulness, as well as in his faith. Had mercy not been a part of his character we may doubt if the Lord would have called him to be the starting point of his plan of salvation. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." Such the Lord is seeking, to be his agents and the channels of the mercies he has provided for mankind, to be dispensed during the Millennial age. Only the merciful will be acceptable to the Lord as joint-heirs with Jesus in the kingdom, and only the merciful of the ancient worthies will share with Abraham in dispensing divine favors to mankind as "princes in all the earth;" representatives of the spiritual kingdom.—Psa. 45:16.

We contrast Abraham's modest and reverent petition with some which we have heard uttered by those who suppose themselves to be members of the Gospel church, the body of Christ,—and the contrast is immensely in Abraham's favor. "O let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but this once [more]; peradventure ten be found there [will you have mercy upon the cities for their sake]?" How some can go to the Lord in prayer in rude and dictatorial manner, telling him what they want to have done—how many they wish to have converted, how he shall manage the various features of his work, whom he shall bless and how, etc.,—we cannot tell. Let not such persons think that they shall receive anything of the Lord; let them not think that such praying is either fervent or effectual in any good sense. Let us, on the contrary, as the Lord's people, reason how great he is, and how insignificant we are; how just and true are his ways, and how imperfect are our best conceptions; and let us approach him with reverence to ascertain what are his purposes, rather than to amend or alter them to alignment with our imperfect judgments.

SAVED SO AS BY FIRE

Evidently Lot's decision to reside in Sodom was for business reasons: he evidently had some children twenty-five years before, when he started out with Abraham, his uncle, and probably his interests in business and his desire for prosperity leading him to reside among the Sodomites was chiefly for the prosperity of his children. Alas, how great was his mistake! Yet he did not seem to fully realize it until, urged by the angel, he fled from Sodom accompanied by his two unmarried daughters, losing all else he had in the world—his wife and married children and grand-children, his flocks and herds and servants and all his personal belongings. He was indeed saved, preserved, from the destruction which there came upon the ungodly; but it was a bare rescue, not an abundant deliverance; he was, so to speak, pulled out of the fire.

We may consider ourselves justified in considering Lot and his daughters who escaped to be illustrations, samples, whose antitypical lessons would apply in this present day. For as Abraham and his patient waiting represented the faithful, the overcomers, so Lot seems to represent a class in the end of the present age, who do not walk sufficiently by faith and who seek not chiefly the kingdom and its righteousness; but who for the sake of earthly advantage are quite willing to risk their spiritual interests and the highest interests of their children, by choosing fellowship with the world;—by commingling to some extent with the world, the flesh and the devil, even tho, like Lot, disapproving their surroundings which vex their righteous souls. Such, the Apostle tells us, shall be "saved so as by fire." (1 Cor. 3:15) Such the Lord illustrates as coming up out of great tribulation, washing their robes and making them white, and eventually obtaining a blessing, but not the chief one which they might have obtained had they followed faithfully with the pilgrims and strangers, the "little flock."—Rev. 7:9, 14.

The story of Lot's haste out of Sodom, and of his wife's transgression of the angel's command in looking back and hankering after the things left behind, are brought to our attention in that part of our Lord's great prophecy relating to the end of this age;—"Remember Lot's wife!" (Luke 17:32) This reference seems to corroborate the thought that Lot's experiences were somewhat typical. The Lord's people will be tested along the line of their separation from the spirit of the world. Those who, like Abraham, are the friends of God will be far off from the danger; others not so faithful will be in the full midst of the trouble, yet if loyal at heart to the Lord they will be delivered with great loss, and the sufferings which such disappointments and losses will imply; yet in the end such will gain the heavenly, spiritual life for which they started out. None, however, will be delivered if they remain in the city of destruction, Babylon. If they do not avoid it at first, they must at least be willing to leave it, and that with great energy, ere its destruction comes; and if they love the things behind, more than they appreciate deliverance—so that they in any degree look back or long for the evil things doomed to destruction in the coming trouble, it will mean that they will not be worthy of having any part or lot in the deliverance.

The record is that Lot's wife became a pillar of salt, and altho infidelity has been inclined to dispute such a miracle, we have every reason to believe the truthfulness of the record; and like all miracles, if explained, it would no doubt seem reasonable enough. An explanation of the miracle has been suggested by a traveler, as follows: "Just as some of the victims of Pompeii stumbled in their flight, and were buried under the ashes, which still keep the outline of their figure, so Lot's wife was covered with the *half-liquid*, slimy mud." "An atmosphere heavily charged with the fumes of sulphur and bitumen might easily produce suffocation, as was the case with the elder Pliny in the destruction of Pompeii. And as no dead body would ever decompose on the shores of this salt sea, if left in such an atmosphere, it would become encrusted with salt crystals. Pillars of salt are found in the vicinity which have formed from the spray, mist and saline exhalations of the dead sea, and are constantly growing larger."

SUFFERING THE VENGEANCE OF ETERNAL FIRE

Jude tells us that the destruction of Sodom was intended by the Lord to be an illustration of the fate of the wicked. But it certainly does not illustrate what that fate is generally supposed to be: it does not illustrate perpetual fire, with the Sodomites continually burning and never destroyed, and with demons poking the fires and torturing the victims. Nothing of the kind. The "eternal fires" which God intends for the wicked, and which he illustrated in the case of the Sodomites, signify fires, whose work of destruction is complete and everlasting. It is divine vengeance or retribution against sinners—"they shall be punished with an everlasting destruction" (2 Thess. 1:9), beyond all hope of recovery. The "lake of fire" of Revelation, and the Dead Sea of Sodom represent in *symbol* the second death—extinction, from which there is no hope by a resurrection or otherwise. None will go into the second death on account of ignorance. All who enter it will do so because of wilful, deliberate participation in sin, or because of sympathy with it.

Supposing Sodom to represent sin, the lesson would be that all finding themselves in an evil condition of life, even tho, like Lot, their hearts be out of sympathy with it, should and must flee from it if they would avert the consequences. They must flee in haste and tarry not in all the plain. Yet it is a comforting thought that as the angel laid hold of the hands of Lot and his daughters and helped, urged and encouraged them to flee, so the Lord's providences will take hold of every one who shall seek to escape from sin, and will so coöperate with their good wills in the matter that they shall eventually be fully rescued from it.

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A PROPHET, LIKE UNTO MOSES

"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people."—Acts 3:22, 23.

We agree that the time for the fulfilment of this prediction is near, even at the doors; and now one, styling himself "Rev." John Alexander Dowie, heralds himself to the civilized world as being this Prophet. We are not hastily to accept his dictum, and to exclaim, "Verily, this is he of whom Moses, in the Law, and the prophets did write." Nor, on the other hand, are we hastily to decide that he is an impostor, a false prophet, simply because he happens to live in our day. Rather, in view of the fact that we are expecting the fulfilment of this Scripture we should look the subject carefully over, and weigh all the Scriptural testimony, and thus decide as to the truth or falsity of Mr. Dowie's claims. And, doubtless, in doing this, our investigation of the subject from a Scriptural standpoint will prove profitable to us, whether favorable or unfavorable to Mr. Dowie;—whether they prove him the Prophet foretold, or a deceived and deceiving false prophet.

Analyzing our text, we perceive that its expression, "like unto," has the sense of antitypical; hence the Prophet to be expected must be much greater every way than Moses, as an antitype is always far superior to its type. Moses was the Mediator of the Law Covenant, and thus stood between Israel and God, as we read in reference to the sealing and delivery of the Law Covenant: "The Lord our God made a covenant with you in Horeb. . . . The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of fire. *I stood between God and you* [a mediator, or go-betweeen], at that time, to show you the word of the Lord; for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount." (Deut. 5:2-5) From this we see that Moses, the *typical* prophet, was very great, very influential, had a very high office; and this would signify that the future Prophet whom God had in mind, and whose coming was foretold thirty-five hundred years ago by Moses himself, and further pointed forward to by the Apostle Peter in our text, must, as the antitype of Moses, be wonderfully great, wonderfully powerful, a still greater Mediator between God and men, a still mightier Lawgiver whose word would be omnipotent, and violation of which would eventually mean destruction;—as it is written "Every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:23) Even at first glance every unprejudiced mind would say that Mr. Dowie, and every other man on earth, seems far too insignificant, far too small to fill the requirements. Not only too small for the antitype, but far inferior even to the type.

Turning to the record of Moses' words in the Old Testament, we find them in Deut. 18:15-20, and here we see that the particular feature of Moses' work as a prophet and lawgiver to Israel, which is here referred to as typical of a greater work to be accomplished by a greater Law-giver and Prophet, was the work which he performed for Israel as the Mediator of the Law Covenant at Mount Sinai, in the district called Horeb, already referred to. At the time of the giving of the Law, Israel witnessed a wonderful manifestation of divine power. "All the people witnessed the thundering and the lightning, and the noise of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Exod. 20:18, 19) In response to this their request God appointed Moses to be their Mediator or representative. Moses communed with the Lord in the mount, and received from him the Law, and came to the people and communicated the Law to them, and obtained their assent to the covenant; and then, as a representative both of God and of Israel, Moses sealed the covenant;—ratified it by taking the blood of bulls and of goats and sprinkling first the book of the Law, or tables of stone on which the commandments were written, as representing Jehovah, and sprinkling, secondly, the people, as binding them. Thus the covenant between God and Israel was established at the hands of Moses, the Mediator. It was at this time of the recognition of Moses as the Mediator of that Covenant that the Lord impliedly taught that the time would come when he would make a new and better Covenant, and establish it in the hands of a new and greater Mediator (the Christ); saying, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and I will put my words into his mouth."—Deut. 18:18.

The Apostle assures us of this;—that the Law-Covenant was a type, an illustration of a greater and more wonderful covenant, between God and his people in the future. He points out to us that as Moses was a type of Christ, the great Prophet, so the animal-blood he used in sealing that typical Law Covenant represented or typified the blood of Christ—the blood which seals, makes binding, ratifies, the New Covenant. Our Lord referred to the same thing in connection with his death, and the institution of the Memorial Supper, when he said, "This is the blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins."—Matt. 26:28.

We are sure that we are right in this application; because the Apostle, in Heb. 9:19,20, refers us back to the sealing of the Law Covenant, saying, "When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the Law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you." The entire tenor of the Apostle's argument shows us that he understood and taught that the antitype of this was to be found in Christ, in his sacrifice for sins, and not in Mr. Dowie, or any work that he might do. Continuing the same argument, into the next chapter (Heb. 10:16), the Apostle shows that the work of our Lord Jesus in offering up himself, as the ransom-price for mankind, was sealing the New Covenant, the antitypical covenant, which God had promised through Moses, and through all the prophets, saying, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord."

The Apostle evidently understood that the covenant which Moses, the prophet, instituted, *typified* the better covenant, which the greater Prophet, Christ, would institute in due time. Proceeding to compare these two prophets, the typical Moses and the antitypical Christ, the Apostle says, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy; . . . of how much severer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the [New] Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:28,29) The Apostle's argument evidently is that if God puts so much dignity upon the typical prophet, Moses, that violation of his covenant would mean death, we might reasonably expect that a severer punishment would come to all those who shall be brought under the benefits of the New Covenant, and who shall then spurn them, not appreciating the fact that they were secured by the precious blood of Christ, the antitypical Prophet.

Continuing the same line of thought, viz., a comparison of the two mediators, and the two covenants, the Apostle draws to our attention the fact that Israel could not endure the terrible manifestations of divine power and justice at Mount Sinai, although they were only typical; and that as the typical Israelites needed and desired to be dealt with representatively instead of directly, through a mediator and not personally,—to be in the hands of the mediator, and not in the hands of God. So, says the Apostle, in respect to the New Covenant, and in respect to those who have apprehended that it was sealed with the blood of Christ, and that it is in operation now, and that we have the benefits of it conferred upon us.—If we should repudiate this New Covenant it would mean that we would thereby repudiate Christ (not Mr. Dowie), as our Mediator, and would fall into the hands of the living God, to be dealt with directly by him, and that without mercy. The Apostle clinches his argument by saying, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. 10:31.

It would be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, not because God is unjust, but because he is just; and because we are imperfect, and therefore could not hope to meet the requirements of the law of absolute justice. Divine justice would be to us as a consuming fire, destroying us, because we could not comply with its requirements. It is for this reason that God has appointed for us a covenant of mercy, of which Jesus is the great Prophet and Mediator, —not Dowie. God having appointed this one channel of mercy it is for us to accept it as he proffers it, or, rejecting it, to fall into the hands of Justice, and to meet our desers, utter destruction. Those who reject Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant, will suffer more than those who rejected the typical mediator, Moses; for the latter lost merely the present life, but will have share in the restitution blessings of the next age; while all who intelligently and wilfully reject the Mediator of the New Covenant will die the second death. This is in full accord with the statement of our text, "The soul that will not hear [obey] that Prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people."

Having seen from Moses' own words and their context that this use of the word "prophet" signifies teacher, lawgiver, mediator, between the people and God, and that this declaration looked forward to the giving of a greater law at the hands of a greater mediator and prophet and law-giver, now turn to the words of the Apostle, which precede our text. (Acts 3:19-21) We find Peter discussing the second coming of Christ, and under the power of the holy Spirit explaining to the people that with his second advent would come great blessing, "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," but that the heavens would retain him until those blessed times of restitution should be due. He connects this argument with the words of our text, showing that Moses' prophecy of the great Prophet, of whom he was but a type, would have its fulfilment at the second advent of Jesus, in the power and great glory of his kingdom—"whom the heavens must receive, until the times of restitution. . . . For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto [antitypical of] me." This leaves no room for question, at the bar of any reasonable mind, that the Prophet like unto Moses, announced for centuries as being the very center of the divine plan for the blessing of all the families of the earth, could not be fulfilled by Mr. Dowie, nor by any other ordinary or extraordinary man, but by him of whom Moses, in the law, and the prophets did write—the Christ.

The more we will examine the subject the more we will find it to expand, and the more we will appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan. The Prophet like unto Moses, the great Law-giver, the great King, the great Mediator, will be the foretold "seed of Abraham," in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed—through the divine laws which he will enunciate, and the regulations he will enforce. And this seed of Abraham, as we have already seen, as the Apostle has most clearly set forth, consists of our Lord Jesus, as the Head, the chief, and all of his faithful elect church as members—as his body, "which seed is Christ. . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:16-29.

In this view of the matter our Lord Jesus was raised up eighteen centuries ago as the "Head" of this great Prophet. He was raised up amongst his brethren, "a first-born among many brethren." He is not ashamed to call us "brethren," although he is the sanctifier and we the sanctified; he is the Head over these brethren; and as such he has been raised —how high? Let the Apostle answer: "Far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named" (Eph. 1:20-23); and the promise to his faithful followers is that they shall be counted with him as his "bride," or, under another figure, as his "body,"—"members in particular of the body of Christ." (2 Cor. 11:2; 1 Cor. 12:27) They also shall be raised, up, up, up. Already these are raised above the condition of the world, in that they have been favored of God, and called with a high calling, a heavenly calling in Christ Jesus. Already they have been raised up, in the sense of being transformed by the renewing of their minds, that they may prove the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Already they are reckonedly risen with Christ, and walking in newness of life. And these, the members of the body of Christ, have the promise that they shall be raised up still further in due time—that they shall "have part in the first resurrection," to glory, honor and immortality; that they shall be like Jesus, their Head and Lord, and see him as he is, and share his glory, far above angels, principalities, and powers, and every name.—Eph. 2:6; Rom. 2:7; Rev. 3:21.

Thus we see that the great work which God began in the person of our Lord Jesus, and in the sacrifice which he made for our sins and in his own exaltation in resurrection power, has not been lying idle since; but a work has been in progress in behalf of the world. Jesus personally has exercised the office of High Priest to and for the under priests, his "body," during this Gospel age, selecting, instructing, fitting and preparing them for the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the future in behalf of the world. And we can easily see also that this work of raising up the great Prophet (Head and body) from amongst mankind, to a higher nature, even to be "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4) will soon be accomplished. Then what glory! What blessing, when this great Prophet, Priest and King shall exercise, in the name and spirit of Jehovah, the authority of earth, to bless mankind, to cause the social uplift which the whole world so greatly needs, but which can come from no other source; to restrain, and ultimately to completely overthrow, the powers of evil, of darkness, and of sin, and thus to purify and cleanse the world and bring in the glorious time promised, when there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more pain, no more death,—because the former things of sin, and its penalty, death, will have passed away! All who remain at that time, after that glorious reign shall have completed its work, will be in full harmony, mentally, morally and physically, in deed and in truth, with Jehovah God, and the righteous laws of his empire—all who would not obey the great Prophet, and thus come into accord, having been destroyed from amongst the people according to the divine declaration.

Hallelujah! What a Savior! What a wonderful and comprehensive plan is this, which our great Creator has mapped out, of which we are, first, the subjects, and afterward, by his grace, his active agents in bringing to the world of mankind. O, there is a grandeur in the divine plan which Mr. Dowie evidently has never seen—a grandeur to which he is blind, because the Lord hath not revealed it unto him, because, even now, in the dawning of the morning, the god of this world still blinds his mind.

A lesson in connection with this subject which is applicable to all of the Lord's consecrated people, is the lesson of humility. Only as we are in a humble attitude of mind can we get a view of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan. Otherwise we would continually find our view of God and of his Word and plan obscured by self. Thus the Lord declares that he resists the proud and showeth his favor unto the humble. Let us, therefore, dear brethren, instead of thinking of ourselves as great ones, on the contrary remember that we are dust, and that as the poet has expressed it,—

"My highest place is lying low
At my Redeemer's feet;
No real joy in life I know
But in his service sweet."

"He that exalteth himself shall be abased; he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (Luke 14:11; 1 Pet. 5:6) Let us seek to be servants of the Lord and of the flock—faithful servants, ready and willing to lay down our lives for the Lord, for the truth, for the brethren.

ISAAC, THE PEACEABLE

GEN. 26:12-25.—SEPT. 1.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."*—Matt. 5:9.

Isaac signifies "laughter." Abraham laughed with pleasure when informed that he would have a son that would be born in his old age. (Gen. 17:17) Sarah laughed with incredulity when she was informed on the subject. (Gen. 18:12) And again she laughed in joy and appreciation at the time of Isaac's birth: hence he was named Laughter, or Joyous. His life, as recorded in the Scriptures, was rather an uneventful one. As might have been expected from the fact of the age of his parents, he appears to have been rather a quiet, thoughtful, non-resistant child and man, with less of the fire and aggressive energy than displayed by some others. Our lesson covers a considerable period of his life, and the chief points of character which it brings to our attention are, first, his meek, patient, peaceable disposition; and, second, his abiding faith in God and in the promises made to Abraham, his father.

As Abraham, in the time of drouth, went southward into Egypt, so Isaac similarly went southward, but stopped in the land of Gerar, the king over which was Abimelech. The Lord's blessing was so manifestly with Isaac that Abimelech and the people of that land urged him to move elsewhere, as his prosperity, they imagined, was somewhat at their expense. It is not amiss that we here note the fact that the Lord's blessing upon Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants—Israel according to the flesh—was manifested in temporal prosperity; whereas divine favors to spiritual Israel of this Gospel age are manifested in spiritual prosperity. And since the two prosperities, under present conditions, can rarely exist side by side in the same individual's experience, it follows that those who are in line with the spiritual promises of the present time are generally, in temporal matters, "the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom." "Not many wise, not many great, not many learned, according to the course of this world, hath God chosen."—Jas. 2:5; 1 Cor. 1:26,27.

It is not a little remarkable that, even in their cast-off condition, the natural seed of Abraham (to whom still belong certain as yet unfulfilled promises of God, which will surely be fulfilled as soon as the spiritual Israel has been selected), are nevertheless so kept and guided by divine providence that in all parts of the world they are comparatively successful in the commercial and literary competition of the world; so that, as Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go from us, for thou art more mighty than we," the various nations of earth feel toward and act toward Isaac's posterity—the Jew is continually asked to move on, because, even though alienated for the time being from the chief blessing of the Abrahamic promise, the Lord's hand is with him, and he prospers in his undertakings.

The experiences of fleshly Israel in having no continuing city or country, but being pushed hither and thither throughout the earth for now several centuries, should have produced in at least some of that nation a spirit of humility and of patient waiting for the Lord, and his fulfilment of his gracious promises to them. And we are glad to hope that such will be found thus exercised and ready for the kingdom at its inception; and yet amongst the Jews, as a people, we notice comparatively little faith and comparatively little meekness—especially amongst their wealthy ones. Evidently, the majority are not Israelites indeed, and will not be prepared for more than the average blessings upon the world at the beginning of the Millennial kingdom. Nevertheless, we may hope that a goodly remnant of that people are in the condition of heart in which they will be ready to welcome Messiah's kingdom, when the eyes of their understanding shall open, and to join with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the holy prophets of their brethren, who will then be princes in all the earth (Psa. 45:16), in constituting a nucleus of a holy nation, gathered about the earthly phase of the kingdom,—through which shall proceed to Israel and to all the nations the heavenly laws and blessings dispensed by God through spiritual Israel, then glorified with Christ at its head.

The peaceable disposition of Isaac is exhibited in this lesson by the fact that although he recognized himself to be the divinely appointed heir of that land, who should ultimately inherit it; and although, with his large retinue of servants, King Abimelech himself had recognized his superior power; nevertheless, rather than have strife and contention, Isaac moved his encampment a considerable distance away from the place of strife, abandoning some of his rights for the sake of peace. And it was after he had thus relinquished his rights, trusting to God to give him the land in his own *due time* and manner, that the Lord appeared to him (in what manner is not explained), and reiterated to him the substance of the covenant already made with his father Abraham, saying: "I am the God of Abraham, thy father [I still recognize him; he is not extinct; he still has a place in my gracious arrangements and purposes, although he sleeps with his fathers; I am abundantly able, in due time, to resurrect him, and to fulfil to him and to his faithful posterity all my gracious promises]: fear not, for I am with thee [I recognize thee as associated in these promises and an heir with him—I approve also the element of faith in thy character, and thy submission to my times and seasons and arrangements—I appreciate the fact that thou dost not strive to attain the things I have promised, until the time that I am pleased to give them to thee], and I will bless thee and thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake—[in harmony with the one covenant made with Abraham: you will understand that I am not making a new covenant with you, but merely confirming the original one]."

Many of the spiritual children of Abraham need to learn the lesson of patience—patient waiting on the Lord for the fulfilment of his gracious promises. With quite a good many there is a disposition to hasten matters, to force things; and even questionable methods are sometimes adopted and commended, with the thought that the aggressive ones are more acceptable servants to the Lord than others; but instead of such aggressiveness, as the carrying of the gospel into China or Africa or India with the sword, being the evidence of a zeal which God approves, it should rather be considered an evidence of lack of faith in God, without which it is impossible to please him. A proper faith in God will lead to a careful study of his Word, of the promises; and a careful study of the promises would show that the present is not the time for conquering the world, but the time for calling out, proving and testing, the elect church, which in due time, as the seed of Abraham, shall be fully empowered and fully commissioned to be both kings and priests, and to conquer the world in righteousness. A proper condition of faith in God must lead his faithful ones to wait patiently for him; praying the meanwhile, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth;" and to expect that when the due time shall come Emmanuel will take the control of the world's affairs, and cause its subjugation and blessing to proceed rapidly and effectively. Now, it is our duty to avoid striving with the world; rather to give place—to permit our rights to be infringed, to wait on the Lord, and to expect that he will provide for us the things and the experiences most helpful to our development as new creatures, and thus to make us fit, "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

Two other circumstances in Isaac's life seem to illustrate his attitude of faith, obedience and patient submission, even more than this lesson. One of these we have already referred to—his submission as a young man, in health and vigor, to be bound by his father as a sacrifice upon the altar. In this complete submission to Abraham, his father, Isaac well typified his antitype, Christ Jesus, and his submission to the heavenly Father, Abraham's antitype, even unto death, even the death of the cross.

The other was the matter of his marriage. Isaac manifested a wonderful degree of patience and trust in the divine providence which he seems to have realized was guiding in all the affairs of his father Abraham, and in his affairs as his son and heir under the promises. He was a full-grown man of forty years when his father Abraham, apparently without consulting him in the matter, sent the servant to select for him a wife, who, when she came, he accepted with full loyalty of heart, as being the Lord's choice for him. We are not setting forth as an example in all respects for the fathers and sons of our day. On the contrary, we believe that some of these matters in ancient times were arranged with a view to the typical lessons embodied in the various circumstances and affairs of life. Isaac, as the type of Christ, was fully submissive to the will of his father, as a type of Jesus' submission to the divine will respecting the selection for him of the Gospel church, to be his Bride and joint-heir in the great promises respecting the world and its blessing. Our Lord Jesus is fully in harmony with the Father's will respecting whom, how many, and of what character, shall be the joint-heirs of his kingdom. The force and beauty of the picture is seen when we recognize the servant Eliezer as representing the divine message, the Spirit of the Word of truth, sent forth of God, to gather during this Gospel age a people, a little flock, who shall constitute the bride, the Lamb's wife, and thus be members of the body of the antitypical Isaac.—Acts 15:14; 2 Cor. 11:2.

The characteristics of God's dear Son must be found in all those who will be eventually accepted as his bride and joint-heir. This will include the great faith in the Father which the Lord Jesus exercised, and which was typified in Isaac's full trust and submission. So, then, it is for us who are seeking to make our calling and our election sure to this gracious part in the divine plan, to be peaceable, peace-loving, gentle, willing rather to retire and be nonresistent, where no principles are at stake, where no command of the Lord is to the contrary. We can well afford to sacrifice earthly interests, since the promises to which we are heirs belong to the future, and are so exceedingly abundant, more than we could ask or think, that their attainment will far more than compensate for any incidental losses or deprivations as respects the present time.

The Apostle says, "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (Gal. 4:28)—Christ, our Head, and we, his members, are the antitype of him who was called "Laughter," or "Joyous." And do we not have more joy than others, even in this present time? True, we have a full share in the trials and difficulties and sorrows and disappointments that cause the whole creation to groan and travail in pain together: yet we have what they do not have—"the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts" and enabling us to be "joyful in tribulation also," knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and all the various fruits of the spirit which, when perfected in us, shall bring us to the complete joy and rejoicing of the heavenly kingdom. And if this name, Joyous, applies to us in such degree in the present time, what shall we say of the glorious future, when joined to our Master in the glories of his kingdom we shall cause the knowledge and blessing of the Lord to fill the whole earth, and bring laughter and joy to a world of mankind, now weak and groaning under the administration of sin and death? "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"

THE WORLD'S HOPE NOT IN MISSIONS, BUT IN THE KINGDOM

From time to time we have demonstrated that there is no hope of a general world-blessing through Christ along the lines generally held by Christian people—the conversion of the world by present-day missionary efforts. We herewith supply additional evidences on this subject from highly creditable sources—not with a view to casting disrespect upon all missionaries, but in order to demonstrate afresh that this foreign mission world conversion delusion is doing positive and serious harm to the Lord's true people, in leading to false expectation and, consequently, to misdirected efforts.

Foreign missions were undertaken with two convictions; one correct, the other false. (1) The *correct* Scriptural conviction that the only name by which any can be saved is the name of Jesus;—faith in his sacrifice, and obedience and devotion to him. (2) The *false*, unscriptural conviction that there is no hope for any who die in ignorance of the only name whereby we must be saved. These intertwined theories have been the cord which has drawn hundreds of noble lives to self-sacrifice, especially during the first half of the past century. It is the cord also which has drawn, and still draws, from sympathetic purses, millions on millions of money. And we need not wonder if the money has, in turn, drawn some into the missionary work simply for an honorable and easy living.

We are not objecting to the sacrifice of noble lives and consecrated money, either; for we firmly believe that lives and money *given* with sincerity have been pleasing to the Lord; even though given under some serious and discreditable misapprehensions of the divine character, and plan of human salvation. We object that this mixture of truth and error is very injurious to God's people, in that it diverts their hearts and efforts away from the truth. It draws them away from Bible-study—away from growth in knowledge and in the graces of the spirit. Instead, it inculcates the thought that the chief object of life for all Christians should be the snatching fellow-creatures from the hands of an angry God intent upon throwing them into eternal torment at the hands of demons. Or, if not this, the making and contributing of money which will pay the expenses of those who do the snatching.

As a result, Christian people "have no time" to study the Father's Word; no time for studying the divine plan, cultivating their own hearts, etc. They say to themselves often, and sometimes, unguardedly, to others—Bible-study! Nonsense, we already *know enough* when we know that millions are perishing—going down to hell. Bye and bye we "hustlers" who have been less careful for our own spiritual development and for Bible study, but more "on fire" and "burdened" for souls, will have brighter crowns than yours—if indeed you "hair-splitting" Bible students are not rejected from heaven entirely.

But a reaction from so unreasonable a position was bound to come with the advance of intelligence; and it has come. People in general no longer believe in the awful devil-god of the past, seeking for any possible pretext for the torture of as many as possible of his creatures. Reason is asserting itself, and man no longer poses as the sinner's only friend to save him from a malicious God. That is too absurd a proposition for the twentieth century. But men will have theories; for theories still, as ever, are the basis of action—the rudder of human effort. It has become evident to all thinkers that one or the other of the strands of the original mission-cord is false, unreliable, rotten. Question: Which of the strands will they reject?

We answer that the true one will be rejected; and the false one will be retained. They will continue to believe that all hope ends with death, and will reject the inspired declaration that faith in Christ is the only hope, and this the only name. They have already concluded and are more and more becoming convinced that, although the name of Jesus is a good rallying cry, especially when calling for missionary contributions, it is *not the only name for salvation.* They conclude, but do not care to declare it in so many words, that "education," "civilization," are, rather, the only names for salvation. And *salva-*

tion at home and abroad is more and more coming to mean, not a personal relationship to him who is the light of the world, and in whom alone is life everlasting; but rather it now stands for social progress, municipal and national reform—"social uplift." Thus has the false idea of missions and their conversion of the world led God's people farther and farther away from his Word and plan, which, in their zeal without knowledge, they have been rejecting.

To those who are rightly instructed on the subject by God's Word—to those who lean not to their own understandings, but who search the Scriptures daily to be thereby taught of God—the utter failure of missions as respects any hope of ever converting the world to even the imperfect conditions which prevail throughout "Christendom," is faith-strengthening. Because it demonstrates, it proves beyond question, the truth of the Scripture teaching; namely, that God is not yet attempting the conversion and salvation of mankind in general, but is leaving that great work for the future age, to be accomplished by the kingdom of God when it shall be established in power and great glory during the Millennium. It corroborates fully the Bible declaration that the present work of God is the *election* of a church which, finished, polished and glorified with her Lord and head shall, bye and bye, fulfill the predicted bessings of all the world as Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:29); fulfilling the petition of our Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven."

The following discouraging reports of missionary efforts we clip from the *Literary Digest:*

"A SWEEPING CRITICISM OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

"The missionaries' side of Christian missions in foreign lands has been very fully stated from time to time in Christian churches and in the reports of missionary societies and conventions. Not so much has been heard as to how these missions impress others, except in the occasional private reports given by returning travelers. *Reynolds' Newspaper* (London) has lately been devoting considerable space to this topic. In a recent issue the results of some investigations by a special correspondent employed for this purpose are given. These investigations cover the missionary organizations in London—the great center of Protestant foreign missions—as well as the results obtained by them in the chief countries of the Orient. In speaking of the great sums collected from the people of England for this purpose, the writer states that the Church Missionary Society (Church of England) has an annual income of about £404.906 (a little over $2,000,000). The collection of this money alone costs £25,843 (about $129,000); administration costs £15,917 (about $79,500); salaries to nineteen clergymen as association secretaries amount to £5,432 (about $27,-160). The London Missionary Society has an income of about £150,168 (about $750,840) yearly, while its foreign secretary, the Rev. M. Wardlaw Thompson, receives £800 (about $4,000) per annum, and others receive 'proportionately large amounts.' The missionary income of the Wesleyan Methodists for 1899 amounted to £133,690 (about $668,450), out of which four ministerial secretaries received 'large salaries,' in addition to extra charges for 'children, rent, rates, taxes, house bill, house repairs and replacement of furniture, coals, gas, etc.,' amounting to about as much again. The Baptists in 1900 collected £73,716 (about $363,580) for foreign missions.

"In commenting on the foreign results received for these vast sums, the special agent of *Reynolds' Newspaper* gives the following facts, based on his study of the official missionary reports:

"'What are the results abroad? In India, with its great population of 350,000,000, the number of converts made by the Church Missionary Society, after more than a century's labor, is today 35,640, although no fewer than 3,424 agents are at work. How many of these converts are genuine is a different matter. The above number includes the helpless children. In the year 1889-90 there was a gain of 1,836, mostly the babes of converts. Thus it took two missionary agents and a sum of £113,000 to secure one 'convert' babe, or adult, in a year. What a farce! This ridiculous result, too, is a falling-off on the previous year. The other societies have even a more unsatisfactory record. Mr. W. S. Caine, M. P., on his recent return from India, writing in the Birmingham *Daily Post*, February 14, 1889, thus sums up his opinion of the attempt to 'Christianize' India: 'Educated India is looking for a religion, but turns its back on Christ and his teaching as presented by the missionary. As far as turning the young men they educate into Christians their [the missionaries'] failure is complete and unmistakable.' A writer in *The Contemporary Review* for February, 1888, gives his Indian experience as follows: 'Christianity has taken but a poor grip of Hindu India. Its votaries are nowhere really visible among the population. A traveler living in India for two years might leave it without full consciousness that any work of active proselytism was going on.'

"'And the alleged converts? The Church Missionary Society for 1900 says: 'At present there is a rather low standard of Christian living.' It is the same as was told some years ago by the Rev. Sidney Smith, that the native who bore the name of Christian was 'commonly nothing more than a drunken reprobate, who conceives himself at liberty to eat and drink anything he pleases, and annexes hardly any other meaning to Christianity.' The London Missionary Society in the 1896 report (p. 186) ask subscribers 'not to despise the low ideas and motives with which they [the converts] come to us.' And, again, at page 145: 'A very large proportion who profess themselves Christians, and are baptized, are so very ignorant that great care and patience are required to make them intelligently acquainted with the fundamental truths of Christianity.' Among the Malay Christians, which the 1899 report of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions states 'furnish us with the great majority of our converts' (page 76), a lady worker writes: 'When one questions them by themselves, the one appalling factor that forces itself upon one is their unimaginable ignorance. In most the anxiety for the daily bread is the largely bulking factor for their consciousness.' Extracts of this description might be indefinitely multiplied.

"'In China, the missionaries are now thoroughly disliked, although they have not been interfered with unless their zeal has outrun their discretion, for the Chinese, says Professor Douglas in his book on China (p. 370), are 'singularly tolerant of faiths other than their own.' In the report of the Church Missionary Society for 1900 we are told that 'churches' have been organized by Chinese for the purpose of affording protection in law cases, such as the payment of debts. In 1869 our Foreign Office (Parliamentary paper on China, No. 9, 1870, p. 13) wrote as follows as to Protestant missionaries in China:

"'There is good reason to suppose that the animosity which has lately been more intensely shown toward missionaries on the part of the ruling authorities in China is in a great measure to be attributed to the injudicious conduct of the native converts to Christianity. . . . There seems sufficient reason to believe that converts assume and have acted on the assumption that by embracing Christianity they released themselves from the obligations of obedience to the local authorities and from the discharge of their duties as subjects of the Emperor, and acquired a right to be protected by the European power whose religious tenets they have adopted.'

"'And again, Admiral Richards, in an official communication to the British government (Parliamentary Paper, China, No. 1, 1892, p. 24), says:

"'It seems to be the special aim of missionary societies to establish themselves outside treaty limits; and, having done so, they are not prepared to take the risks which they voluntarily incur, but, on the contrary, are loudest in their clamor for gunboats, as their contributions to the Shanghai press sufficiently demonstrate. . . . It appears to be necessary, after the lessons taught by these occurrences, that some understanding should be arrived at with regard to missionary societies in China. . . It seems altogether unreasonable that the societies should exercise absolute freedom in going where they please, and then their agents should look to Her Majesty's government for protection.'

"'The scandals in connection with the present war in China, published in *The Daily Mail* and other papers, of missionaries engaging with the troops in looting, and inciting the burning of the houses of the Chinese, must give these followers of the great Confucius—who taught a doctrine in no sense inferior to Christianity, and long before Christianity was known—the notion that missionaries are a kind of barbarian horde, whose real object is to plunder and massacre. The number of 'communicants' in Christian churches, throughout China, after half a century's work, is only a few thousands. 'In Ichang,' writes Mr. Little, 'the Bibles that are distributed broadcast are largely used in the manufacture of boot soles,' and, further, that no respectable Chinaman would admit a missionary into his house. In other parts of the country they [the Bibles] are employed to manufacture *papier-mache* tables.

"'As to Africa one quotation may suffice. Sir H. H. Johnson, our present Special Commissioner for Uganda, and a man of many years' experience in Africa, says in *The Nineteenth Century*, November, 1887:

"'It too often happens that, while the negro rapidly masters the rules and regulations of the Christian religion, he still continues to be gross, immoral and deceitful. . . . They [missionaries] may have succeeded in turning their disciples into professing Catholics, Anglicans or Baptists; but the impartial observer is surprised to find that adultery, drunkenness and lying are more apparent among the converts than among their heathen brethren.'

And again:

"'I regret to say that, with a few—very rare—exceptions, those native African pastors, teachers and catechists whom I have met have been all, more or less, bad men. They attempted to veil an unbridled immorality with an unblushing hypocrisy and a profane display of mouth-religion which, to an honest mind, seemed even more disgusting than the immorality itself. While it was apparent that not one particle of true religion had made its way into their gross minds, it was also evident that the spirit of sturdy manliness, which was present in their savage forefathers, found no place in their false, cowardly natures. . . .

"'It is not on the spread of Christianity that African missions can at present base their claim to our gratitude, respect or support. . . . In many important districts where they have been at work for twenty years they can scarcely number in honest statistics twenty sincere Christians—that is to say, twenty natives understanding in any degree the doctrines or dogmas they have been taught and striving to shape their conduct by their new principles. In other parts of Africa, principally British possessions, where large numbers of nominal Christians exist, their religion is discredited by numbering among its adherents all the drunkards, liars, rogues and unclean livers of the colony. In the oldest of our West African possessions all the unrepentant Magdalenes of the chief city are professing Christians, and the most notorious one in the place would boast that she never missed going to church on communion Sunday.'

"'Considerations of space prevent us following the missionary into other fields of his activity. The tale is pretty much the same wherever we turn. But we have said enough to show how grossly deceived the public are with reference to the doings of our missionaries and the result of their missions. Far be it from us to say that there are not good and self-sacrificing men among them. But we assert that the fruit of their energies is so small, and the work left undone at home so great, that it is nothing less than a criminal act of human folly to give any special encouragement to the missionary movement.'"

JACOB BECOMES ABRAHAM'S HEIR

Gen. 28:10-22.—Sept. 8.

"Surely the Lord is in this place."

Although Abraham had two sons, one of them, Isaac, was made the heir of the most of his possessions, and exclusively his heir as respected the divine covenants and promises. Similarly, Isaac had two sons, Esau and Jacob, who were twins; but the former, being born a few moments in advance of the latter, was, according to the laws of primogeniture, his father's heir. So far as we know he did inherit his father's estate, flocks, herds, etc. The divine promise to Abraham was evidently highly appreciated, not only by himself and Isaac, but also by Isaac's sons; but Esau, being less religiously inclined than his brother, set more store by his inheritance of his father's possessions than in his rights as the first-born to the divine covenants and mercies pertaining to the future. Jacob, on the contrary, had an opposite estimate of values. He was quite willing that his brother should have every earthly advantage, but he coveted the special blessing of God, promised to his grandfather Abraham, and renewedly covenanted to his father Isaac.

Severe have been the criticisms which have been leveled against poor Jacob because of his coveting earnestly the best gifts, which his brother despised. (1 Cor. 12:31) He is freely described as a thief who stole his brother's birthright, who took advantage of his extremities, etc., and some even go so far as to suggest that his after tribulations were in the nature of divine judgments upon him on account of this transaction by which he became the legal owner of the divine blessing. To us it seems evident that there is a general misunderstanding of this transaction; for we note the fact that Jacob received no reproof from the Lord in respect to this matter, and that none of his experiences and disappointments, while working for his uncle Laban, are even hinted to have been punishments for a wrong done to his brother Esau. On the contrary, the Scriptures uphold Jacob in every particular; not only the Old Testament records, but also the New Testament records of the transaction complimenting him upon his appreciation of the divine promise, and his willingness to sacrifice every earthly interest in order to secure it. As the course of Esau is held up to reprobation, the course of Jacob is in the same proportion held up for our appreciation and approval—the general feature of his course, if not every particular item therein.

The correct view of the situation, as we gather it from the divine record, is this: Esau loved his earthly interests chiefly; Jacob regretted that he was the second-born, not so much because it would hinder him from being the principal heir of his father's property, but chiefly because it would cut him off from being the channel of divine favor in respect to the future blessings which God had promised in his covenant with Abraham. He well knew that his brother Esau was irreligious and estimated his inheritance of the Abrahamic covenant very lightly. Hence it was that one day when his brother returned from hunting, weary and hungry, and was attracted by some soup which Jacob had prepared, that he was willing to exchange anything he possessed for the satisfaction of his appetite—possibly, too, he may not have been too honest—he may have thought to sell the birthright for the soup, and to ignore the bargain subsequently. Indeed, this was the very course he pursued.

Esau's chagrin and tears later on, when he found that the birthright had really passed to Jacob, do not necessarily mean that he appreciated the heavenly blessing; but, rather, that he understood that he had disposed of all his rank and inheritance as respected his father's estate. Jacob, on the contrary, cared little or nothing for that part of the inheritance; his ambition being centered wholly upon the divine blessing and covenant. He was, therefore, quite willing to flee from his father's house, leaving all the earthly inheritance to his brother Esau, although it properly belonged to him according to the bargain. He counted earthly advantage but as loss and dross that he might gain the divine blessing. Even when, years later, he returned to the vicinity of his father's home, so far from making a demand upon Esau for the temporal things which he had bought from him, Jacob entirely ignored that part of the transaction, and took from Esau not one solitary thing that the latter really valued. Instead of demanding the pound of flesh, according to the contract of purchase, he sent his brother a peace offering, a present of sheep, etc.

Indeed, the entire course of Jacob, rightly understood, seems to us to have been a most noble one. The unhappy part of the bargain was the deceiving of Isaac—Jacob's personating his brother Esau. We are to remember, however, that Jacob having bought all of Esau's rights, had become *legally his representative*, with full authority to take such steps as might be necessary to secure for himself justice;—to secure that which he had contracted for and paid for. In what manner Jacob could have done better to secure to himself that which the Lord's Word concedes he had legitimately purchased, might be open for discussion. But one item connected with it is not open for discussion; that the Lord did not reprove Jacob's earnest coveting of the heavenly promise—which led him, first of all, to the self-denial of giving up his own dinner for its procurement; and, secondly, his willingness to desert all of his earthly interests in his father's house, and to become a pilgrim and a stranger in the world, forsaking all things for this divine promise.

God attested his appreciation of such a character by specially appearing to Jacob that very night, and granting him a vision, in which he talked to him and confirmed to him the original promise made to Abraham and renewed to Isaac, saying, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it and to thy seed; . . . and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Any man who receives unqualified divine approval and blessing we shall most surely refuse to call a thief, or any other evil name. On the contrary, we shall hold him in high esteem, and shall commend to all of the spiritual seed of Israel today that they emulate the spirit of Jacob, and not the spirit of Esau—that they be ready at all times to exchange the pottage of earthly advantage, and to become pilgrims and strangers; outcasts from home and property, and from all earthly things, for the sake of being inheritors of the same heavenly promises—joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Indeed, only to this class will the divine blessings come. Our earthly neighbors and friends may speak slightingly of us —may charge us with ambitious designs, when they learn that we are seeking a heavenly kingdom and joint-heirship with our Lord. They may charge that this is selfishness on our part. But the Lord makes no such charges. He tells us that he is pleased to see us so appreciative of the heavenly promises that we will be ready and glad to give up to others, to yield our earthly rights in any and every particular, if by any means we may win Christ and be found in him, and be sharers in his kingdom.

To the worldly mind Jacob did a very foolish thing. He should not have thought of the Abrahamic promise as being anything of special value. He should rather have sought out for himself the smoothest and easiest way through life, conciliating his brother Esau, etc. He was foolish to leave a home of wealth and many servants and flocks and herds to go out, a stranger in the world, to earn his own living, to begin at the bottom of the ladder. Quite possibly he felt a little of this sentiment himself, as he fixed a stone for his pillow and lay down on the ground to sleep on the first night of his flight. No doubt, he wondered whether or not he were pursuing a wrong course; whether or not the heavenly promise which he had so much appreciated would ever yield adequate returns. But the vision of the ladder reaching from his head up to heaven itself, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it, and God at the other end speaking to him and encouraging him, and declaring to him that he recognized him as the heir of the Abrahamic promise, must have fully satisfied the mind of Jacob, and have made him thankful and appreciative of all the steps by which divine providence had thus far led his appreciative and faithful heart. The angels he might possibly understand to mean divine providences—divine care and supervision respecting himself and all his interests and affairs, while the rungs of the ladder would represent the various steps of the divine plan already known to God, by which the promise he had would reach fulfilment.

When he awakened, Jacob was not filled with self-conceit, nor did he say to himself, Evidently I am greater than either father Abraham or father Isaac, for I have never heard that God ever so appeared to them. Rather, he was filled with a spirit of reverenece and of awe; and he said, This is a holy place; God is here. I will set up a large stone here as a monument, as a reminder of God's blessing. I may come back this way at some future time, and this stone will remind me, not only then, but afterward, of the great favor which I received of the Lord, in that he was willing to manifest himself to me, and to declare me the heir of his promises. Quite a good many of the Lord's people seem rather to lack the spirit of fear, of reverence, as respects the Almighty. We are not to forget the Apostle's words, that "Perfect love casteth out fear," but neither are we to forget the other Scripture, which declares that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Whoever has not first received the spirit of reverence, cannot properly receive the spirit of love; and the love will never cast out the reverence, but rather increase it, casting out only the element of terror, of fright.

The Lord's words to Jacob in the vision, "I am with thee, and will keep thee, whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land," became a strength and assurance, a ballast, as it were, in Jacob's life and experiences; his faith grasped the situation, and he felt strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, in the word of his promise. He was ready now for any and all the experiences which might come to him, knowing that according to this promise all things would work out for his good. And so it is with the Lord's people of this Gospel age—spiritual Israel—the church, the body of Christ. When we have believed God, and have trusted in his promises to the extent of forsaking all to inherit their blessing, it signifies our full consecration, our self-sacrifice in the divine service. Then it is that God speaks to us through his Word, and gives unto us exceeding great and precious promises, which affect, not only the interests of the life that now is, but also of that which is to come. Then it is that we are strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and that we are able to grasp the situation—that if God be for us the efforts of all who might be against us will prove futile. True, the promises which come to us are not exactly the same as those which were given to Jacob—they are better, grander, higher, than his—heavenly, instead of earthly; and correspondingly we have reason to rejoice, be strong in the Lord and go on our way rejoicing, even more than did Jacob.

Then Jacob made a vow unto the Lord—a promise, a solemn agreement: the basis of this agreement was the Lord's promise we have just quoted, that he should be brought back in safety, and that the Lord would be with him and bless him with the best experiences during his absence. Jacob's vow was based upon the divine proposition above mentioned—that if God would do this for him he would surely be his servant, and that forever. Not only would he worship and reverence him and obey him, as best he could understand his will and do it, but additionally he would honor him with whatever substance he would give him, to the extent of one-tenth.

So it is with the spiritual Israelite; when accepted of the Lord through Jesus, and assured of divine favor and blessing upon his pathway, he says to himself, in the language of the Psalmist, "What shall I render unto the Lord my God for all his benefits toward me?" What can I do in return? No true, noble mind can willingly receive many and continued blessings without desiring and seeking methods of acknowledgement of these mercies—without desiring to make some return in worship, in praise, in gratitude, in obedience.

To us also comes the desire to honor the Lord with our substance. And here the degree of our love and appreciation are further manifested. Oberlin, the poor French minister, reading of the Jewish tithes, said to himself: "Well, I am sure that I, as a Christian, have three times as many blessings as the Jews had. If it was right for a Jew to give one-tenth of his property to God, surely I ought to give at least three times as much as that." Another minister has said, "The man who calls himself a Christian, and gives less than one-tenth of his income to the Lord, is meaner than Jacob, and has a lower standard than the king of Sodom, who was ready to give more than that to God's representative."

The standard of giving is one which has apparently perplexed the Lord's people for a long time. Our suggestion is that the divine favor bestowed upon the enlightened Christian calls not only for one-tenth or three-tenths of his property, but, on the contrary, calls for his *all*. To our understanding he who gives himself to the Lord in consecration gives not only his every mental talent and every physical power, but also gives every dollar that he possesses—yea, most valuable of all, he lays his life at the Master's feet, in harmony with the Apostle's words, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and your reasonable service." These sacrifices are earthly, and when offered and accepted the newly begotten mind or will is counted as a "new creature;" and at once this "new creature" becomes the steward, the caretaker, of the earthly nature and its affairs;—all that was devoted or sacrificed. Thenceforth it is the business of the "new creature" in Christ to use up in the divine service, as wisely, economically, and yet rapidly, as possible, all the earthly things, interests, hopes, ambitions, etc., that were originally presented to the Lord as a sacrifice. This complete sacrifice, this giving of our all to the Lord, is the Christian standard, and nothing short of this warrants us in considering ourselves footstep followers of our Lord Jesus Christ and his faithful apostles. Surely they gave all that they had. Surely we also must give up our little all if we would be joint-sacrificers and joint-heirs with the King of glory!

ISRAEL—A PRINCE WITH GOD

GEN. 32:1-32.—SEPT. 15.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"Men ought always to pray and not to faint."*—Luke 18:1.

Fleeing from his father's home, Jacob traveled a distance of nearly five hundred miles to Chaldea, the original home of his grandfather Abraham, where his uncle Laban still lived. His esteem for the promise of God had made him a pilgrim and a stranger, a wanderer from home, just as Abraham's faithfulness to the call had taken him from home in the opposite direction. While the blessings God had promised to Jacob were earthly and temporal, and in these respects differed from the promises which are made to spiritual Israelites, nevertheless, in order to prove Jacob's worthiness of the blessings—in order to test his faith in God's promises, he was permitted to pass through various trying experiences and disappointments. One of these was a love-affair with Rachel, his cousin, for whom he served his uncle in all fourteen years, seven before he got her as a wife, and seven years afterward; his uncle taking a dishonest advantage of him in the arrangement. Nevertheless, we see Jacob's patience and persistency, and note with pleasure that he never for a moment seems to have doubted the promises of God that he should be blessed as the inheritor of the Abrahamic promise.

"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," would seem to apply well to Jacob's career. So energetic was he in Laban's service, so successful in all that he undertook, so persevering, that his uncle soon considered his service indispensable, and was glad to make favorable terms with him to have him remain and take chief charge of his property. Shrewdly Jacob bargained for an interest in the increase of the flocks and herds, etc., as his salary, and practically became a partner. There was nothing dishonest in his making a bargain with Laban that all the brown sheep and streaked and speckled goats should be his; nor was there anything wrong in his scientifically increasing the proportionate numbers of these colored and speckled animals. Laban became aware, before long, that he had a very capable and shrewd son-in-law, and, moreover, that the Lord's blessing was with him. He fain would have had him remain permanently in Chaldea, but Jacob's mind was full of the Abrahamic promise and of the reiteration of that promise to himself in the vision at Bethel, and he desired to return to the land of promise. He surmised, however, not without good cause, that his uncle would use force to restrain him from leaving, or to take from him some of the cattle, etc., which were properly his under the contract, and hence he chose an opportunity for leaving when Laban was absent.

Laban was evidently a powerful sheik, having many servants, and indeed Jacob had become so by this time, as the narrative shows that he was able, shortly after, to give away as a present to his brother Esau, 220 goats, 220 sheep, 30 camels, 50 head of cattle and 20 asses. But when Laban pursued, with the full intention of bringing back Jacob, his family and servants and flocks and herds, God interfered, warning Laban in a dream, saying, "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob from good to bad"—margin. In consequence of this dream, and Jacob's subsequent fair statement of his side of the case, showing clearly that he had not wronged Laban, but that Laban had repeatedly dealt hardly with him, he was let go on his way in peace.

If we draw a lesson from these incidents respecting ourselves, as heirs of the promises of God, spiritual Israelites, it would be that while our hearts are full of rejoicing in God's promises we should not expect these to come to us wholly without our effort to secure them. If God has promised us spiritual blessings, we should put forth the effort to attain these, just as Jacob had put forth his efforts to attain the temporal blessings promised him. If adversity seems to go with us, and we meet with disappointments and more or less fraudulent conspiracy to take away from us our spiritual blessings, as Jacob met with disappointment which seemed for the time to interfere with his temporal blessings, we, like him, should patiently wait for the Lord, and trust and hope and labor on, knowing that the Lord will bring out the promised results in the end; knowing that he is on our part, and greater than all they that be against us.

We noticed in previous lessons the peaceable disposition of Abraham, and also of Isaac, and now we note that Jacob not only left home and abandoned his share in the father's house, and family property belonging to the birthright he had purchased, rather than quarrel with his brother, but that similarly in dealing with his uncle he refused to quarrel; he submitted himself; he trusted to the Lord to bring out the results rather than to his own strength for a conflict, either mental or physical. The Lord apparently would have the spiritual Israelites learn this lesson: "Seek peace and pursue it;" "Patiently wait for the Lord, and he will bring it to pass." It is not of God's arrangement that the spiritual Israelites should contend with carnal weapons; but rather that they should submit themselves to the powers that be, learning the lessons which accompany such submission; and have developed in them the faith, the trust, the hope in God, necessary to a maintenance of their relationship to him, and growth in his grace.

As Jacob and his caravan approached Palestine his confidence in God, and his reliance upon the Lord's promise to bless him, did not hinder him from taking a wise, generous, reasonable course for the conciliation of his brother. He did not stand upon his rights, and say: I purchased the inheritance, and was obliged to flee from it, and now I am differently situated, and will seek my first opportunity to take from Esau the cattle and substance which he received of my father's estate which are rightfully mine, and should there be any quarrel in the matter, let him look to his own side, for right is on my side and I may exert as much force as is necessary to obtain it. Quite to the contrary of this, Jacob said to himself: I care nothing for the earthly inheritance, I abandoned that all when I left home, and I do not intend to lay any claim to it, now or ever. I merely got what Esau did not appreciate, and now, if he can come to realize that I am not after the property, it will assuage his wrath, his malice, his envy. On the contrary, I will be generous to him; I will send him a valuable present, thus showing him that so far from wishing to take from him earthly goods I am disposed to give him more. Moreover, I will send such a message by my servants as will show him that I treat him as my superior—my lord, and that I rank myself as his inferior. He shall see that I am neither wishing to take the honors of his birthright nor its earthly emoluments, though all of these were purchased—I resign freely all of these temporal good things and honors, that I may have the Lord's favor, as represented in the original covenant with grandfather Abraham. He carried out his program successfully, and Esau became his friend. The lesson for spiritual Israelites along this line is,—We should not be sticklers for full justice and the last penny in earthly matters. Rather we may use the earthly mammon generously to make and keep the peace, and to forward our spiritual interests. Our readiness to do this will measure or gauge our appreciation of the spiritual interests, in comparison to which earthly blessings, "Mammon" should be esteemed as loss and dross.

A MODEL PRAYER

Jacob's prayer at the time he was anticipating a meeting with Esau is recorded in this lesson, and may be considered one of the best examples of prayer to be found in God's Word. It is so full of confidence and trust in God. It recounts the original promise to Abraham, its renewal to Isaac, and its second repetition to Jacob at Bethel, and the Lord's promise there given him, that he would bring him again to his home country. It shows the humility of Jacob's mind, which cried out, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast shown unto thy servant; for with my staff [only] I passed over this Jordan [when fleeing from home], and now I am become two bands [great companies]." He tells the Lord of his fear of Esau, yet shows that his fear is offset by his confidence in the Almighty. It was at this time, and doubtless in answer to this prayer, that the angel of the Lord appeared to Jacob, and so full of faith in the power of God, and in the promise of God was Jacob that he laid physical hold upon the angel, declaring that he would never let go until he got a blessing.

Here, the lesson proper, relating to Jacob's struggle with the angel, come in. The angel appeared as a man, as was frequently the case in olden times; Jacob had recognized him, nevertheless, and laying hold of him urged that he as God's representative, sent to meet him, should give him a blessing. We cannot suppose for a moment that the angel was not powerful enough to release himself from the grasp of Jacob, and hence that the wrestling and struggle between them kept up until morning light, the angel vainly pleading "Let me go," and Jacob as persistently holding on and declaring, "I will not let thee go unless thou bless me." We must suppose, on the contrary, that the Lord was well pleased to bless Jacob, and had sent the angel for this very purpose; and that the circumstances were intended as an opportunity to draw out Jacob's longing desires in this respect; to demonstrate to himself how much he really desired the Lord's favor, the Lord's blessing. And when the desired result had been obtained—when Jacob had evidenced the intensity of his desire for harmony with God and such blessing as God alone could give—then the blessing came—Jacob's victory. Not that Jacob prevailed to get from God, through his angel, something the Lord was not pleased to grant; but that he prevailed to obtain the coveted blessing by manifesting the zeal, the energy, the patience, and the faith which God was pleased to see and reward.

The lesson of the spiritual Israelite in this circumstance is in harmony with our Lord's words, "Men ought continuously to pray and not to faint." God wishes us to be persistent, and our persistence measures and indicates the depth of our desires. If the blessing in answer to our prayer does not come in the moment of asking we are to continue "instant in prayer," —patiently waiting for the Lord's due time, faithfully trusting him that he is willing to give the blessing which he promised, even though he may for a time withhold it with a view to our becoming the more earnest in seeking it.

Although Jacob was a natural man, not a "new creature in Christ Jesus," nevertheless his prayer is a model one, in that he did not specify even the earthly things which had been promised him. All he asked was a blessing, in whatever manner the Lord might be pleased to give it. Alas, how many spiritual Israelites seem to have a much less keen appreciation of properties in such matters than had Jacob! Many ask and receive not because they ask amiss, for things to be consumed upon their earthly desires—wealth or fame or temporal good things. (Jas. 4:3) How many forget that the Lord has already promised to take care of the temporal necessities of his spirit-begotten children, and to do for them better than they would know how to ask or to think. How few seem to remember that as new creatures our conditions and desires should be specially for the things that pertain to the new creature, and that it is this class of blessing the Lord invites us to ask for and to wrestle to obtain, assuring us that as earthly parents are pleased to give good gifts to their children, so our Heavenly Father is pleased to *give the holy spirit* to those who ask him (Luke 11:13) If the Lord's consecrated people could all be brought to the point where the chief aim in life, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might have a larger measure of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of the truth, the Spirit of Christ, that spirit of a sound mind, what a blessing it would mean! If, then, they should wrestle with the Lord until the breaking of the day their hold upon him would be sure to bring the desired blessing. The Lord has revealed himself to his people for the very purpose of giving them *this* blessing; nevertheless, he withholds it until they learn to appreciate and earnestly desire it.

Jacob got the blessing and with it a change of name. He was thenceforth called Israel, which signifies "Mighty with God." This new name would thenceforth be continually a source of encouragement to him, an incentive to fresh zeal and trust in the one whose blessing he had secured. All of Jacob's posterity adopted this name. They were all known as children of Israel, or Israelites; for God acknowledged the name as applicable to all of the nation. Similarly, in antitype, we have Christ Jesus our Lord, the true, the antitypical Israel, the one who, through faith and obedience to the Father, has prevailed, has overcome the world and the flesh and the Adversary, and has received the divine blessing as the result of his struggle. He has been highly exalted and is declared now to be prince or ruler of the kings of the earth. He has sat down with the Father in his throne.—Rev. 1:5.

Nor does the analogy end here; for, as Jacob had twelve sons, so our Lord Jesus had twelve apostles; and these, and all who come into Christ through their ministry of the Gospel, are accepted as the true, the spiritual, Israel. The same name belongs to all of these that belongs to the Head. As with fleshly Israel there were some who were "Israelites indeed," and others who were not, but of the synagogue of Satan, in the spiritual Israel there are nominal and real Israelites; and only the latter will ultimately obtain the blessing and be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord. And the name, "Victor," or "Mighty with God," will be a name which will apply to everyone of the Lord's faithful ones in the same manner that it applied to Jesus himself. Each one will be required to manifest his loyalty to the Lord, his faith, his trust, and only those who love the Lord and the promise he has made that they will hold on to his promise, and will not let him go without a blessing—only such will receive the great blessing, only such will be able to overcome the world, the flesh and the Adversary. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith"—in God and in his promises.

ACKNOWLEDGING DIVINE FAVORS

Jacob had a method of marking the special manifestations of divine providence,—as when he called the place in which he wrestled with the angel Peniel; as a reminder that there he had been privileged to see, representatively, the Lord's face, to receive the Lord's blessing, the light of his countenance. Similarly, it is profitable to the spiritual Israelites that we should make note in some special manner of all the Lord's mercies and providences toward us. Many feel poor as respects the Lord's favor and blessing, simply because they have failed to let them make a proper impression upon their hearts at the time they were received. Divine favors are soon lost from our leaky earthen vessels unless special notation is made at the time, either upon the tablets of memory, or in some other manner to refresh memory. Doubtless we would all have more Bethels and more Peniels did we but follow the course of setting up some kind of monuments, and there entering into some special covenant or vow with the Lord in return for his mercies. Quite in line with this thought, that Christians generally have multitudinous blessings, and favors more than they fully recognize, the Allegheny Church has for some years held "Cottage Meetings" in various quarters every Wednesday evening, for prayer, praise and testimony. And the testimonies called for are not the "years ago" sort, however good, but the fresh living experience of the *week*. And as each *seeks* for fresh evidences of divine love and watch-care daily, each finds that he has far more cause for rejoicing and thanksgiving and encouragement than he would have been aware of without such watchfulness and notation. Let us daily and weekly as well as yearly rear to God our Ebenezers, if we would increase our faith and joy and love.

As Saul of Tarsus, in receiving his blessing of the Lord, received also a thorn in the flesh, which buffeted him continually through the remainder of his experiences, but which he learned ultimately to appreciate as a channel of divine blessing, as a reminder of divine favor, so it was with Jacob. At the very time that he was wrestling with the angel and getting the blessing, he received a wound, a troublesome reminder of the blessing, which continued with him probably through the remainder of his days, causing him to limp. The record is that the angel touched him in the hollow of his thigh, probably touched the sciatic nerve, causing the sinew to shrink and a slight dislocation of the joint. The lesson not only was one for Jacob himself to the remainder of his days, leading him to remember his dependence upon the Lord, and that he owed everything he possessed to the divine blessing, but it served afterward with his posterity as a continual reminder of the same thing; for the record is that thenceforth the Israelites would not eat of this sinew from any animal. Jacob's "thorn in the flesh," no doubt, served to keep him humble, even as Paul's served to remind him that he was what he was by the grace of God, and not in any wise of himself. Simlarly, the Lord permits certain weaknesses of the flesh to affect his spiritual children in the present time *favorably*. Undoubtedly some of our difficulties and trials, physical as well as others, are amongst our greatest blessings, working out for us a better portion in the future, by working in us faith, patience, true reliance upon the Lord.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

RIGHT AND WRONG VIEWS OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

If we but remember that nothing in the world's history offers any comparison to present social and financial conditions, we may well regard with a great deal of charity the conflicting views of able and conscientious men respecting the causes, the disadvantages, the proper remedies, and the outcome, of the movements now on foot throughout the civilized world. God's people, justified and sanctified and separate from the world, with new aims and spiritual ambitions before them, and with the instruction and enlightenment of the divine revelation—the Bible—should be able to take a calmer, a clearer, a more comprehensive, and therefore a more true, view of affairs, past, present and to come, than others; for we are to remember that it is prejudice and self-interest which generally has much to do with the blinding of those who see not from the divine standpoint.

From this standpoint we see that neither the rights nor the wrongs of motive or of action lie all on one side of these questions; and, seeing this, we are better able to take a sympathetic position, and to exercise our influence amongst those with whom we come in contact, in the interests of peace. All of the Lord's people should be peace-makers; none of them should be strife-makers. There are generally a sufficient number of selfish forces at work in and about every individual to stir up his mind, to breed in him discontent, and to arouse the passions of anger and malice and hatred; there are few influences, at work, on behalf of gentleness, meekness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. Hence there is the more necessity that the Lord's people continue pouring oil upon the troubled waters—the oil of the holy Spirit, with which their cup is to overflow; the oil of joy as opposed to the spirit of heaviness and discontent; the oil of hope, which illumines the future gloriously, and thus offsets and counteracts the darkness of present discouragements.

As an illustration of how good and wise men sometimes fail to get a correct view of matters, take the following extract from a Philadelphia journal:—

A SPECIES OF INSANITY

"A terrible trouble is disturbing the earth at the present time. It more resembles a species of insanity than anything else. As we know, among members of an undeveloped society the maniacal tendency is not common; that tendency is an accompaniment of civilization. All must have noted the fact that the possession of extraordinary endowments and a facile loss of mental balance, or great wits and madness, as the poet has told us, are somehow near allied. They have a way of going together. Just so here. Today it is not the dull nations, but the bright ones, the most advanced in refinement and everything of that sort, that seem craziest in the craze at this moment sweeping the world. The dementia is practically an exclusive possession of the Great Powers of Europe, troubling England worst, but reaching out and affecting us in this country in some ways, perhaps, worst of all. It seems a madness of the Anglo-Saxon, as he loves to call himself, more than of any other people. And plainly this madness is the result of a disease; it is the outworking of the greed microbe, or it comes from the yeasting in the human blood of the lust for property and dominion. And because of this frenzied, grasping tendency, which, as a sort of demonism, has taken possession of the leading nations of men, and of our own people and the ruling element among them particularly, the whole earth is plunged into a condition of singularly disastrous feud and conflict at the present moment.

"Leading nations have simply fallen into a veritable madness in their scramble for trade. That is precisely the way things are. Commercial interests, so called, stand ready and are eager to sacrifice everything—untold treasures of the people at large, along with their highest rights and profoundest welfare—in order to keep or attain supremacy for themselves and for the furthering of their ends. Think what, under this influence, not only Great Britain and we in America, but Russia also, and Germany and France and Italy, are ready to spend in this desperate rivalry! Millions on millions of the people's money are these nations hot to lavish in outlay so as to buy or bribe the chief advantage in trade lines, the one against the other. This is at the bottom of our militarism. Here is what our wars mean. . . . . War, we may rest assured, is always precisely as General Sherman characterized it. There is no good in it for anybody; only evil—the consummation of evil. A trade war is the same as any other. Greed is behind it; and we have the highest authority for holding that greed is behind all wars. They come of men's lusts. But today, greed in the elaborations and marvelous complications of modern life has become an overmastering disease. The whole land is swept by it. Society quivers in its sway; so do our churches and our homes. Commerce is maddened by it. It is a craze in the heart of the nations. It has well nigh come to be a veritable demoniacal possession, driving the whole wide world, and especially the peoples that ought to be conspicuous in light and leading, into a desperate frenzy, making the immediate outlook for highest human welfare very dark and foreboding."

This is all a mistake. The present agitation and grasp for power and trade is not the result of a special disease of greed and selfishness—not a new form of insanity. On the contrary, it is the result of a larger amount of reasoning on the part of humanity in general, and especially on the part of statesmen and financiers, along lines which the writer of the above article, however otherwise intelligent, has not fully appreciated. The fact is that the present movement is the result of *conditions*, and not the result of theories. Theories, aggressive theories, selfish theories, have prevailed in the world for centuries, and probably prevail no more today than in the past. It is not a new microbe of greed that has attacked mankind, but new conditions which appeal strongly to what for a long time has been known as the first law of nature—self-preservation.

Statesmen and financiers the world over have realized that the new conditions brought into the civilized world during the past fifty years mean a revolution—an irresistible revolution. They mean that machinery and steam and electric power have become the servants of men, and that these servants can be multiplied at a comparatively small cost, and that the necessities of Christendom can now or shortly be supplied by one-third the population; which means that, now or shortly, two-thirds of Christendom's population will be in enforced idleness. Statesmen and financiers seek to ward off such a condition of things, realizing that it would mean calamity, financial, social and political. This is the secret, then, of the effort on the part of the most highly civilized peoples in the world to obtain new markets for their goods and to retain their hold upon the markets already established, at home and abroad.

There are people who tell us that business should revert to old-time methods, moderation, fair prices, limited production, and general contentment; but such people fail to recognize the great change that has come upon the world in respect to conditions. They fail to see that the business pressure which is now exerted is not a voluntary one, but rather an enforced one; for those who would persist in following old-time methods in manufacturing or business would speedily find themselves bankrupt. Consequently all find it necessary to bestir themselves and adopt new methods of business adapted to our day. As they are pushed on by others, so others in turn are pushed on by them. The civilized world is like a great crowd; at the head are the world's notables, backed each of them by the hundreds and thousands and millions of humanity, willingly or unwillingly depending upon them for guidance, for life's comforts, yea, for its necessities. The entire crowd has tasted of the conveniences and blessings of civilization, and the determination of the whole is that they will not go back into barbarism and savagery, but will press on; and a fear of personal or class or national disadvantage is continually goading the great majority of this struggling mass, bidding each look out for himself and his own interests, and let no opportunity escape his grasp.

With the majority the impelling fear is an undefined one; and yet, in a general way, all seem to apprehend that some sort of a check to the world's advancement, and to their individual progress, is imminent. Whether they can discern the ramified influences connecting them individually as factors in the problem or not, they can realize that the more lucrative situations in life are few in comparison to the numbers of humanity; and they can see, too, that prosperous waves come to the world occasionally, through an increased demand for the products of machinery and the soil. They can see that if the Chinese Empire, for instance, with its hundreds of millions of population, were thrown fully open to the commercial enterprise of Christendom, it would cause the wave of prosperity in Christendom to have that much longer roll, because it would require time for the Chinese to fully adapt themselves to the new conditions introduced by machinery; it would require time for them to learn how to install and to operate the machinery, and thus that the evil day of over-production would be put off the further into the future. Instead of calling these men "insane" shall we not, on the contrary, say that they are wise in their generation;—that they are acting out the only part they could be expected to take, as wise men of the world, laboring under the law of personal and national selfishness,—the law under which all the world has for centuries been operating? We hold that the energy of these politicians and financiers is an energy begotten of wisdom, and remember the words of Solomon, "The wise man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself, while the foolish pass on and suffer for it."—Prov. 27:12.

As our Master said at the first advent, so we may now repeat,—"The children of this world are wise in their generation"—wiser, sometimes, than are the children of light. Therefore the latter need to take the more earnest heed to the divine revelation, which is able to give them the "spirit of a sound mind" beyond all others.

The Scriptures give the key to the present situation: they show us clearly that the divine law of love has always condemned the law of selfishness, under which fallen humanity has long governed itself. The law of selfishness is no worse a law today than it has always been. It has been the cause of wars, injustices, sufferings, slaveries, etc., in all the periods of history. It is neither worse nor better today; but new conditions have come upon us: civilization has lifted one-fifth part of the world to a higher plane of thought and sentiment, and upon these, since the beginning of "the day of his preparation," 1799, the Lord has been gradually lifting the veil and granting a discernment of the secrets of nature, which has resulted in great chemical and mechanical discoveries. These, while proving great blessings to mankind, are sure eventually to bring great calamities, by reason of conflict with the law of selfishness now prevailing. All thinking men realize that under the laws of selfishness, competition, etc., it is only a question of time when the vast resources and possibilities of machinery in the hands of the brightest and keenest of the world's population will reach the point of a death-struggle with the masses of Christendom,—not even waiting to reach the masses of heathendom. All wish to avoid this crash, for all instinctively realize that it will be terrible when it comes; but many seek to avoid the matter by saying to themselves, It will not come in my day anyway. And meantime each feels as though he is powerless to stem the current, or to resist the pressure which is behind him.

* * *

As an illustration of the forces at work in Christendom, a result of the new conditions introduced to the world during the nineteenth century, note the strife between the United States Steel Corporation and the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. Much can be said on each side of the question, but it all resolves itself in harmony with the foregoing. The capitalists, representing the money invested and the machinery, are pressed by competition and seeking to maintain their own standing financially and to make progress. They do not desire the degradation of their workmen in any sense or degree; but would much prefer that they were all comfortable and provided with steady employment. The more intelligent amongst the workmen realize that captains of industry and accumulations of capital are necessary to progress and prosperity; and while wishing to be comfortable, well-to-do, and to share in the comforts and luxuries of life, the better class of workmen have no special complaint to make that their employers are better housed, surrounded with greater luxuries every way than themselves. They have no desire to bring disaster either upon their employers or the trade in which they are engaged, or the country which is their home. Their interests in large measure lie in the same direction as that of their employers—they desire prosperity, and extension of trade to this end. The majority of them are not so anxious to become wealthy as they are anxious lest they should become poor—lest they should lose, in whole or in part, the comforts and advantages which they now enjoy, and which are far beyond those enjoyed by their parents at any time in the past.

Why, then, is there need of a rupture? Why, with admittedly satisfactory wages, and admittedly satisfactory hours of work, should there be a strike and more or less of a paralysis of important business interests? The reason is *fear*. As the Scriptures declare respecting the present time, "Men's hearts are failing them for *fear*, and for looking after those things which are *coming* on the earth." (Luke 21:26) Present conditions are satisfactory enough, all will admit—both employers and employed. The whole question is one pertaining to the future—fear. The Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers demand that all the works of the United States Steel Corporation should be "unionized"—that the affairs and interests of all the workmen, nearly one hundred thousand in number, should be recognized as under the care and supervision, and subject to the arrangements and contracts, of the officers of the Amalgamated Association. The United States Steel Corporation refuses this demand, and claims that this in effect would mean that they would compel all of their workmen to join the Amalgamated Association; and, this they have insisted, would be an unreasonable thing to do, and one which they could not do.

To the unsophisticated it will seem strange that there need be any serious ruction or quarrel over a matter of this kind; for, on the surface, as stated by both parties, *benevolence* would seem to be the object of both. The Amalgamated Association benevolently wants to assist the non-union men, and the United States Steel Corporation also benevolently wishes to protect the non-union men in their rights. Where pure love and benevolence of this kind controls on both sides of the question, why need there be any dispute or strike?

Ah! there it is. In this question, as in nearly every other question, selfishness hides itself under a cloak of benevolence, and would fain deceive others, and itself also. Not pure benevolence, but almost pure selfishness, is actuating both parties. The United States Steel Corporation reasons that if all of its mills and employes were under the control of the union, it would be thoroughly at the mercy of the officers of that union, to whose generosity and justice they are unwilling to entrust themselves and their varied interests, valued at a thousand millions of dollars. They say, No! So long as some of the mills are independent and under our control it will not matter so much if others of them are under the control of the union, for then we will not be completely at the union's mercy, and the latter will be obliged to treat us with a measure of consideration and justice. It is, therefore, a very serious question with us, and we prefer to lose millions of dollars now, than to risk, to jeopardize, our interests under the complete control and perhaps tyranny of a labor union.

The Amalgamated Association is laboring, also, along lines of selfishness, and not from pure benevolence and good-will toward the non-union men. They say to themselves: It is all right as it is, so long as times are prosperous, as at present; but as there have been hard times before, so we may reasonably expect them to come again, when there will be overproduction, idle mills and idle men. At such a time we may be sure that the Steel Corporation, recognizing us as the protectors of skilled labor, and the maintainers of its interests as respects time and pay and conditions, and realizing a future time of still sharper competition and lower prices, would grasp such an opportunity to do all in its power to destroy our union, and thus to have labor unresistant at its command. We feel sure that in a season of dullness the non-union mills would be given the preference as respects steady employment, while the union mills would be at the disadvantage, to the intent that our organization might be disrupted. Now, therefore, is our time while business is good, while our labor is in demand, while the mills are behind with orders—now is the time for us to strike, if thereby we can unionize all the mills and place ourselves and all workmen upon a firmer footing for the maintenance of our rights in the *future*, when the final desperate struggle between capital and labor must come.

We cannot say that either party in the conflict is foolish or insane. We must admit that both are wise as respects their own interests.

If these were all Christian brethren; if the Spirit of Christ dwelt in them all richly and abounded; if the spirit of love had wholly or even half supplanted the spirit of selfishness, the matter might very easily be adjusted; for we remember that love is not puffed up, vaunteth not herself, seeketh not her own, but is the very embodiment of generosity and kindness. But, again, it is not a theory we have to deal with, but facts. In theory the civilized world is all Christian, sometimes called, "The Christian World," and "Christendom." But these are misnomers; the fact is the world is not Christian except in name; they are still "kingdoms of this world," still children of this world, and only a remarkably few belong to the kingdom of the Lord, and either know him or desire to be controlled by his spirit of love.

What can we do? Can we hope to convert these millions, to whom the message of the Gospel has come with more or less clearness all their lives? We cannot so hope. We must remember, on the contrary, that this is not the divine plan; that in the divine plan part of the important lesson which the world is now learning is the very lesson which it was intended it should learn, viz., that selfishness always brings misery,—directly or indirectly. The world must thus learn the lesson that the only true peace and prosperity is that which God purposes, and will eventually establish through the kingdom of his dear Son. The world is learning the lessons that wealth does not give complete happiness, but still leaves an aching void; and that all the comforts and conveniences of civilization, coming to the world of mankind, with good food, good clothing, and much advantage every way, do not change the heart nor bring in true happiness. In a word, the world must learn that civilization is not Christianization.

For centuries the Lord's wheatfield, the church, has been overgrown with tares, who are not the offspring of the Lord's spirit at all—who have never been "begotten again," who are not of the "wheat" class in any degree. These "tares" have been passing under the name of Christian, while really and truly they are worldlings—not bad people, many of them, not all immoral by any means, some of them generous, kind, and, in a worldly sense, good—but not "begotten of the spirit." We are in the harvest-time, "the end of the age," and a complete separation must be made. For not one tare is to be gathered into the kingdom garner. On the contrary, a complete demonstration shall be made, as between the wheat and the tares. There are grains of "wheat" so far as we know, interested on both sides of this question, but the vast majority on both sides are of the "tare" class. The wheat, therefore, are not to expect to be understood, or to have the true position appreciated by the others; but nevertheless are to be content and to rejoice in what the Lord discloses to them through his Word, viz., that this time of trouble that the whole world sees impending, will be the final lesson by which the Lord will demonstrate to the world the difference between the reign of sin and the reign of righteousness—between the reign of selfishness and the reign of love.

In the great time of trouble, when all their various systems, religious, political, social, financial, go down in a maelstrom of anarchy, there will be a great opening of eyes,—a passing of present illusions. "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." They will come to see that the Lord's way is the right way,—the only satisfactory way; that the law of love is the only law which can bring everlasting happiness and blessing to any and to all who will obey it. They will come to see, what they do not now realize, that the Lord's true church in the world was a "little flock," a "peculiar people," guided by the Lord's eye, and by his Word, who, through much tribulation, trials of faith, trials of patience etc., will become heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, in the glorious kingdom which will be established upon the ruins of present institutions, for the blessing of all the families of the earth, with a righteous government. Let us then continue to pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

THE BREACH WIDENS

Not long since it was announced that all "union workmen" would withdraw from the volunteer State and National Guards, lest they should be called upon to protect properties when strikes were on, or to suppress riots in which fellow-workmen might be engaged. Now we have the announcement that the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers will start a military organization of its own. Indeed the movement took definite shape on Saturday, August 3, as announced in the Wheeling, W. Va., *Register* of August 4, as follows:

"A. A. OF IRON & STEEL WORKERS TO FORM MILITARY COMPANIES"

A movement was started in this city yesterday for organizing a strong military branch of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Tin and Steel Workers. The organization is designed to band the members closer together, to promote a better fraternal and social feeling, to protect the property of mill owners in cases of strikes and for self-defense.

The Register has been in possession of information for more than a week, to the effect that the idea has been agitated among Amalgamated men both in Wheeling and elsewhere. Not until yesterday, however, did the matter assume anything like tangible shape. Crescent Lodge, comprising the workmen employed at the Whitaker mill, held a regular meeting in the afternoon, during which the subject was broached.

The matter was generally discussed, and several of the speakers were enthusiastically applauded. The details of the plan had previously been discussed among the men, and they were familiar with the subject when they came to the meeting.

Crescent Lodge heartily approved the idea, and decided to enroll membership in the military branch at the next meeting of the lodge. It is expected that other lodges in this section will take the same course, now that Crescent has taken the initiative, and endorse the military plan.

The discussion at the meeting evolved the following reasons for the organization of a military branch of the Amalgamation:

First—It would band the members into closer union, promote fraternal and social feeling, and familiarize the members with the manual of arms of the United States army. Military organizations are regarded as beneficial to other bodies, and the same degree of benefit could be extracted by the Amalgamation. The opinion was expressed that no difficulty would be experienced in organizing companies of 100 members each, in nearly all the lodges in the order. In a short time a National military branch would be the outcome, and beneficial features might be added.

Second—In cases of strikes and lockouts, the lodges would be in position to tender their services to mill owners for the protection of their property. It has been frequently charged, and it is claimed by Amalgamation men that it has been proven, that the lawless element has been incited to deeds of violence against capital, for the specific purpose of creating a public sentiment antagonistic to unions and strikers. In the discussion in Crescent lodge, it was stated that labor leaders have consistently contended for law and order, and that they have never sanctioned violence.

* * *

It is expressly understood among the members of Crescent lodge that the military body will not be subject to orders from any government authority, except as individuals. Their position is the direct antithesis of that. They will not place themselves in positions to be called upon by State authorities in cases of strikes and labor disturbances, but they take the position that labor troubles may be obviated if mill owners will accept their services in the spirit in which they are offered.

We cannot blame the managers of the trusts if they call in question the benevolence of this movement, and surmise that it means an eventual resort to carnage and anarchy between the two great companies of fellow creatures now being pressed into the vortex of strife for mastery by the inexorable laws of supply and demand and supported by constitutional selfishness, and both parties goaded on by fear.

Temporarily the power is in the hands of wealthy and wise captains of industry; who, at any cost, will strive to hold on to all the advantages they have already attained; for the mills may stand idle for a time with only the loss of dividends, while the mechanic's necessities continue and his credit is necessarily small. Besides, by the laws of nature, his competitors are increasing even in his own family, not to mention the attractions which his employment, and hours and wages present to labor from other fields, which can soon learn to operate machinery successfully.

Unquestionably capital must win in this contest under present conditions; but unquestionably also the ultimate result will be a grinding of the masses, between upper and nether millstones of supply and demand, until the danger point has been reached and the great explosion follows;—anarchy and destruction, born of fear and despair and not of preference or a love of lawlessness. "There shall be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation."—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21.

Our advice to "brethren" in connection with all such troubles is, Yield—bend—submit to the inevitable as quietly and kindly and peaceably as possible. Seeing the outcome be "content" to let the Lord fight your battles. Accept whatever "rights" you can secure by lawful and peaceable means, and wait for the King Immanuel and his kingdom of equity for the remainder of your "rights." Consider that you already have and enjoy more blessings and rights and privileges than your fathers, and more than as members of the fallen race you could justly demand; and be ye thankful. Additionally you can think generously of those on both sides of this conflict seeing that both are *forced* to the issue by present-day conditions. And thank the Lord for the light of his Word, which permits you to see matters thus in their true light.

A MODERN REFORMATION

From the *"London Daily Chronicle."*

While the attention of the British public has been divided between South Africa and China, events of far-reaching importance have occurred in France, Portugal, and Spain. With little comment from the Press, and scant notice from people not directly affected, laws have been promulgated or revived in France and Portugal that aim a dangerous blow at the priestly brotherhoods whose directors are in the Vatican, and whose ramifications extend all through the Latin countries. Students of Continental life have seen the slow approach of an anti-clerical movement in the countries overrun by the powerful militant associations of the Latin Church, but not a few have thought that the agitation would spend itself in protests.

FRANCE AND THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

In France the feeling against the religious houses (Jesuits, Assumptionists, Dominicans, Benedictines, Carmelites, and other Orders) has been growing year by year.

It is unlikely that the full power of the Roman church in matters beyond its proper jurisdiction was perceived by the men at the head of French affairs before the Dreyfus case, and then the gravity of the situation impressed itself upon the few strong men left on the side of the Republic. That the church would overthrow the Republic if it could, was apparent to all thinking people, and in the meantime the Vatican's campaign was making the army unmanageable. It must be left to the historian to say what France owes to the Marquis de Gallifet and to M. Waldeck-Rousseau, who tempered courage with prudence at a very critical time, and to estimate the events that would have followed General Roget to the Elysee had he accepted the invitation of the half-mad enthusiast and patriot, Paul Deroulede. While the loudest outcry of the Nationalists has been directed against the Jews, at the instance of the Jesuits, who have never forgiven the Jewish financiers for breaking up the "Union Generale," it has been evident that the Republic is the offender in their eyes, the various groups that make up the National party finding, in hatred of the Republic, their one common sentiment. As the Latin church has nothing to hope from the Republic, and everything to expect from a Pretender of the type of the Duc d'Orleans, it has befriended the Nationalists, and sought to capture the power in times of crises. And it has very nearly succeeded.

It is reasonable to believe that the new law for the regulation of Associations will be strictly enforced, and, unless the unexpected happens, the brotherhoods of the Latin church, now working in Paris under orders from Rome, will become illegal communities by the end of the year, liable to suppression. Their members will be liable to fine and imprisonment. If M. Waldeck-Rousseau succeeds in a task that is well nigh completed, the Jesuits will no longer be able to train the young officers of the French Army: they will not be able to exert secret influence over the heads of the army, nor to evade taxes due upon such of their property as is not returned to them; they may even be unable to draw the hard-earned money of the French peasantry, as they and their brethren, the Assumptionist Fathers, have done so successfully in the past.

Moreover, the Bill relating to Associations enables the Government to break up any union whose objects are deemed by the Cabinet to be inimical to the Republic, and thereby to control movements that, while they appear to be the outcome of the popular will, are in reality promoted or financed by the clerical associations through the medium of men of straw.

THE PARALLEL WITH PORTUGAL

One of the curious points about the new French Law of Associations is that it is not an original conception, but is founded on the Portuguese law of 1834, which abolished religious congregations in Portugal, confiscated their property, forbade the formation of new congregations, and, out of the profits of confiscation, pensioned the monks and nuns whose property was taken away. Portugal, at the time when the law was enacted, had been passing through a terrible crisis. Queen Maria Gloria, a girl of fifteen, was hardly secure upon the throne; Dom Pedro was dying; Dom Miguel, the Pretender, had been defeated after a sanguinary campaign; the clergy had been active intriguers on his behalf; and the country was in an uproar. The Queen's advisers saw that they must break the clerical power, or be content to suffer rebellion to smoulder in every village, whose ignorance responded to priestly direction. A very curious parallel may be drawn between Portugal in the early thirties and France in the late nineties, the only difference being that the recent civil war in France was waged on paper. The Portuguese law was a success for a few years. Associations of nuns having less than twelve members were dissolved, and members sent to other convents, or the nunneries were not treated as harshly as the monasteries. The nuns were to die out, and in Lisbon today is an old lady in her ninety-second year, relic of those troubled times, and the last survivor of the old regime. She saw the uprising, and has lived to see the religious associations creep back to their old places, in spite of the law. Monasteries and nunneries have sprung up again, the power of the Jesuits has waxed strong, and their procedure has become so unbearable that a crisis was reached little more than two months ago. Some Jesuit Fathers, of Oporto, tried to remove a young girl to a convent against the wishes of her parents; the action was made public, and served to fire the smouldering discontent. There were riots and bloodshed on a scale that alarmed the authorities.

The popular feeling was strengthened by the regular clergy, whose antipathy to the foreign brotherhoods is very great. Queen and Cabinet have been on the side of the Jesuits; Dom Carlos, the King, alone is liberal in his views. Popular passion led to an unpleasant incident while the King was driving out in the early part of last month, and on the following day the Law of 1834 was put into force once more, Queen, Cabinet, and Jesuits being unable to stem the current of the King's anger. It was a striking episode in Portugal's latter-day history, more suggestive of the Orient, than the Occident. Several religious houses have been closed in the last few weeks, and the inmates sent away to their own countries. The Jesuits are fighting hard, but not wisely. They issued a proclamation a week or two ago calling upon the people to petition the Throne to restore their privileges. These proclamations have been torn down in several towns; at Setubal riots and bloodshed were the order of the day. In the meantime the King has ignored the tendencies of the Government, and assured a deputation of Liberals that the 1834 Law shall be enforced rigorously. They say in Lisbon that the beginning of the popular revolt may be dated from the exodus of the Assumptionist Fathers from France. Many came to Portugal, where their procedure served to exhaust popular patience. The Conservative and Reactionary Ministry of Portugal is tottering to its fall.

THE JESUITS AND THE CARLISTS

In Spain the outcry against the clerical brotherhood is very strong. Throughout that unhappy country the very lowest orders of clergy seem to find a home. They have a comparative immunity from punishment, and are for the most part men of little or no education. So long as Carlism offered reasonable hopes of success they encouraged the Carlists, by orders from Rome, for the presence of a Carlist King in Madrid would be meat and drink to the Vatican.

The revolt against the Latin Brotherhoods is a very serious factor in the social and political situation for the time being. It is not unlikely that the Franco-Italian entente will spread the trouble in Italy, and that we shall see the movement working from Paris to Madrid, and from Lisbon to Naples. But while Governments change and Ministers pass away, Rome remains, and it would be unwise to rely upon a permanent change in the relations between Latin church and Latin countries until the standard of education is far higher than it is today. In the temporal service of Rome, Cardinal Rampolla marshals some of the keenest intellects in Europe. Rome will bend before the storm of popular opinion, and when it passes, renew her stature as of old time. Financial crises are within view in Portugal, Spain and Italy, and the Latin Brotherhoods find plenty of material for denunciation of irreligious Governments when food is at a premium and the maximum of taxation pursues the minimum of wages. Yet in the hands of unscrupulous Governments crises are a two-edged weapon, and many Latin Governments owe the Latin church little affection.

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The above taken in connection with the "Los von Rome" (away from Rome) movement, which, as already noted in these columns, is rapidly gaining headway in Austria, shows that the screws of superstition are being gradually loosened,—preparatory to the great, great political, social, financial and religious "earthquake" (Rev. 16:18), which is shortly to dismay all except those who have some knowledge of the final outcome of the divine plan of the ages.

THE WATERED LILIES

The Master stood in his garden,
  Among the lilies fair,
Which his own right hand had planted,
  And trained with tend'rest care;

He looked at their snowy blossoms,
  And marked with observant eye
That the flowers were sadly drooping,
  For their leaves were parched and dry.

"My lilies need to be watered,"
  The heavenly Master said;
"Wherein shall I draw it for them,
  And raise each drooping head!"

Close to his feet on the pathway,
  Empty, and frail, and small,
An earthen vessel was lying,
  Which seemed no use at all:

But the Master saw, and raised it
  From the dust in which it lay,
And smiled, as he gently whispered,
  "This shall do my work today.

"It is but an *earthen* vessel,
  But it lay so close to me;
It is small, but it is empty,—
  That is all it needs to be."

So to the fountain he took it,
  And filled it full to the brim;
How glad was the earthen vessel
  To be of some use to him!

He poured forth the living water
  Over his lilies fair,
Until the vessel was empty,
  And again he filled it there.

He watered the drooping lilies
  Until they revived again;
And the Master saw with pleasure
  That his labour had not been vain.

His own hand had drawn the water
  Which refreshed the thirsty flowers;
But he used the earthen vessel
  To convey the living showers.

And to itself it whispered,
  As he laid it aside once more,
"Still will I lie in his pathway,
  Just where I did before.

"Close would I keep to the Master,
  Empty would I remain,
And perhaps some day he may use me
  To water his flowers again."

RESPECTING FOREIGN MISSIONS

We have heard from three dear sisters in Christ, who have been for a long time deeply interested in foreign missions, to the effect that they were greatly disappointed that in our last issue we quoted certain criticisms of foreign missions. They find no fault with our own utterances in the article; but think the quotations *false* when they refer to the missionaries as having taken part in the looting of Peking. One of the Sisters says,—"I ask you, *in justice to the missionaries*, to publish in the *Tower* the enclosed extract from an article in the May number of the *North American Review*,—by Rev. Judson Smith, Corresponding Secretary of the American Board of Foreign Missions." We give the extract cheerfully, following, and will explain later on.

"THE MISSIONARIES AND THEIR CRITICS"

"The efforts of the Boxers were directed especially against the native converts, because of their connection with the foreigners. These converts were crushed by heavy fines, were robbed, were driven from their homes, and, in due time, were slain by hundreds and thousands. When the siege of Peking was raised the missionaries were left with large bodies of native Christians dependent upon them for everything. The missionaries themselves were left without homes, without resources, with these hundreds of homeless, helpless people looking to them for aid. Chaos reigned in Peking and in the country around it. The missionaries of different Boards felt that it would be intolerable for them to suffer these Chinese refugees, who had helped during the siege and had won encomiums for the share they had borne in it, to perish, as they must if something were not done in their behalf. The case was urgent. They were without food and without the means of obtaining it. Food and shelter for the very next day and then for days after that, must be found. Delay meant starvation and death. In the absence of all native authority with the knowledge and approval of Mr. Conger and other Ambassadors, two colonies were established in different parts of Peking, in courts abandoned by their owners, and were supported by the resources found in these courts, just as the Ambassadors and all others in the siege had been kept alive by what they found within their reach from the British Legation. As to the charge of looting by the missionaries, besides their own denials, we have the explicit testimony of one wholly outside their number whose position gave him exceptional facilities for knowing the facts. Mr. R. E. Bredon, Deputy Inspector General for the Imperial Maritime customs of China, who was in Peking throughout the siege and remained there some time afterward, wrote October 3, to the North China Mail, 'I heard in the Legation, before we were enabled to leave it, that missionaries had taken quantities of loot. I took special pains to investigate the truth of the assertion and found absolutely nothing to confirm it.'"

LET THE TRUTH PREVAIL

Although we quoted the *Literary Digest* article as a whole, we had no special desire to refer to the "looting" practiced at Peking. The leading journals have had much to say for and against the conduct of the missionaries in this respect; but for our part we considered that they treated the matter too severely,—seeming to overlook the fact that anarchy prevailed, and that it was not only necessary to take possession of palaces as temporary shelters, but necessary also to procure food for the starving—either by seizing food or by seizing goods which could be turned into money wherewith to buy food.

There is no doubt, however, that missionaries did adopt this plan of confiscating goods, called "looting;" for they have *confessed* it. The article by Rev. Judson Smith was called out as a *defense* of the course; and on close examination will not be found to be a *denial* of the facts *admitted* by missionaries Ament and Tewksbury. For instance Dr. Ament says,—

"In explanation of *anything the missionaries may have done in the line of looting*, it is only right to say that a famine was predicted for the coming winter, that they had hundreds of people in their charge who were in immediate need of food, clothing, and shelter, and who looked to the missionaries for assistance. It is but justice to them to say that if in the ardor of their desire to provide for their people, they did some things that attracted criticism, *they did it with the best of intentions.*"

The New York *Sun* of May 4, says:—

"In an interview at Kobe, Dr. Ament, while on his way home to this country in Mr. Conger's company, gave an amazing picture of his experience in 'selling stuff' that did not belong to him. We are now quoting from the Kobe *Herald* of April 6:

' "The Tungchau mission, through Mr. Tewksbury, were selling things at Prince Yu's residence, and Miss Smith, of the London Mission, was selling off stuff from Boxer premises she had taken for her people. Mine was the last sale of the three. There were no especially valuable things on our premises—the owner was a broken-down Mongol prince; one sable robe, numbers of fox and squirrel-skin garments, and a large number of garments of inferior quality. The sale lasted two weeks."

' "Did you have it at stated times of day, then?"

' "No, at any time when the officers came. I had an experienced Chinaman put a value on the things, and I then charged about one-half or two-thirds of the value they would have brought in ordinary times. The officers were very glad to purchase at those rates."

' "Then there was no regular sale?"

' "No, the things were marked, and the officers would come and go prowling around the rooms, bringing to me what they wanted while I was going on with my work, and this, as I say, went on for about a fortnight. When they saw what things were wanted, some of our Christians borrowed a little money and went on the streets and purchased fur garments from Russians or Sikh soldiers, and brought them in and sold them to the officers at a good profit." '

"Thus was the palace occupied in the absence of its proprietor, by the Rev. Dr. Ament turned into a receptacle and mart for stolen goods; not stolen, he asserts, by the 'Christians' who brought the stuff in, but by them purchased on speculation from the original looters and sold under Dr. Ament's supervision at a good profit. . . . If the Rev. Dr. Judson Smith blinks the word loot, the Rev. Dr. W. S. Ament doesn't. We wonder whether the first-named divine has really read all the evidence afforded by his own chief witness."

* * *

But while we thus give both sides to the looting matter and thus establish the truth of all we published in our last, that shocked some of our readers, nevertheless we have heretofore avoided all reference to the matter, feeling that considerable excuse should be made for departure from Christian and civilized usages, considering that anarchy prevailed and that money from other sources was probably not available. Nevertheless we cannot commend the course. It would have seemed questionable to a "business man" and should not have been even thought of by ministers of the Gospel of justice and love. The missionaries evidently were misled by the worldly looting spirit prevailing in that anarchy and did what they would not do again, and would not have done then under less temptation.

NOT MEN BUT FALSE DOCTRINES DO WE ATTACK

Our article was not intended as an attack upon missionaries, nor yet upon missions; but rather it was an attack upon the false doctrine which has been the mainspring of energy in connection with missionary efforts; viz., that the heathen are going into eternal torment by the hundreds of thousands yearly;—*for lack of the knowledge* carried to them by the missionaries. If Christian people desire to go to the people of China, Japan, India, Turkey, etc., as doctors, nurses, hospital-attendants, teachers of school-children, general teachers of morality, and illustrators of our Western civilization, well and good. And if incidentally then they get an occasional person or many to accept Jesus as their Redeemer and Lord so much the better. But it is high time that the false pretense, the pride and vanity bubble, of *"converting the world"* were burst, and that its baneful influence upon Christendom terminated.

The missionaries know full well that it is as reasonable to talk of a trip to the moon as to talk of "capturing the world for Jesus:" neither would be possible without a miracle, —the interposition of super-human power. It is time that Christian people learned that the only hope of the world's conversion—the only hope that the Lord's will shall ever be done on earth as it is done in heaven—lies in the promised second coming of our Lord Jesus, to be earth's King, and to set up the kingdom of God which we are assured will triumph over Satan and sin and every evil, and scatter blessings to every creature, and *make possible to all* a full return to divine favor and life-everlasting.

PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations."—Matt. 28:19.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."—Mark 16:15.[*]

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[*] This verse is not found in the oldest Greek MSS. They end with verse 8. Thus the *basis* of the Christian Science, and Christian Alliance, and Mr. Dowie's Christian Catholic system *falls*.—See Revised Version margin.

"*The Gospel which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven.*"—*Col. 1:23.*

"*This Gospel of the kingdom shall be declared in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end* [*of this age*] *come.*"—*Matt. 24:14.*

If the expectation that the world is to be converted by missionary effort, before the Lord comes a second time, is a mistake, how shall we understand the foregoing Scripture statements?

We reply, that nothing in the above passages of Scripture or any others say one word about the world's conversion as the result of the preaching. On the contrary, the general tenor of Scripture is to the effect that this age will end as did the Jewish age—with a great time of trouble—because of the "tares" out of accord with the Lord and his kingdom of righteousness.

The Lord's words here are to be viewed in the light of his previous instructions to the same apostles. He had told them to "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not;" explaining that for the time his mission was *exclusively* to the Jews, "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:5, 6; 15:24). Now he would give them to understand that the Jewish favor was drawing to an end, and that ultimately they would be privileged to tell the good tidings to all that have an ear to hear—to Gentiles, all nations, as well as to Jews.

That this is the correct view of the commission is evident from the third text quoted above. The apostle announces that the time had come when the gospel privileges were open to every creature under heaven who had "ears to hear" and a heart to appreciate it. To interpret his language otherwise would be to charge him with falsehood; for neither then, nor since, has it been a fact that even *one in ten* of the human creatures under heaven have heard the gospel.

The key is in the last of these texts. It points out distinctly that the mission of the Gospel is *not to convert the world*, but *to "witness"* to it. The true converts under this witnessing will be in all but a "little flock"; but to these "elect, according to the fore-knowledge of God, through sanctification of the spirit and a belief of the truth," God proposes to give a share with Christ in his kingdom;—his agency for uplifting humanity and blessing all who, after being enlightened, seek a blessing—even unto life everlasting.

Anyway, it is the "*Gospel of kingdom*" that is to be preached in all the world, and not "another gospel"; and we fear that very few of the missionaries know much about the kingdom Gospel. Nevertheless the "Gospel of the kingdom" is clearly set forth in the Scriptures, which are now published in all the languages (not dialects) of earth. Furthermore, the *Watch Tower* literature is in the hands of all the missionaries in every quarter of the world; and through some of these—we know not—God can and will find the true "wheat" for his "garner."

* * *

One Sister inquires, Should not we carry to the darker parts of the earth our superior ideas respecting health, cleanliness, care of the sick, civilization, etc.?

If by *we* is meant the Lord's consecrated people, our answer would be, No. God's commission to us through Jesus and the apostles is restricted—"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to *preach the Gospel to the meek*,"—the teachable. 'He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear!" We are not to *force* the Gospel of the kingdom upon any, by sword and gun, or in any other manner. Thus the Apostle Paul *witnessed* for Jesus and the resurrection and the kingdom to come, seeking only so many as the Lord our God had called. He gave special attention to the *instruction of these few*, to the intent that they might be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light—the kingdom. He never dreamed of general conversions and taking the world for Christ, knowing that such was not the divine plan,—except through the kingdom.

As to whether the world (nominal Christendom) is doing well or ill for the heathen, is an open question. The fact that we, born and reared under Western civilization, would be miserable if obliged to live along the lines of Eastern civilization proves little; for so far as we can discern the people of China and India prefer their own methods, customs, etc. A canary bird, reared in captivity, may greatly enjoy its gilt cage with its swing, bath, etc., so as to feel lost indeed if deprived of them; but would the bird reared under other conditions, be happier in such a cage? We know that it would not. And may it not be so with different races of men, accustomed to different ideals and methods? Will the Chinaman be happier in a European cut of coat, shoes, shirt, collar and tie? Are we certain that the Chinawoman will be happier with larger feet, and shoes of our pattern and with corsets and Paris fashioned gowns?

Ah! you say, it is not these alone we would take them. We would supplant their Joss houses with what we term churches; and their weird musical instruments with our organs, and we would give them Jesus instead of Brahm and Buddha.

Even so, are we quite certain that this would increase their happiness? Are there not millions, in Europe and America, who have these very blessings, who are among the most discontented and unhappy people in the world? Are these foreign heathen either better or worse in God's sight than many in so-called Christian lands who attend "church" regularly, wear fashionable clothing, etc., of whom the Lord says, "This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men."—Isa. 29:13. Let us not forget the Lord's words to some very zealous for mission-work in his day;—"Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of Gehenna than yourselves."—Matt. 23:15.

"Even as many as the Lord your God shall call," said the apostle; and accordingly God's people, realizing that the *chosen* will be few, should seek to labor in harmony with the Lord's callings. Eighteen centuries show us that while no nation under heaven is refused or discriminated against, and some out of all have been called, nevertheless God's favors have been chiefly toward the white or Caucasian race. If we have done all we know how to do in this the Lord's special wheat-field, then by all means let us go into other fields. But if through the delusions of Satan the "gospel (?) of damnation" has been substituted for the "Gospel of the kingdom," so that the majority of those who profess the name of Christ have no knowledge of this Gospel, then, by all means, let us who do know of it, bend all our energies to labor in this field which is "white already to the harvest," and its harvest work rapidly progressing.

QUARTERLY REVIEW—SEPT. 29

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him.*"—Psa. 103:17.

Our text is a forceful reminder of our studies in the past quarter. It was a lack of reverence for the Lord that permitted mother Eve to be deceived and to become the first transgressor. It was a lack of reverence for the Lord that led our father Adam into disobedience, into practical suicide, because of his love for Eve, and because he had not yet learned the proper reverence for God which would have led him to be obedient and to trust the results of Eve's disobedience to divine wisdom. It was lack of reverence for the Lord which operated in Satan to an evil ambition, and thus to his fall. It was lack of reverence for the Lord and for his rules of government that permitted the angels of the first dispensation to leave their own condition, and thus to get into sin with humanity. It was a lack of reverence for the Lord on the part of the world in general that caused the world to be full of violence and ready for destruction in the flood.

It was a proper reverence for the Lord that controlled Noah and his family, and kept them separate from the evil of their time, and that brought to them ultimately the divine blessing and preservation through the flood. It was a proper reverence for the Lord that enabled Abraham to forsake home and country in response to a divine promise, and that guided him throughout his pilgrimage and kept him separate from the Sodomites and the evil influences of that time. Similarly, on Isaac's part, it was reverence for the Lord which kept him in his father's footsteps; and we have just seen how fully Jacob was imbued with this reverence for divinity, and for all the gracious promises by which the Lord represented himself to him. We have seen the hand of the Lord with all those who had this reverence, and that even though they passed through numerous and severe trials, difficulties, etc., they were not forsaken, but upheld.

On the other hand, we have seen Lot's insufficiency of reverence, which permitted him to associate with evil-doers, and which ultimately brought upon him a share of their trouble. We have seen Ishmael's lack of reverence, and Esau's lack of reverence, and how these though not injured of the Lord, nevertheless missed greater blessing which a different course might have brought to them.

The lesson for us is that which Joshua expressed to Israel later, saying, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; as for me and my house we will serve the Lord." (Josh. 24:15) Let others reverence whom and what they will; we, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, we, who have come to know him through his Word, and through his providences, and through the power of the spirit by which we are begotten again to newness of life—we can do naught else than reverence our God; and reverencing him we must trust him implicitly; and trusting him implicitly we will gladly walk in whatever way he may mark out for us; and thus trusting, and thus walking we are content, whatever lot we see, since 'tis his hand that leadeth us. And let us be assured that following the true Shepherd after this manner, we shall ultimately reach the heavenly fold. In these assurances we have joy and peace and blessing of heart, even in the house of our pilgrimage, before we reach the heavenly city.

INTEMPERANCE

PROV. 23:29-35.—SEPT. 22.

Golden Text:—*"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."*—Prov. 20:1

Intemperance is one of the most dreadful curses afflicting humanity, and even those who are its slaves will admit the force and truth of our text. It would appear that everyone coming under its baneful influence becomes more or less its slave—the more so in proportion as he has become weak through the fall, and the six thousand years of increasing loss of physical and mental strength and vigor. Only those who realize that inherited weakness has much to do with drunkenness, can sympathize with a fallen one, or rightly appreciate why intoxicants have so much stronger influence over some than over others. But while pity and sympathy are properly called for, they must be exercised in moderation, if we would benefit the fallen and the weak. None are so weak, so degraded, as to be without some base of character; and our aim should be to strengthen and build up character, and encourage and stimulate resistance to these weaknesses, rather than too freely to condone them.

The weak and degraded should be encouraged to know that they have a will-power which will greatly assist them in the cultivation of character if they will but use it. But they and all should know that the greatest strength and stimulus to character comes from above; and that the weakest as respects depravity of the flesh, may obtain such help of heart and of intellect from the promises, exhortations, admonitions and encouragements of the Lord's Word as will make them strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. We need power and strength of our own wills every day in overcoming the weaknesses of our fallen condition; but we need more than this,—we need "grace to help in every time of need!" and we need to learn whence it is to be obtained, and how to approach the throne of heavenly grace with confidence, so as to obtain the needed blessing.

Here comes in the necessity for an appreciation of the doctrines of Christ—to assure us that our weaknesses are understood and sympathized with by the Lord in every proper sense, and that his provision in Christ is such that he can be just and yet justify believers in Jesus;—that he can be just, and yet forgive us our sins and grant us needed strength and help in overcoming.

To those who have friends or neighbors addicted to intemperance, over whom they desire to exercise a helpful influence, we advise that they appeal to the will, to the self-respect, and to the rewards of temperance and intemperance, viewed from a worldly and social standpoint: but we advise that they go further, and urge that in view of the weakness of their own wills, as manifested by their intemperance, they should recognize that while all men need the Saviour, and the help which he alone can give, yet the weaker the will the greater the need. When we are weak in the matter of self-reliance, and are thereby led to make a covenant with the Lord, and to lean upon his strength, then we are strong.

We will make this lesson a short one, since we have no reason to believe that any particular number of our readers are slaves to intemperance; indeed, we know that whom the Son makes free is free indeed; and we urge upon all that the greater freedom which we receive in Christ, through a clear knowledge of the divine plan, should lead us more diligently to bring every talent and power of mind and of body *into full subjection to the divine will*, and into the service of the divine plan. And those who are imbued with this thought will surely realize that they have neither mental nor physical powers to dissipate—that they belong to the Lord, and are to glorify him in their bodies and their spirits, which are his (1 Cor. 6:20) They will perceive that they are merely stewards, and that any misuse of talents, either through intoxication or otherwise, would be a misuse of their stewardship, and lead surely on to that condition in which the Lord could not say to them, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

But while disposed to encourage temperance, and to discourage intemperance in respect to intoxicants of every kind. we feel that the special lesson needed by the Lord's consecrated people is in respect to the intoxicating influences of the world, as they come to and affect us as "new creatures." There is an intoxication in wealth, in luxury, in ease, which tends to say to the soul, "Take thine ease; forget thy covenant of sacrifice—to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, and be dead to the world and its aims with him." There is an intoxication of pleasure, of fashion, of pride and fond desire, which appeals to the "new creature" very strongly, through various avenues of the mortal body, and seeks to intoxicate, to stupefy, the new mind, to make us dull of hearing as respects spiritual things, to make us lax as respects our zeal for the Lord, for the truth, and for the brethren; and to make us covet the things that would be approved by the world, and pleasurable to our own flesh, and harmonious to the wishes and exhortations of our friends. To all of these intoxicating allurements the answer must be, No; we have sworn off, we have covenanted our lives that we shall henceforth be dead to earthly interests and alive toward God. Our joys, our pleasures, our intoxications, must be of the spiritual kind. We must become so enthused, enraptured, with the heavenly things, with the joy and peace and blessing which accompany the eating and drinking at the Lord's table, and being filled with his spirit, that the intoxicants of earthly joys will have less and less attraction for us.—Eph. 5:18.

"My soul, be on thy guard;
Ten thousand foes arise:
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize."

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE RANSOM

Question.—Is an understanding of the philosophy of the ransom essential to justification?

Answer.—Justification is the name for that standing in the sight of God in which he can accept us and deal with us no longer as sinners, but *as* perfect human sons. This relationship or standing has been accounted to the friends of God ever since the day of Abraham, surely, and evidently to some others previously. Neither Abraham nor David nor Samuel nor the prophets understood the philosophy of the ransom. They could not understand it, for it had not yet been revealed in any sense or degree; it had merely been hinted at in types and through indefinite promises.

But they could and did have *faith in God*, and the Apostle Paul (Rom. 4) shows that it was that faith that justified them. They had faith to the full of the revelation of God's will and plan made to them. The extent of the knowledge of God possible to be possessed has increased considerably since Abraham's day. In Rom. 4:24, the Apostle makes faith in God the basis of *our* justification as it was the basis of their acceptance, though now faith in God *includes* faith in the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer. It was impossible for any to believe on him of whom they had not heard; but Abraham believed God in his statement that in his seed (afterward shown to be Christ) all the families of the earth should be blest. Abraham's faith was *reckoned* as justifying him in God's sight. It was such an active, obedient faith as would have accepted Christ personally, as it accepted the promises concerning him. In due time his faith shall be perfected—at our Lord's second advent.

Coming down to the first advent of our Lord: His teaching evidently brought a great light to them that had the eyes of their understanding opened, and he declared the ransom. We have no reason to suppose that even those who heard our Lord speak in dark sayings and parables grasped the philosophy of the ransom; and so through the Gospel age to the present time. We must therefore suppose that in God's wisdom it was quite sufficient that his people should believe the fact which his Word does clearly state, that Christ's death paid the penalty for the sins of the whole world somehow or other, not understood.

The ransom was necessary, so far as God was concerned, as the basis of our justification. But as far as we were concerned, the thing necessary was to "believe God" and to accept God's statement, that through the death of Christ the reconciliation for the sins of the whole world was effected, for all who would believe it and act accordingly.

The philosophy of the subject is needful in our day, and is "meat in due season" now, because we have come down to a time when there is in progress a special sifting and testing in connection with Christ and his sacrifice, and when it is necessary to have the philosophy of the subject in order to be able to appreciate and hold on clearly to the fact that we were redeemed by the precious blood.

It will be noticed that the prophet declares that all the tables of Babylon are full of vomit—rejected things. They had some very good things upon their tables, among others the doctrine of the ransom; but failing to be in the right condition of heart now, the Lord is rejecting Babylon; and those of his people in her are called away from her tables to the meat in due season, while her tables, served by those who are rejected from being the Lord's mouth-pieces ("I will spue thee out of my mouth"), are in the light of the dawning day being despised; and even the good things from the Lord's Word (the ransom, etc.), which once yielded them refreshment, are now defiled in their eyes along with the rejected nonsense of the dark ages.

THE TEMPLE OF HIS BODY

Question.—What did the Lord mean when he said (John 2:19), "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up?"

Answer.—A suggestion as to his meaning is found in verse 21—"But he spake of the temple *of his body*"—the church, he being the head of the church.

A day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The first advent was in the beginning of the *fifth day* or thousand years (over four thousand years being past, the fifth thousand begun). During the fifth and sixth days his church has been selecting, and *early* in the *seventh* (the Millennium, the *third* day, his body, the church, will be perfected with him—the spiritual temple. He himself was raised from the dead "on the third day," literally, but it was not by his own power—*God* highly exalted him. The words of the text can not, therefore, refer to our Lord's personal resurrection.

"WHOM NO MAN HATH SEEN NOR CAN SEE"

Question.—Do you believe that the restitution class will ever enter heaven, and "see the King in his beauty?"

Answer.—No, we have no reason whatever to expect that any of the restitution class will ever enter heaven, or ever see spiritual beings. It would be entirely contrary to their nature; man is adapted to the earth, as a fish is adapted to the water. If man were taken out of the earth into heaven he would be like the fish out of water—out of his element. Nor is there any suggestion in the Scriptures of any change of nature; human nature being perfection on its own plane, so designed by the Creator; and those perfect on the human plane will be just as satisfied with their perfection as will the perfect on the angelic plane, and those on other planes of being. They will see the King in his beauty in the same sense that we now see the Lord when we are "looking unto Jesus." More than this, when mankind is perfect they will see in each other the very image of God; and all through the Millennial age they will see in the princes who will be in charge of their government, the likeness of God, for these princes or ancient worthies will be perfect human beings.

THE CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE

Question.—How far are the Christian Alliance views correct?

Answer.—In our opinion not very far. They look for the second coming of the Lord, but mistakenly, as do many friends in the various denominations. They hold nearly all the false doctrines held by nearly all denominations. In our understanding many of the Christian Alliance people are earnest, and probably as a whole, a more holy people than most of the denominations; but this is about all that we can say for them. We must consider their system as a branch or ward of Babylon, and would warn all to come out of her, that they be not partakers of the woes that are shortly to come upon her, and that they be upon the Lord's side and accounted worthy to see further light of present truth.

Question.—What is your understanding of the call and work of a minister or preacher, as taught in God's Word?

Answer.—(1) That in a general sense all Christians are anointed of the spirit to be preachers, and are such in proportion as they exercise their talents in spreading the truth.

(2) That any Christian (man), having knowledge and ability as a herald, who feels drawn to devote all his time to the spread of the truth, an open door being seen, is justified in changing his field of labor from temporal to spiritual, in part or in whole, giving more and more of his time and energy to his direct *vocation* of an ambassador for God and less and less to his *avocation* earthly.

(3) That these heralds shall trust in God to supply their needs; and receiving only free will offerings from the brethren and others should "labor" for the things needful, accepting these conditions of the Lord's providence.

(4) That when one of these finds every door of opportunity closed, he shall accept it as an evidence of work done in that field and should seek to know whether for some reason his service is not acceptable longer or whether the Lord has another field for him, or whether all the work is done. In any case, he should recognize that his vocation is that of an ambassador for the truth, and that earthly affairs are only his avocations, and should seek to prosecute as best be can the ministry of the Word, through evil and good report, through trials and encouragements, through sorrows and joys.

WHAT WAS JEPHTHAH'S VOW?

Question.—What attitude are we to assume toward the account of Jephthah's reckless vow which brought death to the daughter? Is there any redeeming feature in the incident?

Answer.—We are to accept the Scriptural statement that Jephthah was amongst the faithful—acceptable to God. As such he must also be acceptable to us. In respect to his offering his daughter in sacrifice our conclusion must be that the divine arrangement then and now differs materially. We may say, however, that as Abraham was about to offer his son Isaac, not willingly, but through obedience to what he understood to be the divine will, so did Jephthah with his daughter; and he was not hindered by an angel from the Lord. I do not know if the lamentation has any significance.

* * *

Answer.—A totally different view of this matter is possible, and we merely suggest it, namely, that the vow was one of full devotion to the Lord—one of chastity and sanctity—seclusion from society, deadness to the world as a priestess. The daughter's request for time for lamentation, and the subsequent annual celebration by the virgins, would agree well with this view. The chief objection to this view is the statement respecting "a burnt offering," and this seems almost insurmountable.

"WHOM NO MAN HATH SEEN NOR CAN SEE"

Question.—In what sense can the statement in Job 19:26 be true, since we understand he will not have power to "see God" as a human being?

Answer.—The passage might be understood in two different ways: (a) As an expression of Job's trust in the Lord that notwithstanding the serious disease with which he was afflicted, and the apparent utter destruction of his skin by a loathsome disease yet he hoped for recovery and that he should yet praise the Lord in the flesh and in health. Or (b) it may be understood to refer to a future life and Job's confidence that tho his sickness should result in death, complete dissolution, yet it did not mean in him an everlasting extinction. As previously stated, God would call and he would answer in his flesh. His seeing God in the flesh should not be understood as that which is impossible, of which our Lord says, "No man hath seen God at any time," and of which the Apostle says, "Whom no man hath seen nor can see." It should be understood in the way in which it is commonly used today, viz., that God's people see him in his works, as we sometimes say, "I see God's hand in this." And again, we are informed that "all flesh shall see the salvation of God." And again, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

A writer in the *Advance* facetiously points out the antagonism between the Bible and its true friends on the one side, and the Higher Critics on the other. But he does not seem to realize that the followers of these higher critics are in most of the pulpits and in the most influential pews of Christendom;—that the secret of the prevalent skepticism and indifference of professing Christians is *doubt*. It is not the loud and foul-mouthed infidelity of a century ago; but much more insidious and dangerous, because it has a "form of godliness"—much more deceptive to such as are sincere truth-seekers. The writer says:—

"Beyond any question some unknown writer gathered up the legends of his time and used them to describe a hero, whom he named Abraham. A later writer used the same legends, but he called his hero Isaac. Without doubt all these stories were invented to account for the supremacy of Israel over Edom." So said a Rev. Dr. in his 'lecture' to some fifty ladies of his church a few days since—in a Congregational church not far from Boston! At the close of the lecture, among others this question was asked: 'Doctor, do you believe that any such persons as Abraham and Isaac ever lived?' 'Well, I don't know,' replied the Doctor. 'It is quite possible that persons bearing those names have lived, but probably these names represent nations or tribes. I should say that the weight of best modern scholarship is against the theory that any such persons as Abraham and Isaac actually lived.'"

Being from the backwoods and not familiar with the "best modern scholarship," I was wont to exclaim, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it!"

What a pity that Isaiah could not have heard a course of lectures like these before he prophesied! Then he would have been spared the mortification of making such a reference as we find in his prophecy—Chapter 41:8: "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend." And another blunder worse than the first: "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him!" But it may be that "the best modern scholarship" will discover, if indeed it has not already proven, that no such prophet as Isaiah ever prophesied or lived even; This would do much in clearing the way for a solid foundation for our faith!

It is a great pity also that Matthew could not have heard or read a few lectures concerning the "higher criticism" before he wrote his book; for he would have omitted the first chapter which has deceived so many ignorant souls since his time! A great many people have lived in times past and "fell on sleep" believing that in some way Jesus was descended from Abraham! Alas, what ignorance! Why could not the wise men of the East have discovered this new knowledge ages ago?

Moreover, what help it would have been to Jesus if he could have known the "last word of our best modern scholarship!" He would not have been deceived, nor would he have deceived others by quoting from those "old legends," as He did in Matt. 22:32: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob!" Nor would He have said: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad. I say unto you before Abraham was I am." John 8:56, 58. Then think of the unfortunate Stephen! Had he only known the results of "the best modern scholarship" he never would have spoken as he did in Acts 7:5—and so might have saved his life! If he was ignorant or so foolish as to rehearse as true a lot of "legends" about people who never lived, why should not the multitude gnash on him with their teeth, stop their ears, run upon him with one accord, cast him out of the city and stone him to death! James too was deceived and quoted as a fact a passage from those same "old legends"; Jas. 2:23.

But the most deluded of all those poor, ignorant men, who lived and worked in the first century was Paul! How unhappy he must be even in heaven (if there is any heaven), if he now knows the "last word of best modern scholarship!" His ignorance first appears in quoting the same "old legend" that fooled James in his letter to the Galatians—3:6. He repeats the myth in his letter to the Romans—4:1-4. But worse than this, in the ninth chapter he digs up and palms off onto the innocent and unsuspecting Romans a whole string of "legends!"

Ah me! Four years of preaching and working does not seem to have brought any more light into his benighted mind! for then he wrote that strange epistle to the Hebrews! Who can read the eleventh chapter of that epistle in the light of "the best modern scholarship," with any degree of allowance for the ignorant writer?

Poor Paul!—To think of the sermons written and spoken from the "legends" quoted by Paul in that chapter is enough to give a man spiritual nightmare! And the preachers have believed those stories to be true, and so have deceived their flocks. "The blind leading the blind!" These deluded preachers have cited Abraham for an example of faith, living, saving faith, lo, these centuries past! And yet Abraham never lived! To buttress their sermons on prayer, these same preachers have quoted again and again Abraham's petitions as found in the "legends" recorded in Gen. 15, 17 and 18! What a debt of gratitude we owe to the "higher criticism," that our eyes have been opened and that with the very beginning of this glad new century "the best modern scholarship" has brushed away the myths and "legends" of the ages and given us a "new theology" founded upon the latest researches of "the higher criticism!"

* * *

The serious feature of the matter is, that Christian people in general are but "babes" as respects a knowledge of God's Word, and hence liable to lose their little all of faith; especially when the doubts are suggested by their leaders, to whom they have been taught to look too implicitly for guidance in matters of faith.

The Word of God clearly shows us that so great a falling away from the faith is to be expected here, in the end of the age, as will justify our Master's words,—"When the Son of Man cometh [is *present*] shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 8:18) These are the "perilous times" mentioned by the Apostle, and of whose deceptions our Lord said,—"If it were possible [if they were not divinely aided] the very elect would be misled by them."—Matt. 24:24; compare 2 Thes. 2:10-12; 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

The only safe-guard for the Lord's people now is the "present truth" with which the Lord is so bountifully supplying the "table" of his fully consecrated people. God has so arranged the outward evidences respecting the Bible that the world and all who have the spirit of the world can find plenty to cavil at and stumble over. The Lord's intention was and still is that only from the *inside* can his Word and plan be seen in their true beauty and strength. He intends it to be "sufficient, that the *man of God* may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work." But who are genuinely *men of God*, is the question. The difficulty is that many professing to be men of God are men of their own—not consecrated: and many of the consecrated are consecrated to a particular work or theory or sect instead of to God. Now the "hour of trial" has come which will show the real standing of each one professing godliness. God is now making it quite possible for every "man of God" to be thoroughly furnished, fully equipped, at the same time that he is permitting the Adversary to bring in error like a flood.—Isa. 28:2, 18-20; 59:19.

In view of these conditions let all whose eyes are open, all who see where we are and what is coming, be alert first for themselves that they may be of the "brethren" who will see and be delivered, by giving the more earnest heed to the things which God has shown us, lest we let them slip; and secondly, for all who give any evidence of being "brethren," to assist them as much as lieth in us. Thus we may make our own calling and election sure, and minister *grace* to all with whom we come in contact.—2 Pet. 1:10; Eph. 4:29.

THE OUTLOOK—WAR AND PROSPERITY

As our readers are aware, we credit the prosperity of the world during the past three years very largely to their wars, which have put hundreds of millions of dollars into circulation among the people, and stimulated manufacturing, shipbuilding, etc., at a cost of an increase of public debts, which, being put into the shape of negotiable bonds, is practically an increase in the world's circulating medium—money.

Our principal reason for looking for a further period of prosperity and inflation is, that in our judgment there is scarcely time enough to permit a panic and period of general prostration and then another period of prosperity and inflation and another panic, etc., by the time which we think the Scriptures indicate as the time for the great cataclysm of trouble; by which the present institutions of Christendom are all to go down in anarchistic chaos. The culmination of the trouble in October, 1914, is clearly marked in the Scriptures;* and we are bound therefore to expect a beginning of that *severe* trouble not later than 1910;—with severe spasms between now and then.

Should the severe trouble come in 1910 we may infer that it will be preceded by a period of gradual financial and social disturbances, similar to those of the past, and leading on toward the condition of desperation then, or sooner, to be reached. For these reasons we expect the present wave of prosperity to roll on a little while: and since it could not do so without war, or something of the kind, to put more money and more bonds into circulation—therefore we look for war, possibly numerous small wars, possibly great ones. It is a time for wars and rumors of wars, and of crying Peace, Peace; but the end is not yet,—a more pronounced *federation* of Protestantism is first to be expected, and a consequent persecution of such as will refuse to worship it.

In harmony with the foregoing, read the following extract from that very conservative London journal, *"The Spectator:"*—

"THE LITTLE CLOUD"

"One grand difficulty of the past, the insufficiency of useful products, is being rapidly obviated. The world is being searched for more pleasant things, and with the new facilities for intercommunication the search is well rewarded. As regards food, indeed, always the first of human preoccupations, the world has been pooled, and where absurd laws do no interfere bread is now so abundant and so cheap that the age-long ascendency of those who by owning the soil controlled its production is threatened, and will probably disappear. It is more than probable that the speed of human transit, and the inherent power of the instruments used by man to lighten toil, will be enormously increased—a new and lighter accumulator of electricity would effect that at once—while it is possible that the fertility of the earth itself, the locked treasure-house of all things, may be materially increased. The energy of white mankind, relieved of many superincumbent weights, has been developed beyond precedent, and the highest men of science see dimly that even man's power of thinking may be enlarged by a comprehension of laws as great as gravitation which are still hidden from his ken, but the filmy veil of which shows an inclination to disappear. The 'rolling back of the heavens' in the fifteenth century, on which thinkers and rhetoricians have so often dilated, would hardly expand man's conceptions more than an accurate and fairly full comprehension of the nature and properties of the all-pervading though invisible substance which we have agreed to call the ether.

"In the midst of all these facts and prospects men remain silly, and a new and serious danger bewilders all who can think. The white world may fling its future away for the gratification of its spites and greeds. The nations have become conscious of each other, and they snarl. The fierce jealousies, the fiercer greediness, the distrusts fiercest of all, which in history are seen to have divided the dynasties, now divide the peoples. Each is as angry when it sees another gain anything as a dog when it sees a bone in another dog's mouth. Each thinks itself injured when another is enriched, and, what is worst of all, each believes in its heart that every other is plotting astutely and carefully to deprive all rivals of that which they possess.

"The new hunger for comfort, the new knowledge of the external world and the riches it contains, unite with the new freedom and rapidity of intercommunication to produce a hatred of rivals at least as strong as the ancient hatred of races or religions. Great nations are ready to fight to the death for transmarine acquisitions, for privileges of trading, and above all for profitable monopolies. Governments are forced to 'interfere,' usually with menace, to secure concessions for their subjects. The popular papers are full of profits about to be pilfered away. The more popular the representative the more angrily he pleads for objects which, in plainer language, are large profits to be reaped by his constituents. If the State buys anything abroad he is furious; if it is indifferent to a foreign tariff he is in despair; if it does not prevent a rival railway he asserts, and almost believes, in treachery in his rulers. It is impossible for him to believe that the claims of others may be well founded, and the imputations in which he indulges resemble nothing so much as those of priests against heretics or scholars against each other in the Middle Ages.

"In short, while the Governments are tranquil the peoples hate each other to the point at which the maintenance of peace becomes daily a more difficult performance. The spirit infects all countries alike, even Great Britain, usually so free in her inner pride from any impulse either of envy or apprehension; and if it cannot be allayed there will in the end be war. And war in England or with America now fully included in the circle of jealousies, would mean the disappointment for half the century of all the hopes with which it begins, the waste of the new resources upon competitive and skilful killing, and the diversion of all powers of thought from conquests over Nature to conquests over each other. Everything, in fact, in the time is propitious except the nature of man, which in its new freedom from the pressure of suffering is allowing the freest play to some of his meanest instincts. So far as safety and progress are concerned, the world has gained little by the exchange of royal ambition as the driving force in politics for popular jealousy and greed."

WHAT OTHERS ARE COMING TO SEE

The *"Grocer's Criterion"* (Chicago) commenting on the fruit and vegetable scarcity resulting from the general drouth of the past Summer points out that this means deprivation to the poorer classes, and high prices for life's necessities, etc. It then concludes,—

"The cost of living everywhere will be enormously increased all over the country. With the coal trust putting up the price of coal and other trusts advancing the cost of the necessaries of life, the outlook for the masses is not very encouraging. The labor situation has not improved and there is a growing feeling of discontent among the poorer classes in every manufacturing locality.

"We have been enjoying a long period of prosperity, but over-reaching greed will soon result in bringing about an industrial revolution. Success has turned the heads of ambitious promoters, and they desire to control and monopolize the business of the world, which will eventually end only in universal disaster. We believe that the beginning of the end of the present era is at hand. We look to see want, misery and suffering in the near future. We expect to hear of outbreaks, riots and bloodshed at almost any time, and the conditions are ripe for a bloody conflict between capital and labor.

"The long drought will tend to aggravate the parties to the present struggle.

"We can not reasonably expect the difficulties now existing to be soon amicably or justly settled. Greed is apparent and uppermost and is crushing labor with an iron hand; labor is struggling for its very life with a fair prospect of being overcome—yet there are no immediate signs of a panic. There may be a slumbering volcano beneath us, but it has not yet burst into fiery eruption. Business men everywhere are entrenching themselves to meet the emergency when it comes, and to this conservative policy we may attribute the present calmness in the commercial world and the absence of anything like a panicky feeling among business men."

Watch Tower and *Millennial Dawn* readers have seen the above conditions for these many years in the light of the divine Word. The Editor has been proclaiming these things for nearly thirty years. It is an evidence of the ripening of the matter when the worldy can see them without the secret light of God's Word,—clearly discernible only by the "royal priesthood" in the "holy" place in the light of "the golden candlestick." But our sorrow for the world in view of its coming catastrophe is mitigated by our knowledge of the grand results to be thus brought about under the administration of the coming kingdom of Messiah. Praise God then even for "the day of wrath!"

PALESTINE'S MINERAL WEALTH

Commercial Awakening of the Holy Land Promised Under the Turks

Washington, Aug. 6.—The Department of State has received from Ernest L. Harris, Consular Agent at Eibenstock, a report on the mineral treasures of Palestine. The report says:

"Valuable mineral treasures have recently been discovered in Palestine, so it is safe to say that the industrial awakening of the Holy Land is no longer a dream. It is true that the greater part of the once flourishing country is a barren desert. The lines of communication are miserable, and traffic is unsafe, aside from the one railroad from Yafa to Jerusalem.

"The newly discovered mineral deposits lie on both sides of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. The salt deposits of the Dead Sea could be developed into an industry. The most important of all the deposits is phosphate. At present the phosphate mines of Florida almost supply the world's demand. The immense fields of phosphate to the east and west of the Jordan need only better means of traffic and communication in order to insure the development. This, it would seem, is not far distant, as the Turkish Government is planning a continuation of the Yafa-Jerusalem Railroad, and steamboats are already plying the Dead Sea."

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* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOLS. II, III.

OUR SPECIAL EDITION LINEAR BIBLE

We have received a sufficient number of orders for the new Bible to warrant us in proceeding with its publication. It is to be printed from the regular "Linear Bible" electroplates with special Dawn and Watch Tower references in the one-inch-wide margins. Additionally we will add a Topical Index giving Scripture references as well as Dawn and Watch Tower references. These were prepared by two sisters in Los Angeles, California.

Our readers are aware that these Bibles are being prepared at considerable trouble, for their convenience and spiritual assistance and not for financial profit: indeed, we run the risk of losing something. We do not wish to *urge* any orders, but feel sure some who do not order will be greatly disappointed when they see the books in the hands of others and think of what they have missed. The price is only about one-third that of the same book *without* the wide-margin references which will so greatly add to its value among Watch Tower readers. See the illustration of type in our issue of July 15. Two bindings, $2.00 and $3.00 post-paid.

Orders may be sent in at these prices during September; but not later. Some will be printed, extra, for a party who believes they will be in demand at much higher prices.

"FINALLY, BE ALL OF ONE MIND"

"Finally, be all of one mind [*harmonious—in accord*], *having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."*—1 Pet. 3:8, 9.

Harmony does not mean alike-ness. Rather it signifies unity with diversity: and this is the meaning of the Greek word translated "of one mind" in our text. The Lord's will respecting his people does not contemplate exact sameness, wholly ignoring individual characteristics and peculiarities; on the contrary, a diversity with harmony is more desirable than a sameness; as, for instance, it is the harmonious union of the seven colors that constitutes the beauty of the rainbow. So also in music: one strikes a chord on the piano or the organ and the result is harmony, oneness, union—the variety of the notes gives a melody which could not be obtained from any one of them, or from a sameness of equal volume. This is the thought the Apostle's words give us in respect to God's people; they are of various natural temperaments and dispositions and peculiarities, and the divine alchemy by which the human is transmuted into the spiritual, the old mind into the new mind, does not wholly destroy, and is not intended to destroy, the elements of character and disposition; but is intended to take from each one its dross and imperfection and discordancy, and thus to permit all eventually to unite in and develop into a harmonious whole.

The Lord does not expect, however, that this condition of complete harmony, will be attained by his people the instant of their consecration. On the contrary, as the Apostle indicates in our text, this attainment of harmony is the result, the glorious consummation,—rather than the beginning of the work of grace in the Lord's people: he says, *"finally,"* not primarily, we are to be all of one mind—harmonious. It requires long years, generally, in the school of Christ, for his disciples to so grow in grace and in knowledge and in love,—ere they reach the glorious condition expressed in our text, even "finally."

The Apostle Paul intimates that we are to continue so to grow in grace and in knowledge, and in love, as to attain in heart, in will, the stature of a perfect man in Christ. The "babe" in Christ has not the stature of a "man," and requires first the milk of the Word, and subsequently the "strong meat," that it may grow thereby, and finally attain to the ideal condition represented in our text,—a condition of harmony with the Lord and with each other, which indicates that the work of grace has well progressed—that the mark of perfect love has been well attained in the heart, even though it be not possible still to fully express it in every word and act of life.

The Apostle Paul describes this transformation of life, this growth, saying, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind;" but while it requires only a short time to give this instruction, and does not require long to agree to follow the instruction, it does require patient perseverance in well-doing to comply with the instructions;—to fully attain to the transformed conditions even in our hearts—so that we *will* aright, however difficult it may be for us to always *do* right. And here arises a difficulty: many do not clearly see just what are the requirements, and hence go through life in a maze, in perplexity, in doubt, in fear, lacking the rest and peace and blessing which should come from a proper understanding and a consistent endeavor.

No doubt all have been struck with the fact that those who manifest the deepest interest in the divine plan are not always the most smooth and most agreeable people in the world: frequently they are so combative as to be continually distressing both themselves and their friends by their unwisdom or their disposition to wrangling and contention. The very quality which the Apostle mentions in this text as like-mindedness or harmony is peculiarly lacking, naturally, in the disposition of the majority of those who become deeply interested in present truth. And some have been inclined hastily to condemn the doctrines and to say, This is not the peaceable Spirit of Christ." Where the Spirit of Christ is there should be love and harmony. So says the Apostle: *"Finally,* be ye all of one mind." And this should be borne in mind as being the final result of discipline and instruction in the school of Christ; by our attainment of this disposition to harmony (while at the same time loyal and courageous for the truth), we may safely gauge our growth in grace, knowledge and love.

We want to suggest an explanation as to why it is that so many of the Lord's people are combatively disposed. A wrangling and contentious disposition is the result of large combativeness—misdirected—unwisely exercised. Combativeness itself is not a bad quality. On the contrary, it is a good quality,—a quality actually indispensable to the attainment of the prize set before us in the Gospel. Those who lack combativeness, lack backbone; lack the ability to walk an upright life, under present conditions; they are like a boat on the river which has neither oars nor wheel nor screw-propeller. They can do nothing but float with the current, for they lack the apparatus necessary to stem it. There are many goody-goody people who lack firmness, lack character, lack combativeness, and who could not think of anything else than floating with the popular current; and these frequently are mistaken for "saints" when they are nothing of the kind. They are not even of the kind of material that the Lord takes to make "saints" out of. They are unfit for his purposes under the present call of this Gospel age; for all who are called now to be of the elect church are called to be "overcomers;" called to be victors; called to stem the popular tide; called to fight a good fight of faith and obedience; and such as are totally lacking in firmness, in combativeness, in character, cannot possibly comply with these conditions, and are not in the race.

So then, if any of those who have grasped the truth, and who have been grasped and drawn by the truth to consecration to the Lord, have at times felt the perversity of their natural dispositions—their combativeness, contentiousness and wrangling disposition, and felt discouraged on this account, let them thank God and take courage. Let them realize that this very disposition constitutes one qualification for enlistment and service under the Captain of our salvation;—although such a service will mean the bringing of this contrary disposition into accord with the spirit of love, which, in the end, will mean that the wrangling disposition will be subdued, and the combativeness be properly turned to good account in another direction.

But while taking all the encouragement we can from the thought that the Lord is wishing and is seeking and calling out a fighting class of "conquerors," who could not be conquerors unless there were something to conquer, and who could not conquer unless they possessed something of the conquering or combative disposition, let us nevertheless, promptly take ourselves in hand, realizing that the good quality of combativeness has in every instance been misdirected, and that from the moment we enlist as soldiers of the Cross of Christ our combativeness is to be turned into new channels. We are to learn, first of all, that our combativeness is not to be exercised toward the Lord, that we should resist his will; but that, on the contrary, we are to make a full surrender to him of our thoughts and words and conduct. We are to remember that combativeness is not to be used toward the brethren; for to fight against the brethren is to fight against God, against the truth, against the fellow-members of our own brigade. Instead of fighting against the brethren, we are to love them, and to fight for them, even as we are to fight for the Lord and for the truth. We are to remember, too, that our combativeness is not to be exercised against our friends, our neighbors, or the world in general. No; all of these have plenty to contend against without having our opposition. On the contrary, they need our sympathy, they need our help, they need our encouragement, they need whatever we can render them in the way of uplift.

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH—1 TIM. 6:12

How, then, and against what shall we exercise our combativeness, that it may be well directed to the Lord's pleasement and in the service of his cause? We answer, that our combativeness is to be turned against sin, and that its first exercise must begin with ourselves: the battle with self is the greatest battle, and we have the Lord's Word for it that he that "ruleth his spirit (his own mind, will) is better than he that taketh a city," because he has to that extent learned to exercise the combativeness of a true character in the right direction, in self-control. It is after we have had considerable experience in battling with sin and selfishness in ourselves, in casting the beam out of our own eyes, in subduing anger, malice, hatred and strife in our own hearts and flesh—it is then, and by means of this severe battle and experience, that we will be prepared to assist the brethren, and to assist our neighbors in their difficulties—to help them to overcome their besetments and weaknesses.

Whoever starts out by fighting even the sins of others before he has made a vigorous campaign against his own weaknesses and errors, is making a mistake. He needs *humility* and *sympathy* to assist the others to fight their battles, and this he cannot gain without first battling with himself and learning to appreciate how strong is the foe to be contended with, and how thoroughly entrenched is sin and selfishness in all the avenues of the flesh. He even needs to be worsted in some of his battles with self in order to have a clear appreciation of his own inability to overcome and to force him to go to the throne of the heavenly grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help. He needs this because, as the Apostle says, it is when we are weak that we are strong; and when we are strong in our self-confidence, and therefore neglect to go to the Lord, then we are weak and liable to make failure in the battle, and to be overcome by the enemy—Sin.—Heb. 4:16; 2 Cor. 12:10.

All those who have had any experience in the matter, and who have learned how and where to direct their combative energies, find that there is full scope for the exercise of every particle of combativeness one possesses. (1) In himself, continually; as the Apostle expressed it, "I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). O, how much of energy and how much persistency in fighting the good fight of faith, and of loyalty to the Lord, is needful in the conquering of self—"bringing every thought [and so far as possible, every word and act] into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5). Plenty of room here for combativeness; plenty of room for all the contention and wrangling we want;—contention with sin and self-will, wrangling with the will of the flesh and opposing it at every step—mortifying it, killing its affections and desires. No wonder the Apostle speaks of these present experiences as a fight; no wonder he tells us that we must be prepared to endure hardness as a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(2) As soon as the victory over self has been gained, and as soon as the new mind has put a garrison in every quarter of the conquered body, to guard it from rising in insurrection, to hold it in subjection to the King of kings and Lord of lords—forthwith all the remaining energies that can be spared from self-control will find ample opportunity for usefulness in battling for the Lord, battling for the brethren, battling for the truth, battling against error, battling against all the wiles of the devil, "for we are not ignorant of his devices," as the Apostle declares.

(3) As the eyes of our understanding get opened, wider and wider, we see the great conflict that is progressing throughout the world between righteousness and sin, between our Lord and the god of this world and his blinded representatives, who ignorantly think that they are doing God service and are often found fighting against the truth and against the true soldiers of the Cross, their brethren, even as in the case of Paul. We remember how he, as Saul of Tarsus, persecuted the church, mistakenly misusing his combativeness in a wrong way. We remember how the Lord called to him in the way, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"—Why are you fighting against God, opposing the truth and his cause? In Paul's case we see how that as soon as the eyes of his understanding were opened he became a most valiant soldier of the cross, hesitating not to lay down his life in the service of the Lord and the brethren, who once he had ignorantly opposed.

It was the same combativeness which made Paul a violent persecutor that subsequently made him the most valiant of the apostles in the defence of the truth. And so it was also with others of the apostles. Those who had the largest amount of combativeness naturally, when it was turned into the proper channels, became thereby the strongest and most valiant for the truth. Peter, for instance, full of combativeness, and at first seriously impeded by it, ready in defence of the Lord to smite off the ear of the high priest's servant, was very valiant subsequently in the use of his talents to the Lord's praise. James and John, two others specially favored and recognized of the Lord, and specially used in the service of the truth, were of combative dispositions, so much so that they were known as the "sons of thunder;" and it was these two who were so incensed at the Samaritans who refused to receive our Lord into their city, and who were so full of love and zeal for the Master that they inquired, "Lord, wilt thou that we call down fire from heaven to consume these men and their city?" They had the combativeness, they had the courage, they had the zeal; but they had not yet learned how to direct it, and so the Master intimated, when he said, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of. The Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." By and by, when they were anointed with the holy spirit at Pentecost, and had learned gradually what spirit they were of (what spirit the Master was of, and what spirit they must be of as his disciples), they understood better how their combativeness and zeal were to be used. And hence we find them loyal soldiers of the cross, shunning not danger, enduring hardness as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus, even unto death.

It was this natural combativeness consecrated to God, and rightly directed through the spirit, that led Peter and one of the others, when threatened, and charged straitly by the Sanhedrin that they should preach no more in the name of Jesus, to courageously withstand this *illegal* restraint upon their liberties and rights as Jews, under the Law, and to be obedient to the voice of the heavenly call, and to declare, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20). The Lord knew whom he was choosing for his apostles, and we see clearly that weak, vacillating, nerveless men would not have served the cause as did these whom Jesus chose. And it is but reasonable that we conclude that the Lord similarly throughout this age, is seeking for and choosing strong characters, those who dare to do right; who dare to incur the frown of the world and its slights and sneers, its scoffs and its jeers, its persecution because of fidelity to the Lord and to the brethren. This is overcoming;—and to whatever extent any realize that they are deficient in these qualities let them cultivate this combativeness in this proper direction—to combat weakness, combat sin, combat subserviency to those things which are contrary to the Lord and his Word.

FAITH AND THE MESSAGES ALSO ESSENTIAL

But combativeness alone would not be sufficient. It needs proportionate faith, in order to use the combativeness aright. Hence we hear our Lord's word, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Faith in the Lord must be the power that will move his people and energize them. Not faith in creeds, nor faith in men, nor faith in ourselves, but faith in the Lord and in his exceeding great and precious promises. As the steamboat wheels represent its combativeness, by which it battles against and pushes the water, and thus is enabled to go upstream, so its steam-power, through the engine, represents faith, which must be behind the combativeness, to exercise the combativeness—to lead us to endure hardness, to direct us in fighting the good fight and to hope for the rewards to be attained.

Similarly the fuel and the boiler generating the steam represent the Word and providences of God, which produce in us the cause, the power of the faith which energizes us in stemming the current. The exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word were given to us as the basis of faith,—as the fuel to produce the power in us to *will* and to *do* God's good pleasure (Phil. 2:13). And hence these gracious promises must not be neglected; they must be continually used and must continue in us to energize us. And the energy must be applied, and we must progress proportionately against the course of this world, if we would attain to the glorious conditions to which we have been called.

While we should remember (lest otherwise we should be discouraged), that the attainment of a control of our own spirits, our own minds, and the bringing of these into full accord, full harmony, with the Lord and, so far as possible, into accord with all of the Lord's people who are in accord with him, is to be "finally," nevertheless we are not to delay our endeavor to reach that final and grand development to which the Apostle exhorts us in our text. We are to have it continually before us as the standard, the ideal, the aim, and although we may fail time and again, if we are rightly exercised in the matter we will be stronger as the result of every failure; for each failure will show us more clearly than we discerned previously the weak points of our characters, naturally resulting from the fall. And if each weak point be carefully noted and guarded against as respects the future we will come by and by, by the grace of God and under the direction of our great Teacher, by his Word and example, and providential leadings, to that subdued condition, that harmonized condition, which would accord to the expression of the text. And to such, looking back, even the failures which subsequently recognized led to greater fortification against the wiles of the Adversary and the weaknesses of the flesh, may be seen to have been overruled by the Lord for our blessing according to his promise that all things shall work together for good to them that love him.

As we *finally*, in larger and larger measure, attain to harmony—to the subduing of our natural dispositions toward contention, gradually getting these combative tendencies into accord with the Lord and his Word and his Spirit, and into accord with those who are his, our fellow-soldiers in this battle for the right, our condition will be what the Apostle here describes; viz., we will have compassion one of another. We will expect to see and will see "the brethren" striving for the mastery over self and we will be sympathetic, compassionate; so that if they err through weakness of the flesh, we will be glad to restore such in the spirit of meekness, remembering ourselves also lest we should be tempted (Gal. 6:1). We will love them as brethren ought to love—heartily, thoroughly—such a love and such a sympathy, such a compassion, as would lead us to do everything within our power for their assistance;—especially along the lines of spiritual assistance, in the conquering of sin, and in growth in grace and knowledge and love;—but, nevertheless, also in temporal matters as we have opportunity, as may be possible to us.

This compassion and brotherly love amongst the spiritual brethren, even as respects temporal matters, cannot surely be less than it would be amongst natural brethren. Indeed, inasmuch as the spiritual relationship is the higher, the nobler, the grander of the two, without detracting anything from the love and affection and obligations toward the fleshly brotherhood, it would imply that the spiritual would appeal to us still more strongly, so that we would do all for a brother in Christ in a temporal way that we would do for any earthly brother—and more abundantly. The Apostle sets this standard, saying, that we are to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith."

This of course does not mean that we are to be negligent of those of our own immediate households and our special responsibilities to these; but it does mean that aside from these, the spiritual brethren should have the first place in our hearts and in our sympathies and in our love, and in all that this would imply in the way of sharing with them both the spiritual and the temporal good things which we enjoy, according to their necessities. Those who have reached this condition of heart-harmony with the Lord and with his gracious plan will have had such an experience in attaining to this position themselves that it will make them pitiful of others,—sympathetic in the difficulties and trials of others; and it will make them "courteous," polite, "gentle toward all."

In a word, according to the Scriptural standard, the elect church of Christ should be the most polished, the most refined, the most polite, the most generous, the most kind, of all the people in the world;—and should be all these in the most absolute sense; not in the mere sense of an outward form and appearance of kindness, gentleness, etc., so common in the world; but a gentleness, a kindness, proceeding from the heart, proceeding from an appreciation of the Lord's spirit and the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love, and the spirit of justice, also. It is a great matter that we learn to be thoroughly just, and in all of our affairs to do unto others as we would wish them to do unto us,—that we accord them the same liberties that we ourselves would wish to enjoy. Truly, the law of God is a wonderful law, and truly the people who are taught of the Lord and trained in harmony with the divine will, must be a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Combative people will always (while in the flesh) feel a disposition to retaliate; but those who have learned of the Lord the lesson of self-control, and who have developed meekness and brotherly-kindness and pity, will thereby be prepared to fulfil the demands of our text,—to not render evil for evil, or railing for railing. And looking to the Lord as the pattern they will see how it was with him, that "When he was reviled he reviled not again." Not because his enemies had found in him something that could properly and justly be reviled and evil spoken of;—nor because his enemies were so nearly perfect that he could find nothing in them to revile and speak evil of; but because he was so full of submission to the divine will that he was enabled to take the scoffs and railings of the people, and to bear these humbly and patiently, and to remember that *even hereunto he was called*, that he should endure patiently and learn the lessons, and prove himself faithful, and develop and demonstrate his true character, and feel and manifest his pity for the people, in their blindness and ignorance, and his love for them.

And so it must be with us as we grow in our Lord's character-likeness. We also will be less disposed to rail at those who rail, and to revile those who revile us. We also will be ready to suffer the loss of all things, and to do so with cheerfulness; yea, even to rejoice in the trials and difficulties of this present time, knowing, as the Apostle declares, that these are working out for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory. We note here the harmony between Peter's statement of this matter and our Lord's statement of it: "Bless them that curse you; bless and curse not" (Phil. 3:8; 2 Cor. 4:17; Matt. 5:44; Rom. 12:14). So the Apostle says we should rather render blessing. If we have not yet attained to this high standard which is at the end of the race, the mark of perfect love, where we love our enemies and are ready and willing and anxious to bless them, to help them, to desire their uplifting out of darkness and degradation, and to wish and do all that we can in harmony with this, the divine plan, let us not be discouraged; but let us press onward, that as soon as possible we may reach this point, which is the mark of perfected character. For, as the Apostle says, "even hereunto we were called, that we might inherit a blessing."

THE BLESSED INHERITANCE FOR WHICH WE ARE BEING PREPARED

We were called to be the royal priesthood, under Jesus, the Royal High Priest of our profession. We are instructed in the Scriptures that this royal priesthood is to be God's agency during the Millennial age for bringing blessing to the world of mankind, and "hereunto we were called" that we might be fitted for this priesthood. The Apostle tells us that in the preparation of our Lord Jesus and his testing as to fitness for the position of High Priest, it was necessary that he should be tempted, tried, and caused to suffer, in order that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest when the time should come to exercise the authority and power of his office. Similarly it is necessary that all who would be of this royal priesthood should have such experiences now as would develop in them also these principles of truth, righteousness—such experiences as would lead them to love righteousness and to hate iniquity—such experiences in battling with self and in gaining control (at least so far as the mind, the will is concerned), as would constitute them victors and develop in them these graces of the spirit mentioned by the Apostle, brotherly kindness, pitifulness, compassion. All these qualities will be requisite in dealing with the world during the Millennial age. They will be merciful and faithful high priests, *because* they will know how to sympathize with the poor world in its fallen condition, and how to make allowances for them in their various efforts toward regaining the standard of perfection then to be established through restitution processes.

We will be kings as well as priests then. As kings, we will be endued with power to control the world. This will be further proper use of combativeness; but we are not fitted and prepared to so control the world in the present time; and therefore the Lord directs his people to wait, and long for, and pray for his kingdom to come, and his will to be done;—to be enforced with heavenly power and authority. These "very elect" kings and priests will be fully qualified to exercise their power in moderation, for then they will have the new bodies in perfect accord with the new minds;—the new minds which are now being developed, disciplined and brought to that standard of perfect love, which is full of pity, compassion, brotherly kindness and harmony. How necessary, dear brethren, that we learn these lessons, if we would be prepared to be used in the glorious service of the kingdom so shortly to be established.

"HATED WITHOUT A CAUSE"

GEN. 37:12-36.—OCT. 6.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*The patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him.*"—Acts 7:9.

Rachel, the dearly beloved wife of Jacob, was dead, but her first-born son, Joseph, was beloved by his father above his ten older half-brothers. And from the narrative it is not unreasonable to assume that this love was not merely on his mother's account, but that Joseph himself had a kindness and nobility of character, which specially commended him to his father, and drew forth his affection. As a son of his old age, Jacob was inclined to favor Joseph in various ways, and amongst others procured for him an expensive robe, of a kind peculiar to that time, samples of which have recently been found in Egypt, in the tomb of Beni-Hassan,—"long, richly embroidered robes in various patterns and colors," which seem to have been produced by sewing together small pieces of different colors. Herodotus describes one sent as a present by the king of Egypt, which 'had a vast number of figures of animals interwoven into its fabric, and was embroidered with gold.' "

Jacob probably did not realize to what extent his partiality was cultivating in his other sons a feeling of enmity and envy against Joseph; and, indeed, we may question if it would have been to Joseph's advantage, as respects development of character, to have remained at home under such conditions; he would probably have been a spoiled young man, just as grandparents are very apt to spoil grandchildren by too much petting and partiality, developing in the favored child a spirit of pride, to plague and injure it for the remainder of life.

The envy of his brothers over his father's partiality was intensified by two dreams which Joseph had, and which he told them of, apparently with all simplicity and innocency. In the one dream he saw twelve sheaves in the field, one for each of the sons of Jacob, and the other eleven sheaves bowed down to his sheaf. In the other dream he saw the sun, moon, and eleven stars bow down to him. His brothers were incensed at any thought of his ultimate superiority to them, who were his elders; and even his father repudiated the thought that the dream could have any meaning, since it would imply that Joseph would be greater than his parents, as well as greater than his brethren. We are not to account for these dreams as the work of the boy's imagination and ambition, although such may be the case in respect to many dreams; rather we are to understand that those dreams were prophetic: that God was foretelling, foreshadowing the future —to the intent that Jacob and Joseph and his brethren might all eventually discern that the Lord's hand was connected with all the peculiar circumstances of his life;—that God foreknew and overruled them in the manner in which they ultimately resulted. This forestatement would make the lessons many times more weighty, when they would be understood, just as prophetic declarations respecting our Lord and his experience, are the more convincing on this account. The dreams were fulfilled later on, when Jacob and his family presented themselves before Joseph, a prince in Egypt, and made obeisance to him as to a king.

Well does the Apostle class envy as one of the works of the flesh and the devil. (Gal. 5:19-21) It is a seed which thrives rapidly in any heart where it takes root, and who can tell what bitter fruitage it will produce? So rank had been its growth in the hearts of Joseph's brethren that when he came to them in the field at Dothan with a message from his father, their envy overflowed all bounds, and they premeditated murder. Subsequently, at the instance of Reuben, one of their number, his life was spared, and he was merely put into a pit, a dry cistern, to die of starvation; Reuben, however, premeditating his deliverance. Subsequently, at the instance of his brother Judah, his life was spared from the pit, and he was sold to some traveling merchants as a slave for the Egyptian market, where shortly afterward he was installed as a servant in the house of Potiphar. How hard must have been the hearts of these brethren, and how sore and affrighted the heart of Joseph, the favored child of his father! The narrative tells us nothing respecting his tears, his entreaties, and the refusal of his brethren, but an account of this is given us elsewhere (Gen. 42:21), for the guilty brethren, when in trouble themselves, exclaimed, "We saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."

Whoever finds envy, hatred or malice in his heart in any degree should know that he is harboring an enemy; a spirit which, under certain circumstances, mighty quickly develop into a spirit of murder. The Apostle, therefore, urges all who have become new creatures in Christ Jesus to mortify, to kill, to bury, to put away, the spirit of evil, of hatred, of strife, of envy, and through the transforming influence of the Lord's Spirit to put on more and more, day by day, the Spirit of love, the Spirit of Christ. We can see a lesson in the experience of Joseph's brethren; and even though envy never led us thus far, it should be an illustration to us of its tendency, and we should hate it and proportionately eradicate it from our hearts.

The chief point of this lesson is its illustration of divine providence. It reminds the children of God of this Gospel dispensation of the promise of the Lord's word, that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God." It teaches us how implicitly we may rely upon divine power and wisdom and love, even when all things seem to be against us; and also how futile are all the powers of our enemies to do us real injury if God be for us. (Rom. 8:31) Apparently the spirit of murder was in the nine brethren, and apparently had the Lord not so led the matter about, some of them would have killed Joseph quickly. But we are not to suppose that it was the only way God could have adopted for bringing Joseph into Egypt, and ultimately (Gen. 41:40) to its throne, to be the life-giver (bread-provided) for the Egyptians in their famine, and also for the Israelites, and thus to lead on to the captivity of the whole nation of Israel in Egypt, and to their discipline and education in the arts known to the Egyptians, and ultimately to cause their deliverance, as he did. We are to remember that the All-mighty is All-wise as well as All-powerful, and that he could have selected any of many ways to accomplish his purpose. The lesson illustrates, however, God's wisdom, by which he is able, not only to circumvent the machinations of evil men, but also to use their evil deeds to serve his purposes, to carry out his designs, and to bless those whom he is leading. Would that all of God's consecrated people, spiritual Israelites indeed, might obtain a great impetus to faith from this lesson, and henceforth rely more strongly and fully than ever upon the Lord and the power of his might. What a peace, what a joy, what a comfort it brings, to be able by faith to realize that the Lord is at the helm in respect to all of our interests and affairs, temporal and spiritual!

Those who can plan murder, and who are full of envy, malice and hatred, will not hesitate to support their evil way by fraud, deception, lying. And so it was with the ten brethren. They took the coat of many colors, they draggled it in blood, and sent it to their father Jacob, probably at the hands of a messenger. Never doubting them, Jacob assented at once to the proposition that his beloved son had been cruelly devoured by a wild beast, and he mourned his loss, apparently for years:—his other sons vainly endeavoring to comfort him, and, no doubt, suffering to some extent anguish on account of their deeds. Perhaps this experience with evil was beneficial ultimately both to Jacob and his sons. Indeed, the subsequent narrative seems to imply this. And there is a lesson here for us, to the effect that those who yield to evil influences may subsequently learn valuable lessons therefrom, and that we may entertain hope for their recovery to righteousness. This is a part of our hope respecting the world in the coming Millennial age—that present experiences with sin, envy, hatred and strife will prove valuable to them by and by, when they shall have experienced some of the retributions and have learned a more excellent way, under the judgments of that time.

As Joseph was hated by his brethren, and that without a cause, and figuratively killed, when sent to them by his father, so Jesus came to his own brethren, the Jews, came in their interest, as the representative of the Father, was hated without a cause, and was actually put to death, murdered. Nevertheless, in the Lord's providence this very hatred will ultimately bring him to the throne of earth, and to the place of power, and give him control over all the food, the "bread of life," and thus indirectly make him the life-giver, not only to the world of mankind, represented by the Egyptians, but also to his brethren, the Jews—to as many as will receive the bread of life upon the generous terms and conditions then laid down.

And "as he was, so are we in this world"—as members of his body—as his fleshly representatives now, and, if faithful, to be his joint-heirs in the throne by and by, and with him to dispense life to the dying world.

We are not to be surprised, therefore, if we find ourselves hated of the world; for, as the Master said, they shall say all manner of evil against us falsely for his sake. Let us remember his words, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—John 15:18, 19.

As our Master was hated without a cause, so let it be with us, so far as possible, that the hatred, malice, envy and murder which may be poured out against us may be wholly unmerited by us—that our lives shall be as nearly pure as possible; that so far as possible our thoughts and words and deeds may show forth the praises of our Lord, and speak of our love for all men, especially for the household of faith. By and by, when the church shall have been glorified, and a new dispensation inaugurated, those who hated us now, largely because they are blinded by the adversary and misled, will bow before us, as the Lord's anointed, and we shall have the great pleasure of lifting them up, blessing them, encouraging them and forgiving them; and assisting them back to the full image and likeness of God.

In our Golden Text let us note the significant statement,—"But God was with him." Success in life may be viewed from different standpoints. To some the successful lives are those represented by Alexander the Great, and Cæsar, and notable kings, emperors and generals; or by its money accumulators—Crœsus, Carnegie, *et al.* But we write for such as have different conceptions of greatness from these;—to those who, without disdaining the merits and charities of any, have accepted the divine standard of greatness as delineated in the Bible;—Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Job, David, the holy prophets and apostles, and above all our Lord Jesus. And the secret of the success of each of these was,—"God was with him."

The same principle holds true today, in all matters connected with the divine service,—"Without me ye can do nothing." God's favor during the Jewish age was manifested in earthly prosperities; but not so in this age, when spiritual prosperity alone indicates God's favor, and when not many rich or great are called, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom. And, if God be with us and for us, who can be against us? What will their opposition amount to? They may indeed cause us pain or inconvenience, but they cannot harm us or injure our highest interests; because the Almighty has given assurance that "All things shall work for good to those who love him, to the called ones in his purpose."

But what must be the character of this class whom God is with and for; and for whose blessing he intervenes in all of life's affairs?

Ah! they are a peculiar people—zealous of good works—zealous for righteousness—zealous for God and his favor—zealous for his service and the smile of his face—faithful, trustful, meek. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God"; now we have these assurances of God's favors which will surely continue with us if we seek earnestly to follow the footsteps of our dear Redeemer—walking not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Let us, therefore, remember to purge ourselves of envy, malice, selfishness, including self-conceit; that we may be vessels unto honor and meet for our Master's service.

PASS UNDER THE ROD

You said to your heart on life's golden morning:
"How bright is the sky and how happy the hours!"
The rich blood of youth through your pulses was throbbing,
The path at your feet was all radiant with flowers;
And life's golden chalice that brimmed with joy's wine,
Sparkled bright in the sunshine most temptingly sweet;
You raised it to quaff with delight from its depths,
But it fell! and its fragments lay strewn at your feet.

Its red wine was spilled and it stained all the flowers,
Like blood drops that ooze from a bosom of snow;
And the sun that so brightly had shone o'er thy pathway
Seemed suddenly robbed of its brightness and glow.
And night's gloomy shades seemed to gather about thee,
And through the deep shadows, the dark form of Pain
Loomed up, and his gaunt fingers clutched at thy heart-strings
And laid their cold grasp on thy shivering brain.

Ah, then did despair like the billows of ocean
Sweep over thy soul, oh, poor heart, sore distressed?
Did you cry out in anguish with tears and with sobbing,
With quivering hands o'er thy bleeding heart pressed?
Ah, yes, and the days dragged so weary along
Till they grew into months and at last into years,—
Till you learned to look up to the Father above,
And at last see the rainbow of hope through your tears.

And you learned that the truest and best of life's lessons
Are gained through the travail and pain of the soul;
That the rarest of graces bestowed on God's children
Oft grow where life's billows tumultuously roll.
And you saw that the stars in the blue vault of Heaven
Shine only when night's sable curtains enfold;
You learned that the fierce furnace heat of affliction
Is needful to sever from dross the heart's *gold.*

'Twas a wonderful lesson borne into thy spirit,—
This grand truth to know, though a fruit of thy *pain;*
It taught thee to *soar* where before thou hadst *grovelled,*
And the heart that had broken learned a heavenly strain.
O, thrice blessed sorrow that drives us to Jesus,
To find in *his love* a continuous peace—
A *joy,* that abides though all earthly hopes wither,
And brings from the nights of despair full release.

O, Heavenly Shepherd, how wise are thy dealings—
Thy thoughts—far beyond human wisdom to know;
Thy *rod* and thy *staff* sure will guide and sustain us,
Held close in thy love while we tarry below.
So we patiently wait while we bide in the shadows,
Our eyes looking up through the gloom of the night,
'Till the shadows shall lift, and the dawn of the morning
Of heaven's full glory shall burst on our sight.

—A. G. James.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

ECCLESIASTICAL FEDERATION

The evidences looking toward a federation of the various Christian sects are multiplying;—city federations, county federations, and state federations are announced from time to time in the daily press, and thus the way is being prepared, the *idea* is being hatched. In England the movement seems fully as far advanced as here; there the church of England is the preponderating power, and, as the Scriptures indicate, will have much to do with effecting the union whenever it comes.

The Protestant Episcopal church has always held aloof from other Protestant bodies; claiming (as do the Catholics) that there can be no true and authorized ministers competent and authorized to preach the Gospel without *Episcopal ordination;*—that all others are fraudulent pretenders. They are willing to fellowship as "clergymen" any Protestant ministers of good character who will submit to *re-ordination* at the hands of an Episcopal bishop, but no others.

In the light of these facts the following cablegram will be read with interest:—

"WAITS ON ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY"
English Archbishop Hesitates in Sending Delegates

"London, August 29.—Will the Archbishop of Canterbury, officially or otherwise, send a representative to the Ecumenical Methodist conference which opens Wednesday? This question, according to Bishop J. W. Hartzell, is attracting the attention of many of the delegates who are in London to attend this most important church meeting.

"'The question is important,' said the bishop, 'because of the meaning which the outside world will place on the Archbishop of Canterbury's action. Invitations were extended to all the churches to attend. Acceptances have been received from the Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and the Salvation Army. The primate of all England, alone, has not been heard from. We anticipate that the conference will have an important bearing upon the future growth of the church. It ought to tend to increase fraternity, dissipate the remnants of antagonism and organize into unions the smaller bodies of the different continents. The aggressive propagation of Methodism will be carefully considered by the gathering.'

"The conference will sit for twelve days, and Bishop C. M. Galloway will preach the opening sermon. The American and Canadian delegates, who are here to attend the conference, number 300, while the English delegates number 200. Chile, Brazil and Mexico are represented in the conference for the first time."

On September 5th, the Archbishop of Canterbury replied to the invitation to the effect that he hoped soon to see all Methodists united to the Episcopal church. The Conference refused to take any notice of the reply, or even to permit it to be read in conference; the reason assigned being that the Archbishop had ignored the Council in *toto*, in that he addressed his reply not to it, but to a newspaper editor. No doubt this was intentional—the Archbishop's position is such that to address the Council would be to recognize Methodism as "branch" of the Church of Christ, a thing which Episcopalianism has never yet done *officially*. However, this may raise a *point* to notice the settlement of which will solve the federation problem.

* * *

SCIENTISTS DUPED BY CLEVER TRICK PLAYED YEARS AGO

Mystery of Famous Pliocene Skull Cleared by Preacher's Confession —Buried as a Hoax

"Los Angeles, Cal., Aug. 1.—The Rev. W. H. Dyer, an Episcopal clergyman of this city, has confessed that the celebrated mystery of the human skull found in a gold mine in Calaveras County, Cal., in 1866, about which antiquarians have wrangled for thirty-five years and which inspired Bret Harte's poem, 'To the Pliocene Skull,' was buried as a joke to puzzle the men of science. Dyer says he was one of a coterie of jokers who knew of the scheme and who were greatly astonished at the noise it made in the scientific world. According to the story, R. C. Scribner, who kept a store in the camp, now Los Angeles, got an old Indian skull, went to the bottom of the shaft while the miners were away and buried the skull deep in the auriferous gravel. It was soon found and he assisted in having it sent on East to be submitted to geologists and authorities on the birth of the human species.

"The result of the examination of the skull at Harvard University caused a great stir in the scientific world. The problem it presented was taken up by the Government, through the geological survey, and all the scientific publications gave columns of space to the speculations of the scholars.

"Bret Harte declined to regard the discovery as a serious matter, and wrote the famous poem ridiculing the craze it had caused."

Scientists deserve our pity if not our sympathy. They have established scores of theories relative to the formation of the earth and of man upon it; and of course reject totally the Bible account of the creation of Adam in God's image six thousand years ago. They are on another track: they will read only the rocks, etc., and from them will get the *truth*. And they will accept as truth only such things as agree with their preconceived opinion, viz., that God did not create man in his own image—that he was evolved from a monkey by a "law of nature" which operates whether there is a Creator or overseer or not; and they greatly doubt if there is a *personal* God, and of course there could not be an impersonal one.

God's people need continually to remember the Bible's testimony, that although all the *upward* tendencies operating in the world today are of God and through more or less godly channels, yet "The world by wisdom knows not God." "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass her master's crib,"—but the natural man, if a "scientist," seems to know not his Creator. His self-confidence hinders his seeing the truth. Only "the meek will he guide in judgment and teach his way"—"the wise are taken [entrapped] in their own craftiness"—they are too wise to learn, too great to be "taught of God" through his word. Psa. 25:9; 1 Cor. 3:19.

The finding of an old bone some time ago created quite a stir. It was surely a proof of pre-adamite man—so gullible do scientists become in their search for the proofs to contradict the Bible. Of course a scientist with keen imagination could allow for certain abrasions and erosions, and could proceed to *make* an entire anatomy to conjecturally fit with the wonderful bone. The matter was quickly dropped afterward when the explanation came that it was found in a long abandoned wooden sewer leading from a butcher's place, and that it was the bone of an old sheep.

Likewise the finding of the skull above referred to was "wonderful!" Its owner must have lived thousands, if not millions of years before Adam's day; and this skull found embedded in the gravel of the *Pliocene* division of the *Tertiary Period* was absolute proof sufficient to tickle scientists. Surely if these great men could and would search as diligently and reason as astutely to uphold and corroborate the Bible's simple statements, they would be taught of God.

But their school will open by and by — during the Millennial reign of Christ and the Church, who will be their instructors. Mark the great teacher's words: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent; and hast revealed them unto babes: even so Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Let us, as the Apostle urges, "humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt us in due time."—Luke 10:21; 1. Pet. 5:6.

THE JEWS AND THEIR PROSPECTS

Mr. Zangwill, a Jewish writer of note, forecasts the future of fleshly Israel in considerable harmony with the prophetic delineation; but he fails utterly to recognize the divine power which, operating in and with Messiah's kingdom, shall take hold of "Jacob" and lift up that people and use them as beacon-lights for the world. "Thus all Israel shall be delivered [from blindness], as it is written: There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer [the Christ—Jesus the head and the church his body] and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins. . . . For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all."—Rom. 11:26-32.

Mr. Zangwill says in part:—

"I am not a prophet with a definite vision of the future of the Jews. No man can forecast the precise directions their activity will take in the twentieth century. I can only point out what the position of the Jews has been for the last nineteen centuries and some powerful forces which have just arisen and which will undoubtedly mold them during the present century.

"One thing seems increasingly probable—that the Jews will return in increasing numbers to Palestine, their old and never-forgotten home. By the year 2000 A. D. I don't see why there should't be 2,000,000 Jews inhabiting the land, transforming it into a garden of beauty and fertility and supplying it with harbors and railways, with a government of their own, which will be the model government of the world. I am firmly convinced that the mission of the Jews is this: To be a people set on a hill—Zion's Hill—whose social, political, agricultural and religious condition will be the moral beacon light of the world. From the laws of that community other nations will learn to govern wisely. From her social condition other nations will learn the science of sociology. From her spiritual supremacy other nations will learn the real meaning of religion. In short, I believe the hope of humanity lies in the development of the Jewish race after its return to Palestine.

"From the time of Christ until about this generation the outside world knew practically nothing of the life and work of the Jews. For long centuries the Jew was persecuted by Christian and Pagan in every country, and this very fact led to the preservation of his individuality. Frowned upon everywhere, the Jews grew closer to one another, intermarried among themselves, and had comparatively little intercourse with the outside world. And this was their salvation.

"Recently, however, the absolute freedom granted them in almost all civilized countries has tended to destroy their identity as a race. They are no longer bound to one another by the strongest ties in the world—those of persecution—but have mingled with the general community, and the Jew is today seeking his own interests, financial or social, largely forgetful of his fellow Jews. The common idea that all Jews work unselfishly for each other is no longer true.

They have imbibed the paganism of your so-called Christian nations, and every man is trying to get the better of the other. Five years ago this condition was absolutely alarming. It appeared as though the Jewish race would shortly become merged with other races and disappear altogether, after its wonderful preservation during 3,000 years.

"My hopes for the race lie largely in the Zionist movement, whether in its direct or indirect effects. Under the enthusiastic guidance of Dr. Herzl, it is making steady progress. Its first object is to raise sufficient money to obtain the Land of Palestine from the Sultan, under whose suzerainty the movement would be carried out. Already about a million dollars has been contributed to this fund, and every city and almost every village in the world has its band of enthusiastic Zionists.

"This money has not been contributed by the rich Jews generally, but by the poorer classes of Jews. The rich take little interest in the scheme. They are often men who have the bent for mere money-making and have largely lost their patriotism. They stand at the top of the social ladder in the world's chief centers of activity; their position is secure; they have nothing to gain by reclaiming Palestine, and seem to care little for the plan. This, however, does not in the least dampen the enthusiasm of the ardent Zionists. Money is fast coming in from every quarter of the globe, and it is believed that in a few years there will be a sufficient sum to accomplish our desires. Then, having gained possession of the land, we should not be so foolish as to rush great numbers of uneducated, unskilled Jews into the country, but would use Jewish shrewdness in sending skilled agriculturists, carpenters, merchants and men and women generally who, under the guidance of practical idealists, would form a sound basis of the model community that is to be.

"Finally, I think the world is daily coming round to the Jewish conception of life. Christianity has proved a failure. Look at the Christian nations today warring against one another like savages. What a spectacle is presented by the allied armies in China! The battle of the future is between the old Judaism and the new paganism. A sense of justice is what the world needs today—such justice as was preached and foretold by the great Jewish prophets; and I believe it will be left to the Jewish race — whether as a model community in Palestine or as a spiritual army scattered over the world—to supply this need and to make justice supreme in the hearts of men."

HATRED AGAINST THE JEWS IN GREAT BRITAIN

In every nation of Europe except Great Britain the Jews have suffered persecution, and labor under more or less restriction of privileges. As we have already pointed out from the Scriptures, fleshly Israel is to suffer yet more—"the time of Jacob's trouble" is to last up to the very close of the "day of vengeance" when they shall be delivered by the setting up of the kingdom. This persecution, we believe, will extend to all nations—our own included—and will tend to still further cause the Jews to long for the Land of Promise and the good things fortold for them under Messiah's kingdom. We quote a cablegram as follows:—

"London.—Anti-semitism is on the verge of open and widespread outbreak in England, according to Isaac Suwalsky, editor of 'The Jew,' an influential East End Yiddish newspaper. He asserts that daily attacks are made on poor Jews in the streets of the Whitechapel district, and that symptoms of hatred toward the Jews exist even among the highest political and social classes in the kingdom.

"He says that unless this feeling is promptly and forcibly bridled Judaism in Great Britain is threatened with persecution outrivaling anything in Russia, France, Austria or Germany.

RACIAL PREJUDICE PLAIN

"The symptoms to which the editor refers have become alarmingly common in the London Ghetto. During the last three months the Whitechapel police courts have been regularly called upon to punish persons for assaults on Jewish peddlers and householders. Several 'Jew hunts' have lately occurred on the highways in this district. Testimony in most of the cases proved that racial prejudice was the sole cause of attack, the victims being industrious, law-abiding residents, frequently inoffensive youths.

"When the outbreaks fail to take the form of injury or robbery the persecution assumes a terrorizing character. The policemen who guard the crossings are kept busy rebuking truck drivers and 'busmen guilty of hounding Jews with brutal taunts and of making deliberate attempts to run them down.

BOTH PARTIES ACCUSED

" 'Anti-semitism is aggressively intrenched in the United Kingdom. It reaches from the slums to the Whitechapel office of the prime minister. Both political parties are deliberately pledged to it. The conservatives espouse it under the guise of immigration reform. The liberals employ it when they persistently and venomously charge that the Boer war is being waged at the behest of Hebrew capitalists. Jewish candidates belonging to both political parties in all parts of London were fought throughout the late general election by means of placards petitioning the people, 'Don't elect a Jew.'

" 'When anti-semitism gains full momentum in England there will be sad hours for the Jews in this country, where liberty of action and speech are so pronounced that the passions of the populace can only be controlled with difficulty.

SENTIMENT OF RICH AND POOR

" 'There is at present more hatred of Jews in the West End of London than in the East End. The roughs of Whitechapel are Jew baiters for amusement. The cultured people of Downing street and Park Lane are anti-semites by conviction.

" 'Down here the Jews are suffering from the country's excessive patriotism. Because most of us wear beards we are called 'Kruger' by the Hooligans of the neighborhood. I am ashamed to confess that some highly placed personages of our own faith are largely responsible for the coming crusade. They are so wrapped up in the pursuit of titles that they have little time for and less interest in the amelioration of the condition of their pauperized brethren in the East End.

" 'There has as yet been no bloodshed in Whitechapel on account of the race animosities inspired at present by distinguished supporters. However, anti-semitism in London may soon reach that stage.' "

TO ABOLISH PRAYER MEETINGS

The pastors of the Christian churches of Kansas City, at a meeting recently, adopted a resolution declaring it to be their sense that the mid-week prayer meeting, as it is conducted in a majority of Protestant churches, has outlived its usefulness, and appointed a committee to prepare and report a program for such meetings which shall be more modern in its character and better calculated to meet the needs of present day church people.

Dr. George H. Combs, pastor of the Prospect Avenue Christian church, who brought the subject up, and at whose suggestion the committee was appointed, declared that he thought the age had outgrown the old-fashioned prayer meeting. He said: "The prayer meeting was perfectly adapted to the needs of the time which brought it into existence, but that time has long been past. The best men's lives have now become so full of other things that they cannot be induced to come out and spend an evening in prayer."

No minister who took part in the discussion that followed this somewhat advanced statement dissented from any part of it. The remarks of each indicated that he had only been waiting for an opportune moment to so express himself.

The above is a significant sign of the times. The Christian that neglects prayer cannot live the Christian life—cannot "walk as he walked"—the narrow way to glory, honor, and immortality. And congregations composed of praying people could neither desire nor afford to abandon prayer meetings, which perhaps more than any other kind of meetings have been blessed of God to the keeping alive of the spiritual few among the cold and dead nominal professors of Babylon for lo these many years.

Yet it is a good movement—it will work out blessings for those who really love the Lord; for it will open their eyes to the deadness of Babylon and lead them to give closer ear to the Lord's message, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues" —soon to come in a great time of trouble.—Rev. 18:4.

On the contrary we urge that amongst those who read this journal and are interested in the harvest message, prayer and testimony be given an increasingly prominent place—such as it held in the primitive church. The injunction to watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation, is applicable to each individual Christian, but specially applicable to them as a company, as a church, as we are entering the hour of temptation that shall test all that dwell upon the whole earth.—Rev. 3:10.

The Allegheny church has six such meetings every Wednesday evening in the homes of the friends in different parts; and it is specially noticeable that those who love and attend these meetings, while probably no less tempted and tried than others. are much less likely to fall into the snares of the adversary than those who neglect them. Usually at least four prayers are offered and most of the time devoted to hearing testimonies respecting the Lord's providences and their experiences during the week (up to date testimonies) especially along the lines of the previous Sunday afternoon's discourse at Bible House chapel. These are so profitable that we wish all might enjoy them. They are open to all, but though none are urged, nearly all take part and thus both give and receive a blessing.

Recently we have adopted the plan of having one meeting each month devoted almost exclusively to prayer and praise—voluntary prayers being called for by the leader, two at a time, until all present have had full opportunity to address the throne of grace—interspersed with praise, and with opportunity for two or three short testimonies in the middle of the meeting. The results are excellent. Whoever addresses the Lord from a sincere heart is sure to have a blessing.

Brethren, let us watch and pray, in the congregations of the saints and in private, more zealously than ever, as we approach the dark hour of earth's great trial. No other ground is safe. This has the Master's approval and example.

CLEVELAND CONVENTION ECHOES

Even at the risk of seeming repetition we must say that this last General Convention quite surpassed all of its predecessors;—in numbers, interest and enthusiasm.

About 500 WATCH TOWER readers met, many for the first time, and the feast of soul was delightful. Nine of the "Pilgrim" brethren were present and, with the Editor of this journal, delivered most of the fifteen addresses, to most attentive hearers. The Convention was in constant session from 8 A. M. to 10 P. M., except intermissions for refreshments, from Thursday noon, Sept, 12, to Sunday night, Sept. 15. It closed with a love-feast at which seven Pilgrims and five brethren representing the Cleveland church in one hand presented a broken loaf, shared symbolically, while with the other they received and gave parting greetings as the congregation filed past them.

It was good to be there. Those present will probably never forget its spiritual joys and uplifts. The principal attendance was at the Sunday afternoon session, when some one who counted reported 823 in attendance. The next largest attendance was on Saturday at 3 P. M., when after a discourse on baptism—its proper form and real significance—twenty-five brethren and forty-one sisters (total 66) symbolized full consecration by water immersion;—the ages of the participants ranging from 22 to 70 years. The occasion was a deeply impressive one, both to participants and witnesses.

Those in attendance came from every quarter;—from Nova Scotia, Ontario and Montana on the north, to Florida, Tennessee and Arkansas on the south, and especially from the intermediate States—about sixteen in all being represented.

A colporteurs' meeting showed twenty-three in attendance, while about thirty new ones expressed the intention of giving all, or a portion of their time hereafter to colporteuring, and took lessons from expert brethren and sisters in an anteroom. This is one of the features of this harvest work which the Lord has been pleased to specially bless in leading his people out of darkness into his marvelous light. The meeting indicated a renewed zeal along this line of the service. Others may be contemplating such service and we invite correspondence respecting methods and territory; say what territory you would prefer.

Our hope is that the considerable expense entailed by such conventions (railway fare, etc.) will be more than compensated for in the spiritual blessings which will surely go with those in attendance to their neighborhoods, and especially to the various smaller congregations of the saints. May the Lord add his blessing to the efforts put forth by the Cleveland church and by all in attendance.

THE IMPENDING INDUSTRIAL CRISIS

John Swinton, widely known as a writer upon labor conditions and prospects, sums up his recent cogitations in an article in the *New York Herald*. We make some quotations that will be of interest to all who have read *Millennial Dawn Vol IV*. He says, under the above caption:—

"We may have stormy times in our country before the twentieth century has gone far. We may see some apocalyptic illustrations of the workings of that industrial Revolution which is now transforming our body politic into 'something new and strange' and which is bringing about organic changes in our Republic, our Commonwealth, and our social system by means both visible and invisible, through agencies containing the 'promise and potency' of a kind of development not to be foreseen. We may yet see that gigantic modern power called Capital and those immeasurable latter day forces grouped under the name of Labor engaged in performances of large interest and concern to the American people.

"Already there are signs and omens not to be disregarded, and more of them are coming in sight all the time, as we whirl along.

"There are other things than the great labor revolts of our time, so numerous, so continuous, so disquieting and so pretentious, which prompt me to write these words.

"Those of the readers of the Herald who can recall the years that immediately preceded the election of Mr. Lincoln will be able to here make comparisons of a suggestive character. They do not need to be told in how far the passions, the contentions and the menaces of that portentous period resemble those that have come into existence of late years through the discord between the great wielders of capital and the millions of workers for wages, and through the ceaseless strain of both parties in the strenuous struggle. As forty years ago each party declared that it would 'never submit or yield,' so now again the defiant words are heard in the contentious camps.

"But I shall refrain from further suggestions in this line, as I recall the passions and the events that stirred our country forty or more years ago and that led up to the other years, never to be forgotten. Let warning be taken while yet it may. And let it be said of the present writer in days to come that he was an 'alarmist' at the opening of the twentieth century, as was another man in the year 1859, when he wrote 'The Impending Crisis,' a crisis for slavery which came so unexpectedly in less than two years after Mr. Helper's book was printed.

"The magnitude of the labor revolts that have broken out within a year has never been paralleled in any other time or country. I need not speak of those of the many building trades, the coal miners, the machinists, the San Francisco unions, the factory hands, the clothiers, the steel workers or a hundred lesser industries. By the estimate of an expert who has kept count as nearly as possible it would seem that not far from a million wage workers have 'gone on strike' during the last twelve-month; and this of course signifies that a much greater number of other people have been disturbed or have suffered in consequence.

"No wonder that a foreign writer in reviewing the situation gives his essay such a headline as 'The Industrial Anarchy in the United States.' The importance, the gravity, the passionateness and the significance of some of the strikes have been very great. They have affected business, trade, Wall street, the markets, politics, and the daily life and welfare of large masses of our people. They have brought heavy losses to many of the parties concerned in them; they have rent many schemes and crippled many enterprises; they have caused bankruptcies; they have been the source of woes unnumbered; they have wrecked lives and broken hearts; have sent men and women to the poorhouse, the madhouse and the graveyard. . . .

"Notwithstanding the magnitude and the multitude of the convulsing strikes, it is altogether likely that they will become yet greater, more numerous and more convulsing as the industrial and financial powers advance in their development. The forces now in operation by which they are promoted are very sure to increase in strength and momentum as time goes on. A generation ago but a few hundred men used to take part in a strike; some time afterward thousands of men would go out on strike; nowadays hundreds of thousands of men join in a strike, and, moreover, a score of different trades in as many States sometimes 'back up' one trade during a strike, while the great body of organized workers sympathize with the strikers, even if they do not always enter into a 'sympathetic strike.' Looking at the growth of labor unionism everywhere, and in nearly all industries, it is not difficult to make forecasts, applicable to the years that are not far off.

"The domination of unlicensed capitalism and the existence of labor unionism are at stake in these contests.

"It is to be remarked here that the many and great strikes of recent times have been almost wholly free from violence or riotous conduct on the part of the workmen, though the militia have sometimes been called out in the name of the law, as at Buffalo and Troy. The strikes may be properly characterized as 'peaceful revolts.' Passion has run high in some cases at times, but self-restraint has kept it within safe bounds. Every organization, when its members go on strike, always declare that its desire is to secure success in a peaceful and orderly manner; and there can be no doubt that this desire is sincere, for its sincerity has been made manifest by circumstances beyond enumeration. Any suggestion of offering resistance to law is sure to be denounced, as are any unlawful means of gaining an object. Were this otherwise the formidable labor revolts of our day would be a terror indeed.

MOMENTOUS PROJECT OF MEN ARMING

"A short time ago, however, when the great strike of the steel workers got under headway, the Herald startled the country by printing a dispatch from West Virginia that the first military company ever formed by a labor union had been organized at Wheeling by Crescent Lodge, Amalgamated Association. Here, at last, it looked as if there were occasion for both alarm and amazement. One seemed to catch sight of armed and uniformed hordes of steel workers in full array, stalwart men, twice a hundred thousand of them, three times stronger than the regular army of the United States. It is true that the report, after telling that the labor soldiers were 'not to be in any way under the control of the State,' said that they were organized only for self-defence and the protection of property; but that could hardly be regarded as consoling by those people who hold their property under the protection of the State which the Amalgamated Military Company had refused to recognize. There seemed to be something like amalgamated humor in the Crescent report from Wheeling. But soon after the appearance of the first dispatch the Herald printed another, which gave the information that, on account of the excitement created by the first report, Crescent Lodge had resolved to postpone the organization of the military company till the steel strike was ended.

"The interest in the original report, however, has not been diminished, for it is now known that the Crescent Lodge, at Wheeling, is not the only one that has taken the subject under consideration, and that other labor organizations in different parts of the country have done likewise. They claim that the 'right of the people to keep and bear arms' is guaranteed by the constitution, and that, as the workingmen are the 'bone and sinew of the country,' the constitutional right cannot be denied to them.

"It would be foolishness to ignore such things, since the publication of the startling Wheeling despatch in the Herald. The news, however, does not convey a menace to any man's rights. It is quite undisturbing; not at all dangerous in a democratic republic.

"The members of workingmen's organizations are often trained and disciplined to some extent, after the manner of the militia, as may be seen on Labor Day. They drill for their parades; they are proud of their appearance on the march; they follow their flags; they pay honor to the union that makes the best show; and they are also to have experience in athletic exercises.

"At this point it may be mentioned that a good number of trade unions, especially of those in the Western States, have recently prohibited their members from joining the regular State militia, under pain of expulsion, and the reason given for this action is that the State troops are used 'in the interest of capitalism,' against the labor element, and in the suppression of justifiable strikes. It is a fact, nevertheless, that, at least in Pennsylvania and Illinois, the State militia have, on several occasions, suffered from the charge of being unduly sympathetic with labor in the case of a strike.

"Before closing my remark, I would make note of one thing that undoubtedly has an influence in disturbing the mind of the commonalty in these times. I refer to the oft repeated public reports of the stupendous incomes of certain great trusts, flamboyant millionaires, banking institutions, big corporations, stock speculators, market riggers and indescribables. To go no further back than the current month, we have had in August such figures of the dividends of the Standard Oil Company, and the revenues of the billion dollar Steel Trust, and the 'earnings' of at least one of our banks, and the incomes of some of our heavy investors or operators; such figures, I repeat, as might well 'make humanity stagger' and cause Croesus to take to the woods.

"To the ordinary mind, these reports, even when trustworthy or official, are inexplicable, incomprehensible and bewildering. Never before, in all time did the golden stream, the millions and the billions, roll so rapidly as now, rolling into treasuries so vast that they could not be compassed in a day's march by all the labor unions in America. The ordinary mind is apt to become excited in reading about them every day, and to ask why it is necessary to cut down anybody's wages, even if he gets two or three dollars a day, and joins a union to keep them up.

"The news of the latest dividend of the billion dollar Trust was printed simultaneously with other news of strikes, more strikes, and yet other strikes. Can any one be surprised that even thoughtless people are led to indulge in thinking?

"I am asked to make a guess as to the outcome of all these big passionate and ominous labor revolts, which are constantly growing in magnitude, momentum and force. I can't do it. I cannot see how they are to be prevented or put down without a change of circumstances so great as to be unthinkable, or without a change in bodies of men who are beyond reason, or without some kind of change in the relation between capital and labor. It is possible that there may be something in the theory of 'spontaneous generation,' and that it will work out all right in the end, regardless of the lesser movements of either of the belligerents. I can't tell, nor can Mr. Morgan. It would certainly be bad business to use the regular army or the State militia against masses of men striking for life. It would certainly be poor policy to carry 'government by injunction' further than it can be enforced. It is surely folly to abuse and threaten organized labor in the interest of organized capital at periods of storm and stress consequent upon an industrial and social transformation, when our country is passing out of the old into the new and the unknown."

IN THE SCHOOL OF ADVERSITY

GEN. 39:20-40:15.—OCT. 13.

"For God was with Joseph, and showed him mercy."

As the favored child of his beloved wife, Rachel, Joseph was no doubt esteemed by his father as the special inheritor of the Abrahamic promises. He remembered his own experiences, and how the divine favor had come to him, making him an heir of that promise; and doubtless he had, to a greater or less extent, communicated these hopes and promises to all of his sons, and especially to Joseph, his favored one. Joseph's dreams, which so angered his brethren, must have appealed to him and to his father as rather an intimation on God's part of his pre-eminence. It must therefore have caused great disappointment and chagrin to Joseph, first to find himself in the pit, and his strong cryings and tears unheard both by his brethren and the Lord. It must have been a source of bitter disappointment and chagrin when he found himself sold to the Ishmaelites, to be a slave. But however disappointing these circumstances we can see that they were profitable experiences, tending to develop in him a proper character, if rightly accepted—to develop patience, obedience, trust.

There are good lessons in Joseph's experiences for all who are hoping to be heirs of the spiritual features of this same Abrahamic covenant,—joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. (Gal. 3:29) The promise is sure, and the privilege of inheriting is ours; but in order that we may be prepared for that service and its responsibilities, it is needed that we should learn lessons of humility, patience, faith, endurance. Our Lord, the head of this "seed of Abraham," endured such contradiction of sinners, and trials and testings, and learned obedience to the Father's will even unto death,—although he was perfect, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. Much more does it seem necessary that we who are called to be "members of his body" should pass through severe testings and trials, to be fitted and prepared for the glory that shall follow.

Arrived in Egypt, the Lord's blessing was upon Joseph in a remarkable manner, in that he was sold as a slave to a wealthy master. We have little insight into Joseph's previous history, but apparently he was a remarkable boy when he entered Potiphar's house at seventeen years of age. His manliness and sedateness and faithfulness to duty and quick intelligence were a good inheritance from his father, who had earnestly desired his birth;—which was, indeed, in answer to prayer. He evidently inherited considerable of his father's faith, benevolence and executive ability, and as a result rose rapidly in Potiphar's house to a position of great responsibility, to have charge over all his master's affairs. We cannot doubt that the boy's mind frequently reverted to his father and brethren, and his dreams, and to the Abrahamic covenant. Unquestionably he believed in those promises, and doubtless often wondered how they would be fulfilled,—what would be the leadings of divine providence in his affairs. His faith in God, his trust in the promises, served to separate him from the evil influences connected with that sudden transfer of his life from the pasture fields of Canaan to the busy scenes and luxuries and pleasures and sins of one of the greatest cities in the world at that time, a capital of the most renowned nation in that day.

So it is with every life; there is need of an ideal, of a hope, of a good ambition, to act as a ballast and to keep the life steady in the midst of the divers winds and currents of the present evil world. The boy or the girl who has had a proper training by godly parents, especially in respect to the hopes set before us in the gospel, has much advantage every way over youthful companions who have no specific object and motive in life, who lack the ballast of the divine promises, and are driven hither and thither by the changing winds of time, generally into folly and often into sin, in search of satisfaction, which all crave. Christian parents who have been derelict of duty toward their children cannot too quickly correct the fault and help them to settle their minds upon the only things that can bring them true peace and joy and satisfaction, and balance, in the storms of life.

But if Joseph thought he had learned all the necessary lessons of experience, and that his course henceforth would be one of prosperity, he was mistaken. Divine providence had marked out for him a higher station than that of chief overseer of the household affairs and business of General Potiphar; and if his station was to be a higher one, likewise also he must receive further lessons in a still severer school, in order to be prepared for the still greater exaltation in due time. Suddenly, while evidently enjoying his master's confidence and his mistress' favor, calamity came upon him, and that through no fault of his own, but really because of his faithfulness to his master. He was falsely accused by Potiphar's spited wife. He was cast into prison; and this expression, "prison," meant and still means something entirely different in Egypt and all eastern countries from what it means in Europe and America. There prisons were dark, loathsome, terrible places; and prisoners were frequently horribly mistreated, bound in iron fetters, etc. That this was Joseph's treatment, at first, seems evident from a reference to the matter in Psalms 105:18: "Whose feet they hurt with fetters; he was laid in iron." This must have been a severe trial to Joseph, a doubly bitter experience by reason of the hopes he had been entertaining respecting divine favor and future exaltation.

And so it is with the spiritual heirs of the Abrahamic promises: sometimes, while in the discharge of duty to the best of our ability, and when apparently we have the Lord's blessing and favor upon us and our affairs in a most marked degree, suddenly trouble may arise, adversity come, the powers of darkness seem to triumph, and for the moment we may be apparently culprits in the judgment of our fellow-men, and apparently forsaken by divine providence. The only consolation in such conditions is that we have suffered wrongfully—"as deceivers, yet true." Such experiences, doubtless, are needful to us; for though we may sing:—

"I would rather walk in the dark with God,
Than go alone in the light,"

yet this might be but an empty boast unless we were put through the trying experiences which would develop such faith, such a trust, as would hold to the Lord's hand, and trust divine providence in the darkest hour. We are to learn to walk by faith, and not by sight, to trust our Lord where we cannot trace him.

Joseph's faith evidently stood the test, and his nobility of character shone out even under those adverse conditions; and this became a sign to the master of the prison that the Lord was with Joseph, that he was a peculiarly exemplary and wise young man—now twenty-seven years old. The warden of the prison was anxious to have such a faithful servant to assist him in his work. Indeed, there is always room in this world for efficient men and women, and the most efficient are those in whom is the spirit of the Lord, and who have "the wisdom which cometh from above—first pure, then peaceable, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits." (James 3:17) The prison keeper doubtless was actuated by selfish motives to favor Joseph and put him in charge of the prisoners. But no matter for this; it was the operation of divine providence, nevertheless, and not merely Joseph's abilities that secured for him the position. However, we are to note that those whom God specially favors, and specially uses, must have character. A rough diamond may not look better than an ordinary pebble, but it has something of firmness and purity about it that ordinary pebbles do not have, that justifies the cutting and polishing and ultimate mounting as a gem. So we are to remember that while all our blessings are of the Lord and through Christ, nevertheless we have something to do in the matter of "making our calling and election sure;" we must have the love, the devotion, the zeal for God and for righteousness; and not only must we have this character, but we must have the submission which will enable us to accept and profit by the various trials of faith and patience which divine providence sees proper to permit us to experience for the trimming and polishing of the jewel.

Not only were Joseph's experiences as a slave and as a prisoner calculated to give him a sympathy for those in adversity, but additionally he was learning lessons of experience and wisdom, educational in their character, which would prepare him in time to stand before King Pharaoh and to be made his Prime Minister. Some of these experiences he gained in the prison, as related in this lesson. The prisoners at that time were not all culprits, but sometimes the subjects of the king's displeasure. Two such persons high in Pharaoh's household (the "butler" or cup-bearer to the king, being one of the highest officers in honor and trust, and the baker, the manager of the king's culinary department, and general steward of the household) were cast into the same prison with Joseph because of having in some manner offended the king; and as Joseph had by this time chief charge of the prisoners he must have come frequently and into intimate contact with these men, so well versed in the affairs of the kingdom. And under the circumstances they would undoubtedly be communicative to Joseph, as we may be sure he was receptive to all the information obtainable. They must have thought him a very different sort of prisoner from others of that time when he even noticed so small a matter as sadness upon their faces, and enquired considerately respecting the same. So all of the spiritual heirs of the Abrahamic promise, while passing through the trials and difficulties needful to their preparation and polishing for the future glory, must learn to be *compassionate.* "Blessed are the merciful; they shall obtain mercy." Their own experiences help to mollify their hearts, and make them tender-hearted toward all who are in trouble. All of the Lord's people should be peculiar in these respects—"*full* of mercy and good fruits."

Joseph's expression of sympathy soon brought from the prisoners an explanation of their sadness—they had each dreamed on the previous night, and each was troubled, thinking that his dream foreboded evil. Joseph was blessed by the Lord with some intuitive understanding of dreams, and promptly gave their interpretation—one of the officers would in a short time be released, while the other would be executed; and having sympathized with the one who would suffer, and having congratulated the one who would be released, Joseph made request of the latter that in his coming days of prosperity he would remember him and his kindness, and if possible secure his release through the king's mercy.

Joseph's two dreams, and now these two dreams of the butler and baker, and two subsequent dreams by Pharaoh, all give evidence of having been in some manner divinely inspired, and intended to exercise certain influences and to bring about certain results. In our accepting these for all that they were, we are not to be understood as endorsing the thought that every dream is of the Lord, or is to have a special prophetic or providential fulfilment. Quite to the contrary, we believe that the majority of dreams are mental fictions, the result frequently of disordered stomachs and of the brain being partly asleep and partly awake, producing often unreasonable and absurd images, without special meaning except as warnings for better care in respect to our eating. We may even go further than this, and say that we feel sure that there is still a third kind of dreams,—dreams of a still different origin—neither inspired by the Lord nor by indigestion, but by evil spirits, for the purpose of misleading the dreamer. To make sure that our dreams are not the inspiration of evil we must make sure that we are not the children of the evil one, but that having renounced sin and fled for refuge to the hope set before us in the Gospel, we have, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus our Lord, obtained adoption into the family of God, and thus obtained relationship to him and protection from the power of the evil one, and his delusions as respects our affairs; and come under the gracious promise that "all things shall work together for good" to us because we love God and have been called according to his purpose. In the dreams mentioned in this connection we are to notice that those of the butler and baker and Pharaoh were not the dreams of God's people, but nevertheless were evidently inspired of him, and that the purposes of these dreams were not specially in the interest of the dreamers, but largely in the interest of Joseph.

As respects the Lord's people of today, there is much less necessity for dreams than in olden times. We have the Word of God—God's testimony bearing upon every subject needful to us. This message is so complete that the Apostle could say that by it the man of God might be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) This should not hinder us from recognizing a dream as from the Lord, provided it would stand the tests of the written Word—provided the dream was not in any sense in conflict with God's revelation in the Scriptures. If the dream be in conflict with the Scriptures we are to reject the dream. If we find it in harmony with the Scriptures we are to accept it because of that harmony, and merely allow it to draw our attention more particularly to the Scriptures with which it accords. But whether by dreams or walking by faith entirely, and not by sight or dreams in any particular, the true child of God, the heir of the spiritual promises to Abraham, is to look for, to expect, to find, to realize, more fully even than our Golden Text says of Joseph, that "the Lord was with him, and showed him mercy." If the Lord be with us and show mercy toward us, no matter how he may do this, we are to take his favor with grateful hearts, and to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, and who eventually will bring us out of the prison-house of death into the glories of the everlasting kingdom, to joint-heirship with his Son.

"FOR GOD WAS WITH HIM"

Gen. 41:38-49.—Oct. 20.

"Them that honor me, I will honor."—1 Sam. 2:30.

Divine favor was the secret of Joseph's success, as it has been the secret of the success of all who have attained true greatness in the world. In previous ages true success was more or less identified with earthly prosperity, riches and power; but during this Gospel age—the spirit dispensation—true success and divine favor stand related to spiritual prosperity, attainments and usefulness, as exemplified in our Lord Jesus, in the Apostles, and in the less prominent servants of the Cross from their day until now. The principle is the same, though the mode of operation is different. Adversity is still the school in which the chief lessons in character-building are to be learned—in which the correct ideals of life are to be formed, and ultimately to be crystalized into fixed character. The story of Joseph's experiences, which in this lesson culminate in great advancement and blessing, illustrates the fact that God has to do not only with the shaping of national affairs, but also with the individual affairs of all who are "called according to his purpose," and who are seeking to live up to the requirements and conditions of that call.

It was probably because Joseph had some basis of character that the Lord chose to use him to prepare the way for his family to come into Egypt, etc. And we may be sure that had he proven neglectful of the lessons and experiences through which he passed the Lord would have changed or modified his dealings accordingly. As it was, the Lord's favors and blessings were evidently bestowed upon a worthy character, which, so far as we may judge from the record, responded obediently and trustfully in every trial. That Joseph's faith in the Lord was the basis of his strength of character, fidelity to duty and to principle, there is no reason to question. Had he doubted the Lord's providence in his own case, as foreshadowed in his own dreams, he would have been inclined to say to his two princely prisoners, when they related their dreams, as recorded in the last lesson, that they should have no confidence in dreams, for he had proven their unreliableness to his own bitter chagrin, having dreamed of power and influence, and having received, instead, degradation, slavery, and imprisonment. But he evidently still believed in his dreams, still expected release in some manner, and believed that the Lord was overruling in his affairs.

Such a great and confidence in the Almighty Ruler, as our heavenly Father, is still more appropriate in us, the spiritual heirs of the Abrahamic promise; because we have much advantage every way over Joseph and others of our predecessors, who were heirs of only the natural blessings. Those who lived before Christ, no matter how high their station, at the very most were members of the "house of servants," while we of this Gospel age are freely recognized of God as sons, members of the "house of sons," of which our Lord Jesus is the Head. The sons not only are granted, through the holy spirit, deeper and clearer insight into the divine plan, but much advantage every way over the house of servants and over the world in general. Yet as with Joseph and the typical throne of Egypt, it is not sufficient that we should be favored of God and called to joint-heirship in the kingdom of earth; but it is necessary that we shall prove submissive and tractable under his disciplines and instructions; that we may be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." It is necessary especially that our faith should be strong, and to this end that it should be tried, that it may be to the praise of his glory who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Joseph's confidence in his ultimate deliverance, and the fulfillment of God's promise, did not hinder him from doing all he could in a proper manner to effect his own deliverance. We notice how, after kindly treating the imprisoned butler, explaining his dream for him, and rejoicing with him in the prosperity intimated, he solicited that when the prince would again be in royal favor he would kindly remember that his comforter, Joseph, was still in prison, and if possible secure the royal pardon for him. It was proper that he should thus take reasonable steps toward his own liberty, and no doubt the two years longer that he remained in prison brought testings of his faith, of his trust in the Lord; for the butler seems to have forgotten him entirely when his prosperity returned. However, in all this, as we can now see, the Lord was caring for him. He was learning the lesson of patient endurance, of suffering for righteousness' sake, of faith in the Lord. Had he been released by royal decree and set at liberty, he might have gone back to hunt up his father and his brethren in Palestine; or he might have gotten immersed in business of some kind in Egypt; but under divine providence he was kept safely in prison, learning necessary lessons, until he was thirty years of age; and it was at this time that Pharaoh the king, having had two remarkable dreams, which seriously impressed themselves upon his mind, and having consulted the wise men of Egypt, could find no satisfactory solution for them. It was then that the butler bethought him of his own dream while in the prison, and of the wonderful young man there who had interpreted it so accurately, and whose kindness he had so quickly forgotten. Here was an opportunity of serving the king and serving his prisoner-friend; so he mentioned Joseph to Pharaoh in most complimentary terms. Thus we see illustrated the fact that kindnesses done to others, even though they seem to be quickly forgotten, may possibly return in blessing on our own heads later on, and be used of the Lord as channels of blessing.

Pharaoh called for the prisoner, and the explanation of his dreams was so thoroughly satisfactory that he could not doubt their truthfulness, and corroborated by the testimony of the butler, he concluded that Joseph's ability as an interpreter resided in the fact that God was with him; that God was using him: and that in some manner or other the God who had given these dreams, and such an interpretation to so remarkable a young man, would be pleased to bless and to use his servant still further in connection with the precautions to be taken to avert the severity of the famine predicted. Pharaoh was possessed of autocratic power, and was at liberty to exalt whom he would to authority in his kingdom, and very wisely he concluded that none could be more safe to trust than the one whom the Almighty trusted and made his friend;—the one to whom and through whom he revealed the secrets of knowledge. There is a lesson of wisdom here for the Lord's people and for all—to the effect that although the Lord's people may not be perfect, it is safer, in an emergency, to trust those whom the Lord has trusted than any others.

Joseph was at once made what we today would call Prime Minister of Egypt. He was the representative of Pharaoh, and as such had greater power than any monarch or Prime Minister of Europe, except the Czar of Russia and the Sultan of Turkey or their representatives. Many have inclined to doubt the possibility of such an exaltation from prison to second place in the throne; but such are not sufficiently familiar with the customs of eastern countries. A story, for instance, is told of the Sultan of Turkey, that one day having a severe toothache, and his usual dentist being absent from the city, his servants were sent to get any dentist they could find. They found one in comparative poverty, clothed him suitably to be presented to the Sultan, who, after he had performed the service, gave him the title and emoluments of Pasha, with both a city and a country residence, wealth, etc. Joseph's experience was not much more extreme than this. Doubtless, though the narrative does not show it, some explanations were offered respecting his previous character as Potiphar's servant, and as the trusty overseer in prison; satisfying Pharaoh's mind that he was an honorable man, worthy of confidence and trust, besides the attestations of divine favor. So there is likely to be in all of our affairs a time of change, in which, if we have been misunderstood and misrepresented, the truth will ultimately be brought forth, as the Lord declares, "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." (Psa. 37:6) We are to wait patiently for the Lord, and to take patiently such experiences as his providences may mark out for us, questioning not the wisdom, the love and the power of him with whom we have to do—of him who has promised that all things shall work for our everlasting welfare, if we abide faithful to him.

Pharaoh's ring was a signet ring. In ancient times royal commands were not signed and sealed, as at present, but sealed only, the monarch having a peculiar seal which, wherever it went, was recognized as his, and to have counterfeited which would have been gross felony, punishable with death. It was this seal that was given to Joseph, that by and through the authority expressed in it he might issue such commands as he pleased in respect to the accumulation and building of granaries and storing in the same part of the surplus crop of the seven years of plenty.

The honor and distinction of Joseph as next to Pharaoh seems well to illustrate the glorious exaltation of our Lord Jesus (in which the church, as his body, will soon share). Our Lord was tested, yet notwithstanding his faithfulness he went into the great prison-house of death; on the third day was delivered and raised up to power and great glory, and to be next to Jehovah God in the throne of the universe. The divine signet was given to him, and the proclamation was that "All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father," and that nothing should be done except at his command—that all power in heaven and in earth was committed unto him. (John 5:23; Matt. 28:18) The faithful members of the elect body of Christ, the Church, the overcomers, must also be tried in various ways, and for righteousness' sake must suffer in the present time, be misunderstood, misrepresented, etc. These also must go into the prison-house of death, and be therein parts of three great days (thousand-year days), a part of the fifth thousand, all of the sixth thousand, and early in the seventh thousand years, or third thousand-year day, their resurrection is due; that they may become joint-heirs with Christ their Lord and Head, in the glorious things of the kingdom. All this was well marked by the parts of three years which Joseph spent in prison, and his subsequent exaltation.

The meaning of the new, Egyptian name given to Joseph is rather in dispute, Canon Cooke claiming that it means "Bread of Life." It was appropriate in view of the great work which Joseph accomplished—the accumulation of a great store of wheat during the years of plenty,—sufficient to supply the necessities of the whole people during the seven years of famine. In this respect again we are reminded of Christ, who called himself the "Bread of Life." We are reminded, too, that it was through a work which he accomplished that the living bread is provided, for the whole world of mankind typified by the Egyptians; and that through him also the bread of life comes to his brethren, typified by Joseph's brethren and Jacob. As there was no life for all the people there except through Joseph and his work, and as Joseph did his work as the agent or representative of Pharaoh, so we see, as an anti-type, that there is no life for anyone of the world except in and through Christ Jesus our Lord, and that his work is accomplished in the name of, and as the representative of our heavenly Father, the supreme ruler of the universe.

Some are always ready to make objection and to find faults, rather than to make reasonable explanations, and some such object to Joseph's course in collecting one-fifth of the harvest of the plentiful years, and using it later on to strengthen the authority of Pharaoh and his control over all the people of his realm. We might say that even the one-fifth of the crop increase might not be considered an unreasonable tax, as it is the usual amount of rental charged in that vicinity today, and even more than that is frequently charged here and elsewhere in civilized countries; but we do not know that the one-fifth was exacted from the people as a tax. We do not know that Pharaoh's purse and bank account were not drawn upon for the purpose of this storage-wheat at the low price which would prevail during a period of such great surplus. We shall presume the latter, in the absence of any information to the contrary; and as for using this to strengthen the authority of the throne, and the contrariness of this from all democratic ideas, we have nothing to say except that it remains to be proven that a republican form of government is in all respects the best for *fallen* humanity. The Lord does not propose as a remedy for present ills, social, political, moral, etc., to introduce a Millennium along the lines of a republic; but he does propose its introduction along the lines of a monarchy—an absolute monarchy, in which his Son, who redeemed the world, will reign to bless the world by the exercise of autocratic power; for the subjugation of evil; for the bringing of all mankind into full appreciation of the principles of righteousness, and, so far as they will, into full accordance with the great supreme ruler, Jehovah—that they shall be his subjects forever, as the people of Egypt typically became the perpetual servants of Pharaoh.

As Pharaoh gave to Joseph a wife, named Asenath (signifying "Favor"), and she became Joseph's associate in honor and dignity, and co-laborer and helpmate with him in his work of blessing Egypt, so Jehovah God proposes a bride for his exalted Son, our Lord, and she also will be a favorite. It has required all of this Gospel age for her betrothal and preparation for the marriage, and the time is now nigh at hand when she shall be brought near to the King, as the bride, the Lamb's wife, adorned in the glorious linen robe of her Lord, fitly embroidered with the elements of character which he can approve.—Psa. 45:13, 14.

Joseph's head was not turned by the prosperity which came to him; he showed himself worthy of it—that he had profited by previous experiences, so as to know how to use the prosperity wisely. He was not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit; and seeing that the Lord had opened the way before him we find him immediately taking steps to carry out his mission. His first move was to travel throughout the lengths and breadths of Egypt, to determine the most eligible sites for the building of granaries, or storehouses; and the Lord's blessing continued with him and prospered him in the work thus given him to do. So it should be with us; in whatever department of the Lord's service he is pleased to open the door of opportunity to us, we should enter it promptly and with energy—with zeal for him and for the cause to which he has called us. This is one condition of our acceptableness with him. If we are slothful, inattentive to opportunities, undoubtedly they will be removed from us, and given to others, for the Lord is abundantly able to raise up one or another to serve his cause without interfering with, or overruling our free moral agency. Let us more and more appreciate what a privilege we enjoy in being co-laborers together with God, and especially in connection with this great service which our Lord and Master Jesus is executing, and to fellowship in which we have been called, as his bride and joint-heir.

They that honor God he will honor, in his own way; and his way will always be found eventually to be the best way. We not only are to honor the Lord by word of mouth, but especially are we to show forth his praises in the affairs of life—in connection with home duties, business duties, service of the truth: in all things we are to glorify him in our bodies and spirits which are his; and those who thus do shall be blessed indeed of the Lord and be used of him. The slightest service here permitted us is an honor indeed, and faithfulness in these slight services of the present time are eventually to be blessed and rewarded with the greater and grander service of the kingdom.

THOU KNOWEST

Lord, when the thorns of earth pierce sharp and deep,
  And I instead would choose the scented rose,
Let me recall thy tender, watchful love,
  And that mine inmost need thy wisdom knows.
Ah, who can tell how far our feet might stray?
  We are so prone to wander from thy side,
If not hedged in by thine eternal arms,
  And made within thy sheepfold to abide.

I am so glad thou knowest all, dear Lord!
  My life but poorly proves what lips confess,
And well I know none but a father could
  So frail an offering with such mercy bless.
Thou knowest all! This is my cradle, Lord,
  The shadow of thy wings, 'neath which I sleep.
Not for my goodness, but thine own great love,
  Thou wilt in peace thy child securely keep.

WORD OF CHEER AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Dear Brother Russell:—After a thankful and (to me) blessed perusal of the last issue of *Watch Tower*, I want to state that I have truly come out of Babylon, since I read the very first *Tower* that ever came into my hands—March 15 and April 1, 1900. So powerful was the impression made upon me by it that I was then, and have been ever since convinced of these great truths, and all my former doubts are satisfied forever. Now I realize what the blessed Master meant by the words, "The truth shall make you free." Regarding churches in general, when I think of the good, conscientious Christians, many of whom I would fain emulate, and think of seeming to be better than they, I feel very much troubled and very humble. Nevertheless, I can never believe their way again. I often think of the church at Allegheny, and wish I might enjoy the blessing of meeting with you all at times.

The lesson on "Patient Endurance," and that on "Duty-Love" in May 1 *Tower*, are my constant study. I was a member of the Episcopal church. Our minister has called time and again and kindly solicited my return. I have deferred telling him of my change of views only out of consideration for him, as he has been deep in affliction the past year, and when I look at his kind face and think how I may hurt him, I cannot but forbear. This is my standpoint at present. Do not think I am ashamed to own my Lord; O, no!. I am watching my opportunity, which will be soon, I believe. I have distributed tracts to many, having myself enjoyed the blessed truths revealed in them; truly God assisted you to write them. I thank you for their precious lessons. When I think of my unworthiness, and humble station, and realize what great things the good Lord has called me to, can I do aught but press onward to the attainment of the high "mark?"

May God bless and strengthen you in preparing the marginal references you contemplate for the new Bible! Pray for me that I may do all for him that I can find to do.

Yours in the Master,
Mrs. R. L. Jones,—*Ohio.*

[I am glad, dear Sister, to note that you are "tender-hearted" and trust that when, in withdrawing, you announce your present position to the minister and members of the church, it will be worded kindly, inoffensively. See the "Withdrawal Letters" which we supply *free* for this purpose,—sufficient for all the church membership. But, dear Sister, when you feared to cause pain and disappointment to an earthly minister and friend, did you forget the Friend above all others—the Lord—and his smile of approval? Remember the poet's words,—

"O, let no earthborn cloud arise,
  To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."

Let us see to it, dear Sister, that the Lord's approval has first place in our hearts.—Editor.]

Dear Brother Russell:—Our "Volunteer Rally" yesterday was a success every way respecting the amount of work done and the spiritual blessings received. The Lord was evidently with us paving the way, and the interest manifested by the friends from surrounding towns who came to help in the Harvest work was certainly strengthening and encouraging to us here, and the meeting together of all after the day's work was edifying in the extreme. That our hopes and aims are one, was beautifully brought out in the testimonies, praise, prayers and thanks; and it was manifest that the holy Spirit was in our midst. It was "spontaneous combustion," so to speak, and the afternoon was not half long enough to give all an opportunity to voice their gratitude for blessings received, and for being privileged to do something for Jesus in the "volunteer" work. We realized how we had been called and thus far led; and that if we continue to walk faithfully nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God. Bro. Russell and his helpers, and all of the Lord's children everywhere were remembered in our prayers.

The number engaged in tract distribution was seventy-nine, as follows: From Tiffin, 19; Ft. Wayne, 6; Auburn, 1; Ypsilanti, 3; Battle Creek, 1; Pt. Clinton, 5; Detroit, 3; Fostoria, 2; Bowling Green, 1; Ottawa Lake, 1; Findlay, 1; Toledo, 36; total, 79. Tracts distributed about 5,000; churches served, about 55. The weather was extremely hot,—harvest weather—just the sort to ripen *wheat*, and the volunteers proved themselves veterans, and turned up smiling and content, receiving ample pay in the mysterious blessing that comes over one when handing out tracts. Certainly the Lord is our strength in all our ways!

We feel satisfied so far as the day's work went, and know the Lord will bless it in his own time and way. Praying that the Lord will further bless us with his grace, we are, dear brother,

In the "Harvest" work,
The Toledo Class,—*Ohio.*

Dear Brother Russell:—Just a line to thank you for the Gospel truth as I believe Christ would have us know it, and which I have received at your hand. I think I have made good use of the tracts sent me a few months ago; since that time I have learned of the meeting place of the brethren in Liverpool and got a blessing. My family are members of the Methodist church, to which I am attached, but now I see the Gospel in a different light, thank God! With the help of prayer I am trying to do a little of the Lord's work among my shipmates, many of whom are skeptics; I am trying to convince them of a living God and a future judgment. Please let me know if there is a meeting-place in or around Boston that I can attend while my ship is in port. I am willing to be at your service in delivering God's Word, in the shape of tracts or magazines at church doors or meetings of any kind in Liverpool or Boston.

God bless you in the work of spreading the true gospel throughout this wicked world. I pray his kingdom come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Your loving brother in Jesus,

James H. Wallace,—*England.*

My dear Brother:—I have at last decided to give up all, and I have prayed earnestly for help to make the surrender complete; God forbid that it should be otherwise!

My contract in the business indicated above (insurance) will expire in November next; but I want to be wholly occupied in a better work long before that time. In fact, I can't hold my tongue now, I must declare the light I have found (through your help) in the Scriptures; these are now my delight, where before they were uninteresting, though I have been a member of the Missionary Baptist church for twenty-three years, and a deacon fourteen years, but I will send in my letter of withdrawal soon.

I have been a leader in the Reform Party in politics, in this State, for ten years, and have held many positions of trust; but have found that a failure, and will give it up. Have been a drawing speaker, but my voice is nearly gone, hence I will have to supplement it with literature in spreading this "good news" so little known in these parts. I am willing to take a very humble place in the ranks because of my extreme unworthiness and the lateness of the hour.

I have seen in some of your literature that you have colporteurs for *Millennial Dawn*, and other works. Write me terms and full particulars, also any help you can give me on my spiritual condition.

Yours thankfully, H. L. Brian,—*Texas.*

THE ASSASSINATION AND ITS PROBABLE RESULTS

It is difficult to account for the peculiar operation of the brain of the anarchist who shot the noble President of this nation,—William McKinley. What could he, or the class he is supposed to have represented in the act, hope to gain by such an act? What motive of any kind could inspire such a deed? It is most charitable to view the assassin and his accomplices as mentally unbalanced to a greater degree than are the majority of the human family; so that to their view the essential of peace and blessing is less law: whereas those who are directed by the Word of the Lord know that the world needs yet more stringent laws for the correction of evil-doers. How blessed the assurances of the Scriptures that the great reign of righteousness—law and grace—is near at hand. That the Millennial kingdom will not only effectually restrain such unbalanced creatures, but by restitution processes will lift them up toward soundness and righteousness.

A cypher letter has just been found and interpreted. It announces that the anarchists have plotted the assassination of President Roosevelt, Senator Hanna, the governors of all the States and the financial princes—J. D. Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan and C. M. Schwab. It seems difficult to suppose that the anarchists hope to terrorize the people so that no one would accept office. Do they not know that there are several millions of men anxious for a chance at these offices and willing to brave every risk? Anarchists are comparatively few in these days of prosperity: not in prosperous times,—not until "trouble like a gloomy cloud" shall have gathered world-wide and shut out the light of hope, need we fear that the insanity of anarchy will prevail to the extent predicted in the Scriptures—the overthrow of the entire social fabric.

We see no special significance in the assassin's deed as respects the peculiar times in which we are living—the "harvest"—except that it will probably lead to stringent repressive laws against anarchists. Such we would approve, but opine that a restriction of liberty in this approved direction might soon lead to an abuse of power and a restraint of proper liberties;—an attempt to restrain any and everything not favored by general public sentiment. For instance WATCH TOWER publications have thousands of enemies who would not hesitate to misrepresent its teachings as anarchistic, and in doing so think they did God service;—after the example of Saul of Tarsus. We are expecting some such violent interruption of the "harvest" work within a few years now; but will conclude then that "the door is shut." Meantime let us each and all "labor while it is called day; for the night cometh wherein no man can work."

THE COSTLY PEARL

The pearl of greatest price I sought.
Alas! I sought, but found it not.
    The hours of work and sleep were wasted,
    The fruits of pleasure passed untasted,
  And still with eager zeal I hasted,
The charms of fortune to entice
With some new gift or sacrifice.

Until, one sad, discouraged day,
A spirit, meek and quiet, lay
    Upon my brow a hand restraining,
    It smoothed away my lips complaining,
  Upon my brow a hand restraining;
And while I joyed in perfect rest,
I held the gem, of all the best.

R. B. Henninges.

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FINISHING TOUCHES OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. 4:8.

Mankind in general does too little thinking, and what it does do is more or less along improper lines, and built upon false bases or premises. Nevertheless, all will agree as respects human welfare, there is a power in thought second to no other power in the universe. Few, perhaps, realize to what extent this is true,—to what extent their own happiness and well-being is dependent upon right thinking,—to what extent whole communities and nations owe their happiness or misery to their right or wrong thinking upon the important problems of life. Words are a power in the world, but only in proportion as they awaken thoughts and lead to actions; words, thoughts, deeds, is the order. Truly did the wise man say, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." (Prov. 23:7) If he thinks justly, he will speak and act justly; if his thoughts are selfish and ignoble, his words will be deceitful and his conduct dishonest.

It is because the power of thought is to a considerable extent recognized that it is appealed to on every hand. The teacher appeals to it; the preacher appeals to it; the politician appeals to it; the financier appeals to it; the sociologist appeals to it; the thousands of pamphlets, books, newspapers and magazines published in every land and in every tongue are all appealing to *thought*. Thought, indeed, may be said to be the great engine which is moving the whole world in its every department. The difficulty is that few are of logical and discerning mind, the fall having affected every member of the human family has disordered our reasoning faculties; and charlatans and demagogues and self-seekers very frequently take advantage of the weak mental state of humanity to delude with sophistry, and thus to hinder and obscure correct thinking and reasoning. Against the great force and weight of selfishness in its every member does humanity thus labor, as well as against the wiles of Satan; and it is not surprising that generally it is misled and deceived, because added to its incubus of false premises it must struggle also against its own inertia, sluggishness and inaptitude.

The Lord, also appeals to the power of the mind through his Word, and urges upon his people that they be "transformed by the renewing of their *minds*." (Rom. 12:2) Indeed, it may be said that the cultivation of the power of thought began with God's people, and that so far as religious matters are concerned it has in no particular degree gone from them. While heathen religions seek to restrain the intellect and appeal chiefly to the passions, prejudices and fear, the Lord to the contrary, calls to his people, saying, "Come, let us reason together." (Isa. 1:18) We are willing to admit that nominal Christendom has not heeded the Lord's invitation to any great extent—that very largely nominal Christians avoid thought of religious subjects, and especially avoid reasoning; but we hold that to the extent they thus violate the divine arrangement they have not their "senses exercised by reason of use," and are to be esteemed, at very best, only babes in Christ. —Heb. 5:13, 14.

We are willing to agree also that thinking may be a very dangerous matter in the absence of absolute knowledge upon which to base and exercise our reasoning faculties; but the Lord has protected his faithful along this line by providing us in his Word with the proper basis for reasoning on all subjects involving our duty to our Creator and to our fellow-creatures. The Scriptures lay down certain broad lines, and invite God's people *reason within these lines of revelation*, and by reasoning thus to taste and see that the Lord is gracious; and come to a clearer knowledge of him, a better understanding of his character and plan. Many who are awakened to independent thinking are careless of the *limitations* of the divine revelation, and consequently the influence of the divine Word upon them is a mental liberty and enlightenment which, lacking the divine control, is very apt to go to the extreme of license, selfishness, self-conceit and infidelity. Wherever the Bible has gone it has been the torch which has led civilization: millions have profited by its enlightening influence, though only comparatively few walk close to its light and within its prescribed limitations of reason and conduct; and these few are the true Christians—the "wheat" of this age, "the first-fruits unto God of his creatures," which God is now harvesting.—James 1:18.

THE CONTROL OF THOUGHT

Some are inclined to believe that since man's brain differs from each other man's brain to some extent, therefore his thinking must necessarily be different; in a word, that a man can only think in harmony with his brain construction. But we reply, Not so; each may learn to weigh and balance his own thoughts, to curb some and to encourage others; but to do this each must have before him an ideal of character, to be copied.

Thoughts can be controlled just as words and actions can be controlled: the will is at the helm, and must decide which thoughts and sentiments it will entertain and encourage, and which it will repel. It is necessary, therefore, first of all for the will to be rightly directed, and, secondly, to be strong, and to use its power in the control of thought;—in curbing those thoughts which it recognizes as evil, and in stimulating those which it recognizes as good, helpful, beneficial. The will, in Scripture called the 'heart," is therefore continually appealed to by the Lord, as he now seeks amongst men for his "peculiar people." The message is, "My son, give me thine heart"—thy will. This request is not addressed to wilful sinners, for they are not recognized or addressed as sons of God, but as children of the evil one. Those whom God recognizes as his sons are such as have been brought into harmony with him through forgiveness of sins, by repentance and faith in Christ Jesus, the Redeemer. It is to such that the Lord makes known that if they would "go on to perfection"—to the full attainment of his gracious purposes respecting them, the only proper course would be to give their hearts, their wills, to him in consecration.

The heart, the will, thus given over to God, seeks to know the divine will, to catch the divine thought and to obey it in word and in act; and in proportion as this conditon of the new mind is attained, in that same proportion will there begin to be a newness of life in every respect; in ambitions, hopes, sentiments, and efforts. It is for this reason that the revelation of the divine will and plan is furnished to believers—that by growing in the knowledge of it, by thinking on these things, by filling the mind with the divine plan and will the transforming influence may extend into every avenue of life.

OUR TEXT ADDRESSES THE SAINTS

A common mistake amongst people would be to address the words of our text on the subject of right thinking to sinners, to evil-doers and evil thinkers; but this is a mistake. The entire Epistle to the Philippians is addressed to "All the *saints* in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi" (1:1); and the exhortation is applicable to all the saints everywhere, but not to others than saints—not to the worldly, not even to the household of faith, until they have made a full consecration of themselves to the Lord. It would be useless to address others along this line; the exhortation would be of no effect. Hence, the exhortation of this lesson is not specially applicable to any but the most advanced Christians—not even to the "babes in Christ," but only to those who are somewhat matured in the new life. As for the babes who are not developed new creatures, they will have their attention very thoroughly occupied with the cruder elementary lessons, respecting the coarser sins which the new creature must abhor and battle against. This text addresses those who have made considerable progress along these lines of putting away "the filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit"—those who are seeking to *perfect* holiness in their hearts, and so far as possible also in their earthly bodies.—2 Cor. 7:1.

The context proves our assertion, for after speaking of prayer and thanksgiving to God and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, keeping their hearts and minds, the Apostle sums up this advanced position of grace with the words of our text as the finality or finish of the argument, and of the process of character-development: "Finally, brethren."

"WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE TRUE"

This is the first question to be asked respecting any matter: Is it true or is it false? If it is false the Lord's people are to have nothing whatever to do with it,—no matter how beautiful. Love for the truth lies at the very foundation of saintship, and we remember that the Lord declares through the Apostle that those who will be rejected and stumbled in this harvest time are such as "receive not the truth in the love of it" (2 Thes. 2:10)—such as have pleasure in unrighteousness (untruth). With our poor and at very best imperfect brains there is great danger of our being misled, and hence the Word of the Lord appeals to us with force that we should not even *touch* that which we realize is untrue. This does not mean that we may not weigh and balance evidences to discern the truth from the untruth; but it does mean that as soon as the truth is discovered it will be embraced and acknowledged, and the untruth as vigorously disavowed and completely withdrawn from. To tamper with error after we see it to be error, to "see how it would reason out, anyway," when we know the matter is on a wrong basis, is to lay a trap for our spiritual feet, one which frequently stumbles on the way to Zion.

If we are following God's admonition through the Apostle, in this text, it will mean an avoidance of fiction, of novels, of unrealities. This, on the other hand, will mean an increased reverence for whatsoever things are true, and increased devotion to them, an increase of time for their study, and an increase of the spirit of truth in our hearts as a result.

"WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE HONEST"

The truth of the thing is only one of the tests to which it must be put. We may find a matter to be true and yet not find it to be worthy of our thought, dishonorable. Who does not know that there are dishonorable and dishonoring thoughts, the pondering of which not only wastes valuable time, but instead of bringing a reward, a blessing for the time spent upon them, entails a loss, a disadvantage in that it leaves a dishonorable stain in our minds, unworthy of us as new creatures in Christ Jesus?

The true but dishonorable or unworthy things presenting themselves for our consideration at the bar of our minds are perhaps oftenest in connection—with others—the weaknesses, the errors, the follies, or what not of our neighbors, of our friends. The entertaining of these thoughts, the pondering of them, will be unfavorable to us, and the sooner we discern the matter and dismiss them the better, the happier, the more noble will be our own hearts. The dismission of these unworthy thoughts will leave us the opportunity and the energy, if we will, to expend that much more time upon whatsoever things are not only true but also honorable, worthy of our attention as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

"WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE JUST"

Here we have another limitation. Our minds are to be occupied in thinking about righteousness or just things, principles, etc.; we are not to be continually meditating upon grievances and injustices, either real or imagined. We are to remember, on the contrary, that we are living in the period which the Scriptures denominate "the present evil world," and that it could not be this if justice prevailed generally. We are to remember that hereunto we were called,—even to endure injustice, for righteousness' sake;—to do good, to lay down our lives in the service of the Lord and his Word, and yet to be evil-spoken of and to be misunderstood and to have all manner of evil said against us falsely for Christ's sake. We are, therefore, not to think strange of the fiery trials that shall surely come upon all who are of the royal priesthood; but rather, having settled this matter in advance, when we made our consecration, we are to take it as it comes, as a matter of course, not grieving over nor specially thinking about the trials, the injustices, etc. And thus doing we will have the more time to give to thinking of the more helpful, the more strengthening, the more elevating things—the things that are just, the things that are in harmony with righteousness, respecting the past, the present and the future, as promised in the Lord's Word.

"WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE PURE"

There is a vast amount of impurity everywhere throughout the world. It, therefore, behooves the Lord's consecrated people to follow the Apostle's injunction, and to carefully strain out the impurities, and see that they do not enter into our hearts, our thoughts, realizing that with them in the result will be to work our defilement, to a greater or less degree. Whoever maintains purity of thought will have comparatively little effort in maintaining purity of word and of action. Whether the impurity come from one direction or another—from the world or the flesh or the devil—its attack must first of all be upon the mind; and if repelled there the victory is won: if not repelled we cannot know what the consequences would be, as the Apostle James declares: "Lust [selfish desire of any kind], when it has conceived [in the mind] bringeth forth sin [develops sinful words or deeds], and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death."—Jas. 1:15.

No wonder, then, that the Apostle mentions the necessity for our thoughts being guarded along the line of purity, and that if a matter were ever so well established as a truth, and if it involved no injustice, and even were not dishonorable, yet were impure, this would be quite sufficient to condemn it as unworthy of the mind of the Lord's consecrated people. Nor is it to be overlooked that any smut or impurity entering into the mind may cause such a defilement as will give trouble in its complete eradication, not only at the time, but for years afterward.

"WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE LOVELY"

The saints are exhorted to be meek and peace-makers, but in order to be thus they must have amiable thoughts, lovely and lovable thoughts, kind thoughts, gentle thoughts. These in turn will gradually develop into graces of character. We are not to think upon subjects gendering anger, hatred, strife,—vexatious thoughts, quarrelsome thoughts, vindictive and contentious thoughts. These all are to be shunned as enemies to the new creature, and instead we are to think of the beautiful things, the amiable things, we may know respecting our neighbors, our friends; even though we be not able to fully close our eyes against their injustices or evil deeds, we may at least refuse to waste valuable time in thinking about their weaknesses and thus cultivating unamiable, quarrelsome dispositions in ourselves.

"WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE OF GOOD REPORT"

It may be argued by some that since the world hateth the light and the children of the light, and rejoiceth in iniquity and in getting the advantage over others, therefore those things which would be reputable with it would not be the holy things suitable to the thoughts of God's people. But not so, we answer: the world does recognize to a considerable extent a right standard, even though it does not follow that standard, nor even pretend to do so—even though it hates those who it sees are endeavoring to walk up to that standard; even though it calls the children of light hypocrites, and crucifies them, as in the case of our Lord. It is policy and false religion that generally excite religious persecution. Nevertheless, if anyone will follow the standard that is reputable, and think upon those things he will find therein a blessing.

FOR THE VICTORS ARE THE REWARDS

Some may feel that if they thus sifted and tested and rejected all the untrue, the unworthy, the unjust, the impure and the unamiable thoughts presenting themselves, that they would have no topic left whereon to engage their minds, and this we believe would be true with a great many—their minds for a time would be quite vacant of thoughts, if all the evil and improper ones were rejected, banished; but by the time they would be in this attitude they would have such a "hunger and thirst after righteousness," truth, things lovely, things pure, things noble, that they would be in the right condition to receive the very spiritual food which the Lord has provided for them. There is one thing, and one thing only, which fully combines all of the above propositions, and demonstrates itself to be the one thing true, honorable, just, pure, lovely,—and that is, the divine character and plan. Let us think upon its various features. Let us study the divine Word and behold through it, as a telescope, the beauty of the divine character, the splendor of the divine plan, as revealed in God's Word and plan . . . . whose length and breadth and heighth and depth no man can measure, and only the saints can comprehend by the holy Spirit, and that in proportion as they receive of the holy spirit, the holy mind, the holy thoughts, replacing and displacing the unholy thoughts and sentiments of the natural man. (Eph. 3:18) What a splendid premium the Lord thus places upon the study of his Word in the esteem of all who are of the class addressed by the Apostle in our text!

Such a ruling of the mind is a conquest; such a self-mastery is a victory; the greatest victory that can be gained. As the Scriptures declare, "He that ruleth his spirit [mind] is better than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16:32) And the prescription given by the Apostle in our text, for the mental health of the saints, is the very soul-discipline necessary to our development in character, to the degree pleasing to God and acceptable, through Christ Jesus our Lord. These are the victors to whom will be granted a share in the kingdom. Ah, then, as the Apostle exhorts, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith" until he shall have become the finisher of it (Heb. 12:1,2); remembering that he who is on our part, and who has engaged to help us and to carry us through every difficulty, and to fully instruct us if we submit ourselves to him, and thus to "make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," is Jesus,—who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.

Well do the Scriptures generally enforce the importance of guarding the mind, the will, the heart, saying, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Keeping it, to the saints now called and in the race, means life more abundant, with glory, honor and immortality. Neglecting it, refusing to exercise self-control, means the permission of selfish desires to be conceived in our brains, and to lead away from the Lord and his 'narrow way" on toward sin, on toward the wages of sin—death—second death.

A DISADVANTAGEOUS POSTAL RULING

The Postoffice authorities inform us that we may expect (in common with many other publishers) to be deprived of the privilege of mailing *thick pamphlets* [MILLENNIAL DAWN] at the special second-class rates of postage heretofore enjoyed. We deny the right of the Postmaster General to make such a *law*:—for law-making it practically is, since the present law has been otherwise interpreted for the past thirty years, by all previous Postmasters General; and several of them desired and petitioned Congress (the law-making branch of the Government) to change the law, which Congress refused to do. This is in no sense a blow at our publications, however, and if others submit we will probably make no legal protest.

One effect will be to curtail the circulation of paper-bound DAWNS because it will require us to pay 7 cents *extra postage each;* and we must collect this from our customers. We can still however reach some of you at low rates by express where the orders are for twenty books or more, east of Pittsburg and south as far as Virginia at the old rate, one cent per book: west of Pittsburg (20 or more) as far as Illinois and Kentucky at two cents per book. These prices apply only to paper-bound and leatherette-bound books. The cloth-bound books are unchanged in rate—average postage 10 cents each prepaid.

ANARCHY OPPOSED TO ALL CHRISTIAN FAITH

It is difficult to get a clear statement of the principles of the anarchists, as they are at war with all received principles of human government and conduct, as well as antagonistic to all religions that accept revelation or the future accountability of human beings. Some light is thrown on the fundamental doctrines of the anarchists, for which many of them are willing to give up liberty and life, by a contributor to the London "Times," who has made a study of the social creed of the anarchists, and therefore writes with a fuller understanding than the hasty political doctors who have prescribed so many remedies for the direful disease. We here reprint his summary of the anarchist belief:

"'They hold that there is no moral law, natural or revealed, and, therefore, that every individual is entitled to be a law unto himself. Granting the premise, the conclusion seems irresistible. No majority of citizens, however large, can create a moral right. It can pass municipal laws, and, subject to certain limitations, those laws may bind in conscience men who believe that all civil power is of divine ordinance. But local and temporary majorities have often made or approved laws in flagrant contradiction with the most elementary conceptions of right, while the sacredness sometimes ascribed to natural law, as that law is deduced from the moral judgments of mankind, *semper et ubique*, depends on the view that it emanates from the universal conscience and that the voice of conscience is super-human.

"The anarchist rejects this view. He denies any supernatural government of the world, and, therefore, he denies, very consistently, the moral right of any power whatever to fetter his individual judgment or his individual will. All attempts to curb him in the free indulgence of his individual lusts and passions are in his eyes oppression. The fundamental laws on which society rests are to him tyrannical abuses by which the majority seek to limit the boundless license which is the birthright of every man born into this world. It is idle to tell him that those laws are supported by vast majorities. He answers that majorities, however vast, are mere synonyms for superior force, that he personally disapproves of the state of society which these laws have created and which they maintain; and that he has an innate right to assail that state by any means he chooses. His practical conclusion is appalling, but it seems to me to follow quite reasonably from his premises; and, as those premises are consciously or half-consciously held by thousands in all ranks of society, I fear that we are likely to hear more of him in the future.'

"It is clear from this that the fundamental faith of the anarchists is atheism, not only as to the supreme supernatural governing power and future accountability, but as well as to conduct in the affairs of this life, denying the moral right of any power whatever to fetter or direct his individual judgment. All atheists may not be anarchists, but all anarchists are necessarily atheists. They cut adrift from the regulation or direction of their lives by divine or human power. This makes them anarchists. Their growth in Europe, foolish and crazy as it may be held, is not so surprising, considering the centuries of oppression and wrong operating on minds restrained by no moral or religious sentiment; but that their creed should have followers in this country shows not only the loss of all sense of moral accountability, but the density of ignorance and passion. The principles of the Christian religion or of any other of the world's great religions constitute a complete refutation of the creed of the anarchists. They are therefore the enemies of the human race."

JOSEPH THE MERCIFUL

Gen. 45:1-15.—Oct. 27.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—Rom. 12:21.

Divine providence in the affairs of men is the essence of this lesson. Joseph was now thirty-nine years of age, having been next to Pharoah in the throne of Egypt for nine years. The seven years of plenty were in the past; the granaries of Egypt were full with enough and to spare, and two years of the predicted famine were already past. It would seem that Joseph had made no attempt to communicate with his father and brethren; first, probably because the methods of communication at that time were limited, but more particularly, we opine, because he had for some years been realizing that divine providence was shaping his affairs. He remembered his early dreams, and could see that they were now in a fair way of fulfillment. He would leave to divine supervision this matter, which was evidently beyond his control anyway. He no doubt thought of the famine, and how it would affect Palestine, and thus the interests of his father and brethren, their households, flocks and herds. He no doubt expected that as other people from the vicinity were coming to Egypt to buy grain, so quite probably eventually the Hebrews would come also; and they were forced to come by the close of the second year of the famine.

We may surmise that some law prohibited the sale of grain to foreigners, except by the chief ruler's permission, and that thus Joseph's brethren were obliged to come before him to explain. This thought is sustained by the fact that Joseph, wishing to try his brethren, first cast them into prison as spies—as though they were emissaries of a foreign power; which perceived the wealth of Egypt in food, and was meditating an attack upon the country. This gave Joseph the opportunity of inquiring minutely respecting the home conditions of his brethren, concerning his father and Benjamin, his younger brother, who was not with the brethren. Finally he gave them the opportunity of proving the truth of their statements, holding Simeon as a ransom until they would come again and bring Benjamin with them, knowing full well that they would be obliged to do this, because the famine would continue. These experiences proved a valuable lesson to the ten brethren, respecting the difficulties in which they were and called to mind their past wrong conduct in respect to Joseph, for they accepted their present difficulties as retribution. "They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear, therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child;—and ye would not hear? Therefore behold also his blood is required. And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter."

Joseph was not hard-hearted, but wise in his treatment of his brethren. Most evidently not a solitary act was inspired by vindictiveness. He was evidently taking God's view of matters; viz., that it is proper that a certain amount of retribution shall come upon evil-doers, so as to impress upon them the more thoroughly the sinfulness of sin. Thus parents and guardians of children should not permit their kindness and sympathy to hinder a reasonable, moderate punishment of wrong-doing. Nevertheless, pity and love should be back of all, as it was in Joseph's case; merely planning for the better opportunity and the larger amount of blessing in due time.

When their grain was exhausted, and want was staring them in the face, Jacob finally consented to let Benjamin go with his brethren for the second purchase of grain; not, however, until Judah had become pledge for Benjamin, that he would not return to his home or family unless Benjamin also returned. The coming of the brethren to Joseph's house a second time, with the proof of the genuineness of their original story, was sufficient ground for their entertainment most graciously, and for the liberation of Simeon;—the whole company, to their surprise, being invited to dine with the governor, Joseph. They were surprised, too, that by some preconcerted arrangement they were seated at the table in the order of their ages; and further astonished that their younger brother, Benjamin, received five portions, as an evidence of special regard of the governor. They were rejoiced, undoubtedly, at the good fortune that had overtaken them, and making ready started on their homeward journey, doubtless thinking to themselves—We thought that our hardships of the previous time were probably in the nature of retributions, and that God's hand was in it, but after all, it seems that it was merely a natural thing that we should be taken for spies. Now, behold, we are prospered.

But they had not gone far until they were overtaken by the governor's agents, who represented that a theft had been committed, that the governor's valuable silver mug, called by the Egyptians, 'cup of divination," was missing. They protested their innocence, that they were not that kind of men, and suggested that they be searched thoroughly. Examination was made of the grain sacks of one after another, until finally the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, and the whole company, previously elated, now returned prisoners to the governor of Egypt, whose hospitalities they had so recently enjoyed, and apparently had so poorly requitted. Perhaps they began to think about the Joseph matter again, and to say to themselves, The evil that we thought was past is still pursuing us. It was a good lesson undoubtedly, helping to impress upon their minds, not only the value of honesty, but also the thought that although the wheels of justice grind sometimes slowly, they grind surely and very fine.

Benjamin, with the rest, denied that he had stolen the cup, and whether the brothers believed him or not, they would not lay special blame upon him, but generously shared it as a whole company. Judah, speaking for them, said, "What shall we say unto my lord? What shall we speak, or how shall we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquities of thy servants. Behold, we are my lord's servants, both we and he also with whom the cup was found." They did not explain to Joseph the nature of their iniquity, though this evidently was in their minds. Joseph, however, wishing to see to what extent they had still the same evil, jealous disposition which they manifested toward him, proposed to let the others go free and merely to hold Benjamin, as the slave. The ruse was successful, and developed the fact that the brethren had learned lessons and formed characters in the interim which made them now more sympathetic one for another, and for their father. Their wrong course in Joseph's case had not been persisted in, but had been repented of. Judah explained the whole situation to Joseph through the interpreter, and so vividly did he picture Jacob's love for Benjamin, and his sorrow at the supposed death of Joseph, and the interest of the whole family in their father, that Joseph could no longer refrain—could no longer restrain his emotions. He felt that the time had now come to reveal himself to his brethren, and in order that they might feel the less embarrassed under the circumstances he ordered all the Egyptians from the room, and then explained briefly and sympathetically that he himself was their brother Joseph.

What wonder that the brethren were troubled, as they thought probably of how they would be disposed to retaliate were they in his place of power. But Joseph soon convinced them that he had none but kindly feelings for them, that he was merciful, forgiving. The spirit which he exhibited under these circumstances is worthy of emulation, not merely by natural men, but also by the "new creatures in Christ Jesus." How often do we find that the Lord's people are narrow in such matters, instead of being broad and generous, loving and forgiving. Joseph now speaking to his brethren in the Hebrew tongue, repeated to them the words, "I am Joseph," and added, "whom ye sold into Egypt," that thus they might recognize him, not only by his speech, but by his knowledge of the facts, that it was really their brother who was before them. But this expression was so gracious, and anger and malice were so absent from his every word and act, that they were inspired with confidence, and at his request drew near to him.

Many Christians would have spoiled the whole effect of this great lesson upon their brethren had they been in Joseph's place, by poor judgment, by reading the brethren a lecture;—by telling them what they already knew about the wrong of their conduct, about how now they were in his power, and how he could evil entreat them, but would not. Joseph was too wise and too merciful to take such a course. He took the contrary one, saying, 'Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither." It seems wonderful indeed that a natural man could and would have so much of the spirit of God as is here manifested, and yet we know that Joseph was only a natural man—the holy Spirit not having been poured out upon any of our race until Pentecost. It gives also a suggestion respecting the breadth of character of the ancients, quite in contradiction of the theory of evolution, which would claim that at that early period, man being but slightly above the monkey, would have coarse and brutish sentiments.

Joseph preached a great sermon to his brethren in few words when he said, "God did send me before you to preserve life"—he thus overruled your wrong course, and has brought out of it a blessing. He gave his brethren credit for ability to understand such things. That the Lord overruled their course for good, did not prove that their course was a good or proper course; it merely proved the divine power and the divine wisdom and divine providence, that was over Joseph and over all the house of Jacob, causing all things, even the evil thing, to work out for good, according to the divine plan. How great and how lasting a lesson came to Joseph's brethren through their experiences, and through this his short sermon we cannot tell; but there is a great lesson here for all of God's people today along the line of mercy toward those who deliberately sin against us; and also along the line of noting, discerning and referring to divine providence in connection with our affairs. We are not only to note divine providences, but we are to give credit for them, as it is written, "In all thy ways *acknowledge* him."—Prov. 3:6.

Joseph could have permitted his experiences to have developed a great deal of personal pride. He might have reasoned to himself, as some would have reasoned, that he was merely lucky, or that he was naturally bright, attractive, smart, and that this was the secret of his success; that this was the reason his father loved him specially; that this was the reason, when sold for a slave, he was bought by a good master in affluent circumstances; that this personal brilliancy was the cause of his rise in Potiphar's house to eminence; that the same effected his rise to a position of authority in the prison; that his keenness of intellect had enabled him to interpret the dreams; and that in general he stood head and shoulders above other men; and that others realized this, and hence he had come by his exaltation in a natural way. But had he thus been heady and high-minded, and self-conceited, we may be sure that it would have led to a fall—that God would not have continued to bless, prosper and advance him. We may be sure, too, that had he thus developed a spirit of pride and self-conceit, his conduct with his brethren would have been very different from what it was. He would have been crowing over them, and mistreating them in order to convince them of his power, and thus would have shown himself to be a very much smaller man than his proper course shows him to have been. He was a great man, and his greatness was manifested, not merely in his financial management of the kingdom of Egypt, but especially manifested in his reliance upon God, his realization that the divine promise and blessing, through his great-grandfather Abraham, his grandfather, Isaac, and his father, Jacob, was resting upon him in some manner, and that because of this divine favor things were working as they were.

The spiritual seed of Abraham may draw valuable lessons from this narrative. If it was appropriate that Joseph should acknowledge the Lord as the giver of all his blessings, which were all of an earthly and temporal kind, how much more should the spiritual seed of Abraham acknowledge the spiritual blessings received at the Father's hand,—and recognize in every mercy and favor opportunities of service; that it is the hand of providence. Surely these should always be on the alert, to realize and to confess,—"It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." But on the contrary, we are sorry at times to find some of God's spiritual children inclined to be puffed up, and to speak of God's favor, the knowledge of the truth which they have received of the Lord, as though it were something of their own achievement;—as though some honor were due them, as the inventors of the divine plan.

Again, the spiritual Israelite should be even more merciful than Joseph. If he could see that the persecutions he receives, from his brethren and others, are merely incidents of divine providence—which the Lord is using to prepare him for coming blessings and exaltation, should not the spiritual Israelite take his *disappointments* as *God's appointments?* And should he not with a clearer eye of faith, be the better able to see that many of his spiritual advancements have come as a result of persecutions from the world and from false brethren? And should he not, like Joseph, look with great complacency upon all these various agencies which God has been pleased to use in spiritually uplifting him, to perfect him as a 'new creature," an heir of God, a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, his Lord? He surely should. And the only things which can hinder us from seeing that our advancement is of the Lord, and not of ourselves, will be a lack of humility, and a lack of trust in divine providence; and the only things which could hinder us from feeling patient forbearance and kindly sympathy and love for those who have despitefully used and persecuted us, would be a lack of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of mercy, and a failure to see properly that whatever agencies God may use in our spiritual upbuilding are to be appreciated and sympathized with;—whether they be brethren or of the world—Egyptians.

Then Joseph explained the providence of God, the years of plenty and the years of famine, and how God had been supervising the entire matter, and that this was his means of preserving Abraham's posterity, concluding, "So now, it was not you that sent me hither, but God." We are not to give credit to the evil agencies through which we have received blessings, otherwise we might soon be disposed to call evil good; but we are to give full credit to God, because that which was intended to be evil, and which was evil of itself, divine wisdom, so far above the earthly plane, was able to overrule for our good. It is as we learn the lesson of God's inherent goodness—as we learn to respect his wisdom, love and power that our faith grows stronger and stronger, until we are able to trust the Lord, not only in things which we can see are working out for our good, but able to trust him also in respect to things which seem entirely dark and out of which apparently no good can come; thus we trust him where we cannot trace him. And this is faith; and faith is a *gift* of God in that it is cultivated to acceptable development by the Lord's gracious promises, rightly received, appreciated and acted upon.

While Joseph had patiently waited for the Lord's time to come, and for twenty years had not seen his father's face, having now witnessed the fulfillment of his first dream, the bowing of his brother's sheaves to his sheaf, he realized that the Lord's time had about come for him again to see his father, when the second dream would be fulfilled. And whereas he was all patience before, now he was all energy and haste, because the time was come, and so he said to his brethren, "Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt. Come down unto me; tarry not." He impressed upon his brethren the glories of his position, not by way of boast or pride, but by way of assuring them of his authority and power to care for them, and so that they might fully assure their father Jacob that his caution might not hinder him from taking advantage of the goodly land of Goshen, now put at their disposal. His brethren and father were not invited to come and share in his throne and regal power, but were invited to come and partake of all the blessings flowing therefrom. Just so during the Millennial age, after the Christ, Head and body, represented in Joseph shall be in the throne of glory and of power—in the heavenly Father's throne—when the kingdom of God shall be established in the earth, all who feel a famine, a hunger, for the true bread of heaven, for eternal life, will be invited to come and receive abundantly of it. None, however, of the earthly class will be invited to share in the kingdom honors, for the kingdom class will be complete. But they will be invited to come and receive the blessings of the kingdom, mental, moral and physical, health and strength, under the favor of the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

The parting of Joseph and his brethren was an affecting one; they now understood the meaning of their previous experiences, including the cup found in Benjamin's sack; they saw that these matters all were leading up to the present manifestation to them of the love and sympathy of Joseph, and now, as expressing his special love for Benjamin he kissed him first, weeping tears of joy and recognition, and then did to all the others similarly, and sent them on their way. There is power in affection, in love; but it is necessary that the loving affection be manifested, ere that power can be felt. A difficulty with many parents, husbands, wives, children, is that they do not *manifest* all the affection which they *feel*. Pride or fear or some other thing hinders, restrains them, from being as frank with each other as they should be. Joseph's example here is worthy of emulation. He was the wronged one; he was the one in power; he was the one who should have the dignity, and he, therefore, was the one who could best afford to humble himself, and to kiss and make an ado over his brethren. We may be sure that they appreciated it; that such a manifestation of affection on the part of the highly exalted brother touched a tender spot in their hearts, and doubtless worked good for them to the remainder of their lives. And so we may find it with our friends and relatives, that a manifestation of our love and kind feeling toward them will not only be reciprocated, but will do them good; and that our affection restrained of expression will leave an icy coldness, which nothing else will remove, and that such coldness will affect not only them but ourselves also unfavorably —sapping all of life's joy-springs.

Let us remember, in this connection, the words of our text, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Joseph exemplified this advice. He not only did not permit the evil course of his brethren to overcome him, and make him evil and bitter, but he overcame their evil tendencies, characters and dispositions by his love, his mercy, his kindness, his generosity,—affecting them favorably, no doubt, for the remainder of their days. Such a course is much more incumbent upon us than upon Joseph. He did it spontaneously; we have had the example and precepts of our Lord and his apostles, and, as well, the begetting of the spirit of holiness. "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and God-likeness?"

"SPEAKING PERVERSE THINGS"

To what absurdity, yea blasphemy, men will sometimes go in their endeavor to say something "new" that will bring them into prominence before the public. The following utterance of a Brooklyn preacher deserves first place in this unsavory list. The pity is that his congregation and the public press put themselves on his low plane as respects spiritual things. What could be thought of Dr. Hillis' claim to believe in the vicarious atonement of Christ for the sins of the world, after we know his general view of the subject of *atonement* and entering the holy of holies as expressed in the following clipping. The gentleman's erudition is so highly esteemed among men that he is decreed a "doctor of divinity;" but it has utterly unfitted him to be a minister of the Gospel of Christ—a declarer of the only name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved, and of the only vicarious sin offering, of the only and great High Priest, who has entered the holy of holies by virtue of his own sacrifice finished at Calvary and which alone has merit before God for the forgiveness of sins.

SLAIN FOR THE NATION'S SINS

New York, Sept. 19.—The Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis spoke this morning at the memorial services in Plymouth church, Brooklyn. He said in part:

"Among the heroes and martyrs who have died vicariously let us make a large place for our slain leader. In the highest sense, the president has now entered into the holy of holies, bearing the sins of his people with him. Reverently we confess that he was wounded for our transgressions and he was bruised for our iniquities.

"With sorrow and shame, we hear and now confess that for our transgressions he was stricken. But we remember that the angel of martyrdom and the angel of immortality are twin brothers. Perhaps the death of our president has shocked the people into the consciousness of their sins. Perhaps his blood will cleanse away the people's transgressions. If today, assembled in church and hall, the people register a vow that they will strengthen the home, the school, the press and the church, through wise legislation and noble precept, expel anarchy, lawlessness, injustice, class hatred from the land, our martyred president will not have died in vain. Then, verily, he will have slain more in his death than in his life."

THE CLOSE OF A NOBLE LIFE

Gen. 50:15-26.—Nov. 3.

"So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—Psa. 90:3.

Jacob was a hundred and thirty years old when his sons returned with news of Joseph's greatness in the land of Egypt. His joy at hearing that his son was still alive, and now great, was off-set by the natural weakness of his advanced years. Hence he could scarcely trust himself to believe the report, even with the explanation given by his sons, of how they had sold Joseph into slavery, and had besmeared his coat with blood for their father's deception, twenty-two years before. However, the story of his sons was well attested by the royal present which Joseph had sent to him, and by the Egyptian wagons sent to bear him and the family as comfortably as possible in the journey. These wagons were doubtless the carriages of that day, workmanship in that line not having advanced to present proficiency. Jacob was persuaded, and started on the journey, during which he offered sacrifices to the Lord, possibly questioning in his own mind the wisdom of thus leaving the land of promise, and whether or not it might be interpreted of the Lord as an abandonment of his faith, or a relinquishment of the blessing which from earliest childhood had centered and directed his course of life.

The Lord answered his query, and his sacrifices (probably by a dream) assuring him that he was taking the proper course in going into Egypt, and that ultimately his posterity should come again into "the land of promise." The spiritual Israelite should thus have in view at all times that which by his covenant has become the center of his life, the center of his interest, of his hopes and of his aims—the Abrahamic covenant and his share therein. He too, must be on the look-out lest there shall be deceptions of the Adversary combined with earthly prosperity and the world's favor. When we are undergoing disadvantages or persecutions we are in much less danger than when the tide of worldly prosperity sets in our direction. Let us remember at such times to go often to the Lord, to seek to know his will, fully, completely; to bring to mind our covenant and its value, as above all earthly considerations. And let us offer unto the Lord the true sacrifice—presenting the merits of our dear Redeemer's sacrifice as the ground of our acceptance, repeating the full devotion of our hearts—renewing our covenant. This is the only safe way in this pilgrim journey.

We pass hastily over the narrative of the presentation of Jacob and Joseph's brethren to Pharoah, and their settlement in the land of Goshen. After they had resided there seventeen years (Gen. 47:28) Jacob died, was buried with all the ceremonials common to the Egyptian court, because he was a relative of Pharaoh's representative. And it is here that our lesson proper begins. Joseph's brothers judged him to have a disposition considerably like their own; they could not believe him to be thoroughly generous and forgiving, and though they acknowledged his kindness toward them, they said to themselves, This was merely on account of our father Jacob, and not on our account, and now that our father is dead Joseph will treat us differently. It was because moved with such feelings that they first sent a messenger to Joseph, and afterward followed themselves into his presence, to ask his mercy and to declare themselves willing to be his servants.

It strikes us that this well illustrates the condition of many who come to the Lord with an insufficiency of faith. They are convinced of his mercy toward them, and yet are always fearful. The truth is that they do not know him; they think of him as moved by like passions with themselves, more or less depraved, more or less controlled by animosity. It is an evidence of growth in grace when we come to that place in our experiences where, admitting our own guilt and unworthiness of divine favor we have, nevertheless, become so intimately acquainted with the Lord as to have a full assurance of faith in his declaration that our sins are forgiven. It is to such a development of grace that the Lord referred, saying, "This is life eternal, that they might *know* thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) But such a knowledge is not to be obtained instantaneously, but rather is to be the result of a growth in grace; for we grow in grace as we grow in knowledge, and we grow in knowledge as we grow in grace;—the two keeping pace, the one with the other, as do our feet in walking. It is because the majority who have named the name of Christ do not grow in grace and in knowledge that they fail to attain to that grand condition of which the Apostle speaks as "full assurance of faith"—full confidence in the Lord, in his goodness, in his wisdom, in his love, in his providential care over all of their affairs. And the lack of such growth is owing to their failure to offer their sacrifices unto the Lord—to commit all of their ways to him.

Joseph's answer to his brethren was most noble, and gives good evidence that his conduct was not merely an outward profession, but the result of an established character. He did not even say to himself, My brothers have misunderstood me, but though I freely forgive them I will use their fear as a stepping stone to greater power over them, and will say to them, I will do you no harm, but on the contrary treat you most kindly, as long as you are fully obedient to me, and send me presents yearly, or give me tithes of your increase, or come annually to make obeisance before me, and to acknowledge afresh your wrong, and to confess my generosity. No; he had too noble a character for this; he was too unselfish. On the contrary, he said, "Fear not; for am I in the place of God?" The secret of his right course with his brethren was the correct view which he took of the matter himself; he saw himself as merely God's servant in dealing with his brethren, and in all things. He saw that God's providence had been in the whole affair. How could he think otherwise? He saw the fulfilment of his inspired dreams; he had noted the miraculous leading of divine providence in the various steps by which he had been led from slavery to the throne of Egypt; he probably reflected that if now he should either do evil toward his brethren, or think unkindly of them, he would be casting a reflection upon one of the instrumentalities which God had used for his blessing. He could not do this and be loyal to and appreciative of divine power, and he communicated to his brothers for their encouragement and comfort this thought; that although they had purposed evil, and had done evil, nevertheless the thing really done was a good thing, but for which they deserved no credit, but discredit, and God all the honor. He would have them see that this was the basis of his dealing with them, and that he felt not the slightest animosity, but a full appreciation of the divine blessing, which had come through their course.

How great a blessing it would be for all spiritual Israelites to learn well this lesson; viz., that if we accept the results of any matter as being good, and if we realize that we were guided to those results by divine providence, we should think and feel most generously, most kindly, toward those who were the instruments used by providence, notwithstanding the fact that they might have been unwilling instructors, or, like Joseph's brethren, have verily intended opposite results. Those who are enabled to take such a view of affairs and forces oprating in their daily lives are enabled "always to triumph through the Lord," as the Apostle expresses it. And such find no room for bitterness or railing, either against Satan or against any of his servants. 2 Cor. 2:14; Jude 9.

This does not mean that they call the evil course good; nor that they will or should have any sympathy with the evil course; nor with the evil motives inspiring it; nor with the evil persons, so long as they are in harmony with the evil motives and evil course. But it does mean that their minds will be so filled with the thought of divine supervision in their affairs, and how all the time they were safe under the protecting care, the shadow of the Almighty, and that all things are working for their good, however they outwardly appear, that they will not have any bitterness whatever, either of word or of heart, toward those who attempted to, and outwardly did, do them evil, but whose evil intentions and conduct were overruled by the Almighty. In proportion as the Lord's people get into the large place where they can take a broad view of the situation, in that same proportion will they find themselves not only delivered from anger and malice and hatred and strife toward their opponents, but instead, possessed of "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," ruling in their hearts, keeping them secure amidst all of the storms and vicissitudes of life—because their anchor holds within the vail. They have "set to their seal that the Lord is true," and hence can rejoice always.

Not only was Joseph's course the right one in the sight of God, the noble one in the sight of all right-minded people, the blessed one as respected his brothers, their comfort, their peace, their love toward him,—but it was in every sense the proper and the best course as respected his own peace, joy, blessing. When he allayed their fears and comforted them, and spake kindly unto them, and promised them and their families the same care as when their father lived, he was taking also the course which must have brought the greatest blessing and comfort to his own heart. All do not know it, but it is a fact that the grandest quality that man can exercise, and the one which brings the largest amount of blessing itself, is the exercise of the God-like quality of *mercy*, compassion, benevolence. Those of spiritual Israel who have not practiced in this direction are not far advanced in spiritual development, and those who have practiced realize the truthfulness of the Lord's words, "Blessed are the merciful," and "Blessed are the peacemakers."

The next few verses of our lesson cover the period of fifty-four years from the death of Jacob to the death of Joseph; and give us comparatively little information, except that they give fresh evidence that the basis of Joseph's strength of character and fidelity to principle which carried him safely through the vicissitudes of his remarkable experience was faith in God—faith in the Abrahamic promise. And so we find it today, and through the past, so far as we are able to decipher the teachings of history; those who have been the Lord's faithful people, have all been inspired by the hope set before us in the gospel. This is the hope of which the Apostle speaks, saying that it is "an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast;" —it holds firm and secure in the storms and difficulties of life, and prevents the wrecking of our lives upon the rocks of sin, deception, doubt, selfishness, etc.

Who can doubt that it was Joseph's respect unto the divine promise that kept him faithful as Potiphar's steward, again in the prison, and again as Pharaoh's representative in the throne? In proportion as heavenly promises are before our minds, earthly and selfish ambitions are dwarfed and lose their power over us. Joseph's eye of faith, centered upon God's promise to Abraham and upon the land of Canaan, exercised a potent influence, because he realized that to be a friend of God, and an heir of God's promises, called for a purity of heart and of life which God could approve. Looking back he saw the influence of these promises upon his great grandfather, Abraham, upon his grandfather, Isaac, and upon his father, Jacob, and we see that the same promise controlled him to his great advantage. The people who today become enamored of wealth and of position and of power, so that they would be willing to sacrifice principles of justice and of truth that they might selfishly grasp these, thereby give evidence that they lack the power of the truth, the power of the Abrahamic promise, to control them and their lives. Had the Abrahamic promise not been forceful and weighty in the mind of Joseph he might have been plotting and scheming for the throne of Egypt or to have obtained the mastery over his own brethren; but realizing that God was behind the promise he was waiting patiently for that, as the greatest and most wonderful blessing conceivable —far beyond the things which he could have grasped, and the grasping of which would have meant his relinquishment of God's promise. Not, however, that he expected to go up out of Egypt into the land of Canaan himself; for he evidently knew, and it probably came down to us through him, that God had appeared to Abraham, and told him that his posterity should be in Egypt, and be evilly treated there, and that the period of their sojourn would be four hundred years.

Joseph's hope in God and in that Abrahamic promise must have been, therefore, a hope through a *resurrection* of the dead; and although it taught a valuable lesson, it was doubtless because of his imperfect understanding of the resurrection, and the power of God, that he so particularly gave commandment respecting the carrying up of his bones out of Egypt into Canaan, when the time of God's favor should come, and Israel should be delivered. And so must the spiritual Israelite have his mind centered in the future fulfillment of the divine promises, through a *resurrection* of the dead, if he would be delivered from the wordly influences of this present time, and be kept loyal to the Lord and to the highest principles of character. This faith in a future kingdom, future honor, future riches, future glory, dwarfs into insignificance the honor and glory and wealth of this present time, and makes all true believers separate from the world in these respects, and thus prepares them to think of the affairs of this present time from a more just and more equitable and dispassionate standpoint —they are removed from the immediate influence of selfishness in its most powerful forms, even though they still find, notwithstanding their faith in the promises, the necessity for keeping the body under, and mortifying its natural disposition toward selfishness.

Our *Golden Text* is appropriate to the lesson and every way worthy of the attention of the spiritual Israelite. We know that our days are numbered as respects the present life. We know that we need not expect eternal life under present conditions, and thus far the world and the Christian are on a common level; but here they part, the one saying to himself, "Life is short, and I must grasp and use it for myself, the best I can." The other, with a higher wisdom, that cometh from above, realizes his own inability and insufficiency, heeds the message from the Lord respecting an eternal life beyond the tomb—the resurrection life, and goes to the Lord, petitioning for wisdom respecting the life that now is, as well as that which is to come.

In answer to his petitions he is taught of God in the experience of life to more and more appreciate the eternal, the everlasting life, and to spend time and energy in building up such a character as would be pleasing to his Creator, and bring the reward of "life everlasting." The Christian, in numbering his days, does not do so with a doleful or disconsolate sentiment, although he does so with sobriety. He counts the days as they go as so many blessings, so many privileges, so many opportunities to "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," to render assistance to others in the pilgrim journey, and to develop in himself more and more of the character pleasing in the sight of God—to become more and more a copy of God's dear Son. As he numbers the days gliding swiftly by, and perceives how he is using them in harmony with the divine instructions, he ultimately comes to that condition of heart in which he is longing for the kingdom and the full attainment of all the glories into which he hopes to be ushered, as a sharer in the first (*chief*) resurrection. And from this standpoint he numbers the days as they go by joyfully, and is glad when the days of the years of his present pilgrimage end; because his hope in the Lord, and in the gracious features of his plan, is growing daily stronger, clearer and brighter.

LETTERS FROM THE HOME FIELD

[The following letter, written on return from the Oakland convention to the brother who so kindly entertained the friends, will be very interesting to many of our readers. We publish it with Brother Weber's permission.—Editor.]

My Dear Brother Weber:—I am glad to write you that I arrived home Tuesday morning. Had a very pleasant and profitably journey, for which I thank and praise my heavenly Father. How much I thank him upon every remembrance of you! He put it into your heart to write to me; then so to arrange that I met you on that memorable day in Baltimore; then in inviting me to this last feast at your home—to meet Brother Russell, your own dear family, and so many of God's dear children; then to feast at our Father's table, Oh, how good it tasted! I felt so hungry for the truth. Although the Lord has richly blessed me since this glorious truth began to dawn upon my soul, I had never met with but two people of the *Dawn* faith before this.

I have written a long letter to the church, where I have been a member for nearly thirty years, asking them to drop my name from their roll of membership, and giving my reason for this. I shall also have to write to several missionary societies and other churches and colleges where I have been a contributor. Of course for the present fiscal year I shall have to contribute according to my pledges, but after that it will close and I shall be able, if the Lord continues to prosper me, to do more for this truth for which I now stand.

Well, I will not weary you with too long a letter. I thank the Lord for you and ask you to extend my sincere thanks to dear Mrs. Weber and the girls for all their work of labor and love, also to the boys that were kept so busy. I know God will bless them. And now whenever you come East remember your oldest (or youngest) boy in Cromwell, Conn. I shall indeed esteem it a favor to have the privilege of having you with us, and any of your family that can conveniently come this way. I am arranging with Brother Russell to have a Pilgrim brother come here and give Chart lectures. Yours in the Master's service, A. N. PIERSON.—*Connecticut*.

Dear Brother Russell:—I have not written for a long time; nevertheless my thoughts and prayers are constantly with you and the friends at the "Bible House."

Circumstances forbid my entering the colporteur service, as I had so fondly hoped; but I wish you to know that my zeal for the cause is no less fervent than when I was first enlightened. The experience of those days was sweet to me, for then I drank deep draughts from the fount of knowledge—it was sweet in my mouth, but you are acquainted with the after effects. We can have Christian experience only as we put on Christ; and since it is my daily labor to be transformed by the renewing of the mind into an example of godliness, I can bear witness to the truth of the experiences of the brethren. You may remember how anxious I was in the beginning to spread the truth; how confident that I would be an excellent instructor of the foolish and erring ones. Having read four volumes of *Dawn*, I felt there was very little more to be known about the Scriptures; but now having advanced further in the knowledge of God's plan, and having developed further in Christian character, I feel thoroughly unfit to be a teacher of so great truths.

The school I had last winter was closed prematurely for lack of students. I have tried in many ways to provide for my temporal necessities more comfortably at home, but they have all failed;—rather they have not materialized as I expected; but perhaps from the Lord's standpoint they were a success. I know one thing; they have taught me humility and dependence upon God's loving care. This assurance that I am still in the way I think is due you.

The *Watch Tower* I find an indispensable *vade mecum*, ever full of instruction profitable for all who run for the attainment of the joy set before us. May the Lord ever provide you wisdom, strength and courage, that you may incessantly preach the Word, endure hardness as a good soldier, and be faithful unto death. Yours in the service of our present Lord,

JAMES A. BROWNE.—*Georgia*.

[The above is from a colored brother; and incidentally we remark that about 200 colored persons on the *Watch Tower* lists give good evidence that they are of the "pure in heart," "accepted in the Beloved." Some have thought that we in some measure disdained brethren of color, because we stipulated that the "volunteer" distribution should be done at *white Protestant* churches. But not so: we meant no disparagement of Catholics, nor of blacks; but arranged thus merely because their average standards of intelligence, etc., do not seem to warrant the necessary outlay.—Editor.]

JEPHTHAH'S VOW—A BETTER TRANSLATION

In our September first issue we answered a question respecting Jephthah's daughter. Since then Brother C. J. Peterson calls to our attention the following item from the Appendix of the Emphatic Diaglott:

"The original, Judges 11:30, when properly translated, reads: 'And it shall be that whoever comes forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace, from the children of Ammon, shall surely be Jehovah's, and I will offer to him a burnt offering.' The vow contains two parts: (1) That person who would meet him on his return should be Jehovah's, and be dedicated forever to his service, as Hannah devoted Samuel before he was born. (1 Sam. 1:11) (2) That Jephthah himself would offer a burnt offering to Jehovah.

"Human sacrifices were prohibited by the Law (Deut. 12:30); and the priests would not offer them. Such a vow would have been impious, and could not have been performed. It may be safely concluded that Jephthah's daughter was devoted to *perpetual virginity;* and with this idea agrees the statements that 'she went to bewail her virginity;' that the women went four times in every year to mourn or talk *with* (not *for*) her; that Jephthah did according to his vow, and that 'she knew no man.'"

We are glad that our attention is called to this evidently better translation, which clears away the difficulty, and shows that the burnt-offering was one thing, and the devotion of the daughter another thing. We are to remember, too, the testimony of the entire Old Testament, to the effect that prior to our Lord's birth all the women of Israel coveted earnestly the great blessing and privilege of being possibly the mother of Messiah, or amongst his forebears. We are to remember also the exultant language of the Virgin Mary when finally it was announced to her that she had won this long-sought prize: "Henceforth all shall call me blessed"—all shall recognize me as the one who has attained this blessed privilege of being the mother of Messiah.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

A NEW ERA FOR THE JEWS

London, September 24.—Israel Zangwill, the novelist, poet and playwright, who has become one of the most prominent of the prophets in the Zionist movement, gave today some significant facts concerning the coming conference of the Zionists at Basle, Switzerland. "It is not impossible," said Mr. Zangwill, "that Dr. Herzl may have a great surprise for the world, to be announced at that convention. He has been negotiating in person with the Sultan of Turkey for a charter for Palestine, and it is possible that he has obtained that charter. It seems likely at any rate that the charter may be had before many months.

"Once the charter is assured, much larger contributions should be obtained. We have at present about a million dollars, most of it from three or four subscribers. We're not going to admit anyone except skilled workmen. Jews who want to get into Palestine under the new charter will have to come up to a high standard financially, physically and morally in order to be admitted. If we were going to let in those who were looking for food where there was no food except such as the colonists make for themselves, it would lead to a great disaster."

"What sort of government would Palestine have under the charter from the Sultan?" asked the reporter.

"Well, there's the Chartered Company in South Africa, for instance. Perhaps it would be something like that. But you may say that the leaders of the Zionists have read deeply enough in their histories to know that the pilgrim fathers didn't have the present constitution of the United States in their heads when they sailed for America. The constitution evolved itself—and just so the government of Palestine will evolve itself."

WATER WORKS IN JERUSALEM

The ancient aqueducts and reservoirs of Jerusalem testify to the abundant provision that was made for running water in the Holy City when it was the metropolis of the Jewish state. It is only within the last few weeks that they have been brought again into the service of the city, which, during intervening centuries, has been dependent upon the scanty accumulation of rain water. The droughts of the present summer led to distress, which, happily, the new governor of Jerusalem, Mohammed Pjevad Pasha, had the will and energy to combat. He secured the Sultan's consent to lay immediately a pipe from Solomon's pools, nine miles south of the city. The pipe draws from the sealed fountain mentioned in the song of Solomon: "My beloved is like a spring, shut up in a fountain sealed," the deep down subterranean spring, which, from the time of Solomon, flowed through an arched channel to a distributing chamber. The tunnel is roofed with stones in the shape of an inverted V. It is one of the oldest structures in existence. It passes through the valley where are the beautiful ancient gardens of Solomon mentioned in Ecclesiastes. After passing around the slope of Zion, it enters the city through the grounds of the mosque Omar, which is in the old temple area.

This drawing from Solomon's pools will enable the use of twelve ancient fountains in the city. It will require twenty kilometers of piping, ten centimeters in diameter when finally installed. The governor has also successfully repaired the Virgin's fount, in the valley of Jehosaphat, outside of the city walls. Its waters pass to the pool of Siloam to a tunnel built by Hezekiah, as his workmen recorded in a rough-hewn Hebrew, which is the oldest inscription extant. It was stolen, but afterward recovered, and is now in a museum at Constantinople.

A ROMANIST VIEW OF MORTAL SIN

"The new Auxiliary Bishop of the Roman Catholic diocese of Hexham and Newcastle made his visitation to St. Joseph's, West Hartlepool, on Sunday. In the course of his address he said it was one of his duties to point out their faults. He reproved them for their irregular attendance at mass, for drunkenness, and for the irregular attendance of their children at the day schools. The practice of Roman Catholics sending their children to Protestant schools when they had schools of their own, he said, was one of which no bishop could approve. It was a mortal sin, for which no priest could give absolution."

The above is clipped from an English journal and serves well to show how men who are not vicious may be combative and dictatorial to such a degree as to not only do violence to God's word and character, but also to insult reason, even in its most degraded form. This bishop is very new and fresh every way, when he thinks that even ignorant Romanists will believe him sincere in thus declaring that the sending of Catholic children to the public schools constitutes a *sin unto death* —that hath never forgiveness. And by this the bishop means a sin unto endless life in the torments of hell. Poor world! the "doctors of divinity" have long been Satan's deceiving agents; but thank God for the promise of his word in Rev. 20: 2, 3.

UNREAL HOPES AND FALSE PROFESSIONS

An editorial comment in a prominent New York journal says:

"Future life, no matter how gorgeously it is depicted, is, and must be, a depressing subject for people of one sort, comfortable, prosperous, and self-satisfied. For before they can make their triumphal entry into heaven they feel they have to make their exit from a world in which they are far more thoroughly at home than in any heaven they have ever heard of. Hence the difficulty about the rich man's entering the kingdom of heaven is not confined to one side only. The rich man, for his part, is not in a hurry to get there. And inasmuch as people of this kind set the tone in society, it is no wonder that scientific investigation of immortality is not encouraged. People do not want to hear about it, and above all they do not want to know about it. For if once they knew, it would be most inconvenient. They would have to act on their knowledge, and that might upset the habits of a life time. And the older one gets the less one likes that. What the decision was would not so much matter; whether science decided for immortality or for annihilation, the blissful ignorance that enabled one to ignore the subject in ordinary life would be gone forever. Hence an uncertainty to which we have grown adapted is deliberately preferred to a knowledge that would involve the re-adjustment of ingrained habits."

* * *

"When the Son of man cometh shall he find the faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) It surely is very scarce at present: and as the higher critics proceed, and as the evolution theories spread, faith in God and in his Word becomes more and more vague and lifeless. How thankful we should be to God for the "meat in due season" and light of present truth which hinders us from being "shaken" as are others. Heb. 12:25-28.

ANTI-CLERICAL AGITATION IN SPAIN

The humiliation of Spain in the war with the United States has given a basis to various movements for reform in the land of the Don, politically, socially, and ecclesiastically. One of these movements, headed by Don Sigismundo Peyordeix, is attracting considerable attention in church circles and according to the *Frankfurter Zeitung* is developing rapidly both in extent and in intensity. The agitation is anti-clerical, but not anti-Catholic. According to the same journal, Don Sigismundo sees in the Jesuit order the chief source of the ills that have befallen the church and the people of Spain. Originally a priest in Barcelona, he has now, in conjunction with a number of other dissatisfied ecclesiastics organized a formal crusade against the *status quo* in the Spanish church. His official program is announced in these words: "We are Catholic, but not clerical: on the contrary, anti-clerical." The organ of the movement has been a weekly journal called *El Urbiorc*, so named after a famous mountain fastness which neither the Mohammedans nor the French were ever able to subdue. In addition to this journal, Sigismundo has recently published a larger work against the Jesuits, entitled "*Crisis de la Compania de Jesus*." and is developing great literary activity in non-Spanish periodicals also. The first organ of the movement having been suppressed, a new periodical was called into existence, called *El Cosmopolita*. In a recent indictment of the Jesuit order the Spanish agitator designated twenty-four points, in which he considers a reform necessary. Among these are the following: Alleged decline of the true worship of God and of the true following of the crucified Savior: exaggerated and idolatrous reverence for the saints: the worship of the Sacred Heart and other objects of adoration: decrease in the practice of Christian virtues, such as righteousness, wisdom, temperance; and the increase of external religious exercises that appeal only to the senses, such as processions, festivals, and the whole body of ceremonies: decrease in love and care for the poor, and the growth of the desire for riches, power, and influence; neglect of the Gospel and the traditions and an increasing exaggeration of churchly authority and especially of the power of the Vatican: simony and favoritism in the papal and episcopal government: the prominence given to political trickery in the management of church affairs, and the deterioration of love, justice, and holiness in the leaders of the church; tyranny on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities over the lower clergy and the people. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* quotes Don Sigismundo as saying:

'Against all these weaknesses and evils, which indicate a terrible degeneration of Christian spirit in the church, I have determined to raise my voice day and night, with the permission of my superiors or without this permission. These evils spring from the spirit of Anti-Christ, and to fight this I do not need the permission of Pope or bishop; the call of God and my conscience are sufficient authority."

He also makes it a point to attack the enforced celibacy of the priests, declaring that while celibacy is a good thing in itself it is such only when it is adopted as a matter of free choice and not of compulsion. With reference to the outcome of the agitation and of the present condition of affairs, he writes futher as follows:

"What will be the consequences as far as the future is concerned? This is hard to say beforehand. In the church there is a schism threatening. The Primate of Toledo and the Archbishop of Seville are the two opposite poles in the Spanish church. The former aims at a reintroduction of the Inquisition, and the latter strives for the same freedom of the clergy that prevails in the United States. In political circles there prevails an opposition to the liberal spirit of the lower classes, and the higher classes are sighing for the Inquisition. In economic affairs suffering is rapidly increasing and immortality is making rapid strides. Corruption in official circles caused the catastrophe in Cuba and in the Philippines, and Spaniards, monks, and Free Masons have all acted like robbers. Spain is the most unhappy land on earth because it is ruled by the Jesuit order. The people are without faith or confidence, without manhood, without strength, without law, without science, even without the sense of honor. The highest that this country can do is to hope that the vulture of Jesuitism may soon cease to devour the vitals of this people. However, as it seems, there is the dawn of a new day, when the people will take terrible vengeance on those who have materially and morally ruined their fatherland."—*The Literary Digest.*

ARE YOU WATCHING?

Are you watching for the "presence"
Of the Reaper of the field?
Knowest thou what "signs" proclaim him
Tho' at present he's concealed?
Dost thou watch with straining vision
For the dawning of the day?
Can'st thou hear the legions tramping
On Emmanuel's highway?

Art thou faint with weary vigils,
Looking for thy coming Lord?
Have thine eyes grown dim with weeping,
Sick at heart with hope deferred?
Sore discouraged at the prospect
Of the field so full of tares,
And the prince of evil working
To encompass us with snares?

Sad indeed it seems, my brother,
When we view from earthly height;
For we fail to see the sunshine
That disperses present night.
Climb the peak, O, weary pilgrim,
Of our God's eternal truth,
And from thence behold the landscape!
Then shalt thou renew thy youth.

We'll not think God's arm is shortened
When upon that height we stand;
For his purposes are rip'ning,
And his own shall rule the land.
Tho the night precedes the morning,
Yet at last shall rise the Sun;
And the shadows quickly vanished,
Shall proclaim the morn has come.

Know his "presence" then, O pilgrim!
"In like manner" hath he come,
Reapers, now the sickle wielding,
Soon shall sing the "Harvest Home."
Tares are burning. Wheat is gath'ring,
Soon shall all be gathered in,
Welcome ye the "Lord of Harvest,"
Who shall triumph over sin.

A. J. Morris, M. D.

HELL LESS POPULAR WITH METHODISTS

Rev. J. A. Faulkner of Drew Theological Seminary has given to the world his opinion on this subject, in the columns of *The Methodist Review.* We quote as follows:

HELL ONCE POPULAR

"(1) It is within the memory of men now living that frequently the declaration was heard from the pulpit that there were infants and children in hell. (2) The descriptions of hell were frightfully realistic; that is, realistic as judged from a literal interpretation of the Scripture. Vivid pictures of physical torment were frequent. (3) The impression was made that the vast majority of mankind—including all, or nearly all, the heathen world—were doomed to eternal destruction [*torment?*]. (4) This doctrine formed a staple of preaching to an extent not known today. Then it was a frequent theme, now it is a rare theme in the pulpit.

WHY LESS POPULAR NOW

"If we inquire the causes which have led to this change of emphasis and attitude toward the doctrine of hell, I think we may mention the following: (1) The growth of humanitarian sentiment. Thirty or fifty years ago there were severer ideas as to punishment in general, and a more calloused feeling in regard to suffering, than is the case today. Take the treatment of prisoners and the prevalence of capital punishment. Treatment that we would consider shockingly cruel, that would arouse a feeling of indignation in all minds, was then taken as a matter of course. It was so in regard to school discipline. I was in common school between 1865 and 1872. In years so recent as those, I say distinctly that the punishments in vogue were cruel and barbarous. But they were never so considered then. The growth of love, the larger influence of the spirit of Christ on society, has made an entire change in the atmosphere in which we live. That change has silently made obsolete and of none effect the kind of preaching that once was powerful on the minds of men. (2) Theological developments have also had their influence. Methodism has made familiar the thought that God deals not only justly with all men, but mercifully as well, that there is an impartiality in his treatment of souls, that men must be given an equal chance of salvation, that no man will be condemned for rejecting a Christ he never heard of, or for sinning against light he never had. . . . . .

"(3) The better understanding of Scripture also accounts in part for the change in the thought of hell. Our familiarity with the modes of speech in the East, the intense imagery, the word-painting, the use of parable, figure, simile, with which Oriental speech abounds—all this has made us skeptical of the hard and matter-of-fact methods of our Western speech when it coarsely makes literal what the sacred writers left figurative. In other words we now understand in that fresh, imaginative, child-like age the sacred writers, necessarily spoke, as Easterns, that the holy Spirit had to use the only vehicle that was open to him, and that therefore we must seek to interpret in our Western tongue the truths that underlay the extravagant, tropical descriptions of the Oriental writer. The growth of the science of Biblical hermaneutics has had its share in modifying the old-fashioned ideas of hell.

"First, it has made sad the hearts of those whom God has not made sad. It has turned the hopes of thousands of devout believers into ashes, and filled the souls of God's children with tormenting doubts and dark forebodings as to their own salvation and the salvation of their friends. The brilliant and pious Henry Rogers expressed the despair which this doctrine wrought in him: 'For my part I should not grieve if the whole race of mankind died in its fourth year. As far as I can see I do not know that it would be a thing much to be lamented.' Albert Barnes confesses to the same confusion of spirit: 'In the distress and anguish of my own spirit I confess that I see no light whatever. I see not one ray to disclose to me the reason why sin came into the world, why the earth is strewn with the dying and the dead, and why man must suffer to all eternity.' These two testimonials from eminent divines in England and America may be taken as representing thousands of similar questionings and thoughts of despair in those who have tried to realize the full meaning of the popular doctrine when it was a living thing: Second, the doctrine has worked havoc in turning those who otherwise might have been Christians into infidels. It was this which made an infidel of the elder Mill. 'Compared with this,' he says, 'every other objection to Christianity sinks into insignificance.' It helped make Theodore Parker a Unitarian. It gave an immense impetus to the spread of Universalism and Unitarianism, and afforded a ready fulcrum to the lever by which the preachers of these two sects lifted the people away from Christianity. It will be found that the preaching of hell, in the fashion common some years ago, works in an entirely opposite way from that which the preacher wishes: that is, it turns those away from Christ whom he desires to influence by a salutary fear, and those who are already Christians or on the way to Christ it fills with anguish, doubts and despair."

* * *

We are glad to see this professor so candid and outspoken; and rejoice that the editor of *The Methodist Review* had the courage to publish the article. It will do good in the way of loosing the bonds of superstition and helping prepare some for the truth; yet it is deficient in that it does not go far enough and show up the basis of the error to be the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of God's Word through mistranslations, etc., which have deceived the minds of lay-readers and grossly misrepresented the divine character and plan. For these reasons it *tends* in the direction it condemns—toward Universalism and Unitarianism, with all that this means as respects a denial of the fall of man and of his redemption by the great ransom-price of Calvary. It means a loss of reverence for the Bible under the false supposition that it supports or in any degree sanctions this atrocious calumny against God and human reason.

Now is the time to properly assist those whom Dr. Faulkner may have awakened—before they stumble into skepticism. We know of nothing so helpful to such newly awakened ones as the pamphlet, *"What Say the Scriptures About Hell?"* followed by *"The Divine Plan of the Ages."* We supply these "helping hands" or "Bible keys" at very low prices or loan them free to those who so request.

ISRAEL OPPRESSED IN EGYPT

EXOD. 1:1-14.—Nov. 10.

"God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant."—Exod. 2:24.

Slavery is too strong a word to use with reference to Israel's condition in Egypt. We have seen that Jacob and his family, servants, herds and flocks, were received graciously for Joseph's sake, and located upon the grassy plains known as the land of Goshen, Pharaoh evidently in this matter was controlled by a spirit of benevolence, and by an appreciation of Joseph, and by a realization that his brethren, though not his equals, were men of ability, and likely to make good neighbors. He probably also recognized that as the Egyptians were not a pastoral people the Israelites would not be serious competitors in business, but on the contrary would probably help along the general interests of the kingdom. Moreover, he perceived that the land of Goshen, being toward the East, would serve as a measure of protection against invaders. But whatever his conjectures, he evidently could not have imagined so rapid a development, so great an increase of numbers in that people. That their increase was phenomenal is fully attested by vs. 7 of the lesson. "The children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly and multiplied and waxed exceedingly mighty; and the land (of Goshen) was filled with them." Here are five different expressions used to indicate their phenomenal growth. And when we remember that these all sprang from Isaac, and that he was the only son of his mother, and born when his father was over a hundred years old; and when we remember, further, that Jacob also, was born only after repeated prayers, and that Rachel his wife similarly was long unfruitful, it seemed the more evident that the Lord's providence had much to do with the change which came over Jacob's family after it was transplanted to Egypt.

The seventy souls mentioned in verse 5 were all males except two. Dinah, Jacob's daughter, and Sarah, his granddaughter. (Gen. 46) It is reasonable, therefore, to infer that the females of the company, not included in the count, were about as many more. Neither is it unreasonable to infer that since Ahrabam's household represented many servants and helpers, Isaac's also, and Jacob's, these may have accompanied Israel to Egypt and have been merged into the nation under the law of circumcision. It is well that we have these facts in mind when considering that from the time of Jacob's death to the time of the Exodus was a period of only 215 years; and yet in the meantime the Israelites were so fruitful, increased so abundantly, multiplied and waxed exceeding mighty, to such an extent that at that time the male representatives of the nation numbered 600,000, which, counting four to a family, would imply a total enumeration of 2,400,000.

Infidelity has been inclined to scoff at this record, and to declare that such an increase was impossible; but we are to bear in mind the distinct statement of verse 7, to the effect that the increase was phenomenal, beyond all precedent or ordinary calculation. One of the Hebrew words used in describing the increase gives the thought of *swarming* (as bees and fishes), and this in accord with the divine forestatement. (Gen. 46:3) M. Millett, French Consul in Egypt, declares: "The air of this country is much purer and better than in any other. This salubrity of the air imparts itself to all organic beings, plants and animals. The females, not only of the human species, but also of the animals, are more fruitful than any other in the world." Doubtless also morality, freedom from wars, pestilences and special diseases, had much to do with the rapid increase of that people. As affecting the reasonableness of the record, Prof. Curtis quotes a volume of family memoirs, which shows that 5,564 persons are known to have descended from Lieut. John Hollister, who emigrated to America in 1642. It is said that in the early settlements of North America the actual rate of increase for several successive periods was for the population to double itself every fifteen years. Calculating at this rate, and counting husbands or wives for the seventy persons in the text, (in all, 140), the increase would amount to 2,293.760 in 200 years.

The statement of verse 8 doubtless applies to some period after the death of Joseph. Since Joseph ruled Egypt for eighty years, it is quite probable that there was more than one Pharaoh on the throne, and it is the general supposition amongst scholars that the new king of verse 8 signifies a new dynasty—a change in the royal family through insurrection or otherwise. Possibly the very fact of the general peace and prosperity of Egypt, during Joseph's term of office, led to a general abandonment of the affairs of state on the part of the royal family, and thus paved the way to such a rebellion and change of dynasty—an ambitious family grasping the reins of power after the death of Joseph, and at a time, probably, when matters were not running so smoothly in the kingdom's affairs, by reason of the loss of the divinely guided governor.

The kings of the new dynasty did not recognize Joseph, nor any indebtedness on the part of Egypt to him, and the Israelites, his people. On the contrary, the new ruler, less ready than his predecessors to look for the leadings of divine providence, cast a suspicious eye upon the Hebrew people, noted how rapidly they were increasing in numbers and prosperity, and reasoned that they had no ties to either Egypt or its throne, and that therefore their further growth would be inimical to the empire's welfare; because, in the case of wars, they might espouse the cause of the enemy, or might attack the government and seek to make themselves the rulers of Egypt. This would be worldly wisdom as represented in the treatment of the Sclavonian peoples today; and no doubt it was so regarded then. The new king put into execution plans intended, not to destroy the Israelites, nor to drive them off, but merely to hold them in check—to prevent their further marvelous increase. He sought to discourage the ambitions of the people by overwork under discouraging conditions, hoping that this rigorous treatment would impair their virility or possibly cause them to feel that they would not wish to bring forth children to so burdensome a life as their own. But the record is that the repressive measures were unsuccessful, and that the people of Israel increased more and more. The new king did not take divine providence into account.

Scholars are quite united in the belief that Rameses II was either the first or second ruler of this new dynasty, antagonistic to Israel. His mummy was found in 1881; we saw it exhibited in the museum located near the Great Pyramid, in 1892. Of the identity there can be no reasonable doubt.

The head of the mummy shows phrenologically just such a character as the history implies. The hooked Roman nose shows great determination, while the low forehead indicates a deficiency of the quality called benevolence. How surprised Rameses will be before long, when in due time, with the remainder of earth's millions, he shall come forth from the prisonhouse of death! He may still see his old mummy, and undoubtedly will see Israel, as represented in the ancient worthies, occupying the chief place in earthly power for the blessing of Egypt and all the families of the earth, under the ministration of spiritual Israel—Christ and the Church in glory. What a lesson he and others will read in the developments of the divine plan, as they will then perceive them —things which we perceive already because the eyes of our understanding are opened to the things revealed in the divine Word, and which will be corroborated more and more as we approach the Millennial day.

We are not to understand that the Israelites as a whole were compelled to leave their industries and engage in brickmaking and the construction of treasure cities, palaces, highways, etc. On the contrary, we are to suppose that drafts were made from time to time upon the people, much after the manner of the conscriptions for the army in Germany, Austria, Italy, France and Russia. This same method of dealing with the people was in vogue in Egypt until quite recently, when the British Government took control there. It is known as the *Corvee* system of enforced labor. We recall that Solomon introduced such a system in Israel, compelling each individual to serve so many months upon public works. The same system is in vogue to some extent in various civilized countries, where the farmer is permitted to pay such a proportion of his taxes in money, and another proportion in labor—or, instead of the labor, he may pay it all in money. The system, rightly operated, of course, would be no more of an injustice to the people than an ordinary tax, but evidently the object of Rameses, the oppressing Pharaoh, was to injure the people under the guise of public works and necessary taxation.

A lesson which we spiritual Israelites may learn from Israel's experience in Egyptian bondage is that our God is abundantly able to make all of life's experiences work to our advantage; and that his word is sure to fulfilment in its due time, regardless of what man may propose. Had Rameses adopted a different policy in dealing with Israel they might have forgotten the promise of God, which indicated the exact time in which their deliverance from Egypt would come—they might have become so interested in Egypt and its affairs, and in their land of Goshen, etc., etc., and so intermingled with the people of Egypt, that they would have forgotten the promise of their deliverance, and that the land of Canaan should then be theirs. In this we see another illustration of the fact that sometimes we receive greater blessings through adversity than through prosperity. As the adversities of fleshly Israel drew them together, and separated them from the Egyptians, so the trials and adversities of the spiritual Israel tend to draw them nearer to each other, and nearer to the Lord, and to separate them from the world,—leading their hearts more and more to an appreciation of the goodly heavenly Canaan which God has promised us. As the Israelites were more fruitful under the persecutions and oppositions, so we frequently find it to be with the spiritual Israel, that not only the zeal increases, but numbers also increase, as well as "fruits of the spirit," under persecutions and difficulties.

CONCERNING THE CLOSING OF THE CALL

A brother wrote to us on this question recently, and a portion of our reply may be of interest to others and hence we present it below. We wrote him:—

Respecting restitution: We have held from the first, or at least, since 1881, that we are in "the times of restitution" now; and that the opening features of restitution work will be manifested in the downfall and destruction of the things pertaining to this present order, making ready for the new record of things. We have given the illustration in first and second "Dawns" of how the new order of things might be compared to the beginning of a contract for the substitution of a new building for an old one—that the first evidences of the work would be those of destruction, the pulling down of the old. We still hold this, and hold that this is all that we should expect—that we should not expect personal, physical restitution now. Some years ago we had the impression that *possibly* some signs of physical restitution to humanity would be due in this "harvest" or lapping period; but all question on this subject is dispelled for years past, as we have seen most clearly that the new order of things and its blessing must wait until the entire "body" of the great Priest has been completed—until the entire work of atonement has been finished—then the High Priest, Head and body complete, will lift up his hands and bless the people, in glorious garments,—i. e., clothed in the majesty of divine power and authority as the foretold Prophet, Priest and King in one.

Some years ago we were less careful than now in the use of language respecting the restitution times, in mentioning that coming condition as a "call" to restitution. We should have been more particular, more specific, and should have said that the "Trumpet of the Jubilee" would be blown, announcing the beginning of restitution times. This work is now being done, through the *Watch Tower* literature, etc. The Jubilee Trumpet is not a *call*, in the ordinary sense of the world call, but rather an announcement; the Lord will announce his kingdom and its blessed regulations, and will expect every one to yield implicit compliance; and those who do not yield compliance will receive "stripes;" and if still persistent will "be destroyed from amongst the people." This thought is very different from the thought of a *call*, as that term applied during the Gospel age, when the matter was open to each who heard to either accept to reject the high calling and its "narrow way."

Respecting consecration before 1881 being necessary to a share in the high calling: We must admit that all who were consecrated in 1881, when the general call ceased (because the full *number* had accepted which would complete the elect class) would have a precedence over any others: Indeed, that no others could be accepted to the "bride" position in any sense, except as some of these already consecrated ones should be accounted unworthy, and their places and crowns vacated. (Rev. 3:5, 11) But since it requires all of these consecrated ones to complete the elect number, it follows that any who would be accepted to take their places must make their consecration and be accepted of the Lord subsequent to 1881.

We are to remember, moreover, that justified believers are accounted "holy," and their justification is specifically designated in this way in several instances. For instance, the Apostle says, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, *holy*, acceptable to God," etc. And again, "Else were your children unholy; but now are they *holy*"—children one or both of whose parents are the Lord's children. It is from this class of justified ones that we should expect the Lord to accept the number necessary to complete the elect number—to take the places of those who in 1881 were in a consecrated attitude, but who, because of unfaithfulness since, will be rejected from the "bride" class, to have their portion either with the second company, "saved so as by fire," or with those who sin wilfully and deliberately, and thus incur the "second death" penalty. We should, therefore, look for those who would now come into divine favor and joint-heirship with Christ amongst this class—amongst those who were already justified in October, 1881, or amongst the children of such as were justified at that time; though we may not know nor say that others may not have become eligible by a more recent justification.

Since the general "call" ceased October, 1881, although the "door" is not yet shut, but stands ajar for some to pass out who fail to keep their covenant, and for others to pass in to take their places, that the predestinated number may attain the prize, and yet that none shall attain to it except such as are copies of God's dear Son, in heart, in intention—it is impossible for us to make positive promises of joint-heirship in the kingdom to any who may consecrate their lives to the Lord at the present time. All that we can say to them is that consecration is their reasonable service *in any event*, and that if the Lord shall manifest his acceptance of their sacrifice it would be proper for them to consider this an evidence that they had been accepted of the Lord to all the rights and privileges of such sacrifices as made their consecration before the general call ceased.

As to what would constitute evidences of divine acceptance, we suggest two, the enjoyment of both of which would seem to us a good basis for full assurance of faith on this point. (1) God's acceptance of the sacrifice might be reasonably inferred if the consecrated one finds opportunities for self-sacrifice, self-denials, etc., in the service of the Lord, of the truth and of the brethren—however humble the service or opportunities for "laying down our lives for the brethren." (2) God's acceptance of the sacrifice should in the present time imply not only a begetting of the spirit of holiness, but also an ability to appreciate clearly the spiritual features of the divine plan, represented by the light of the golden candle-stick in the "Holy," and by the shew-bread, and by the privileges of communion and service represented by the incense at the golden altar.

Whoever has these two evidences has what we think he should consider a satisfactory proof that he is inside the first vail of the Tabernacle, that he is therefore counted for the time being at least as a member of the High Priest's body. And such, we believe, should consider themselves as fully eligible to the prize as any upon the race-course, upon condition of faithfulness even unto death. It will be noticed, however, that we distinguish between an appreciation of spiritual things and appreciation of restitution and earthly things merely. We believe that the "natural man," under favorable conditions, may appreciate a great deal of the divine provision for the world, and that it is the spiritual things which God has specially in reservation for the little flock, which can be appreciated only by those begotten of the spirit. This does not mean that the natural man cannot understand what we mean when we discuss spiritual things; but that, as the Apostle declares, though he understands what we say, our words are "foolishness unto him," he cannot grasp them as truth, and as applicable to himself.

HE WAS A GOODLY CHILD

EXOD. 2:1-10.—Nov. 17.

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it."—Prov. 22:6.

Every child is not born a Moses, and no amount of training would make him his equal as a man. We have everything to say in accord with the Golden Text, and not a word in opposition; nevertheless, the foundation for greatness must be laid before the birth. It is a great mistake made by many —and one to which they are assisted by false theological views—that each child is a special creation of God, so that, if an idiot, God may be blamed; and if well endowed and balanced mentally and physically, God receives the credit. The Scriptural proposition is to the contrary of this, viz., that all God's work is *perfect* (Deut. 32:4)—that Adam was his workmanship, and that he is not responsible for the defects and imperfections which more or less mar every member of our race. In a sense, of course, all that we have, even though imperfect, is of God, since he is the author of all life and indirectly our Creator.—Exod. 4:11.

But our defects are explained to us in the Scriptures to be the results of sin, and the natural development of its death penalty, working in the race under the laws of heredity. We are all born in sin, shapen in iniquity, in sin did our mothers conceive us. (Psa. 51:5) But we are not all born in the same degree of degradation. While fallen parents cannot bring forth a perfect offspring they can, and sometimes do, produce types higher than themselves. This is accomplished by a law of nature affecting the mental conditions of the parents, and especially of the mother (and she is always susceptible to favorable or unfavorable mental and moral influences from her husband) during the period of gestation.

According to this divine law, therefore, parents are to a considerable degree responsible for the prominent traits of character in their children. If this matter were more thoroughly undersood, more fully appreciated by parents, the result would be a great improvement in the natural quality of the children born. The husband would endeavor to make the surroundings favorable to the highest emotions and sentiments and aspirations on the part of his wife; who, in turn, would coöperate and set her affections on noble and good and pure and generous things, with meekness; and the result would surely be the birth of children much more resembling Moses than the majority do—in nobleness of character combined with humility.

Nothing herein stated, however, is intended to encourage the begetting of children by the Lord's consecrated people living in this "harvest" time. That begotten and born of the flesh is flesh; while that begotten and born in the Spirit is spirit. (John 3:6) The "*new creatures*" in Christ Jesus have a still higher and grander work before them than the producing of even *perfect* children, were such a matter possible. They have the privilege of coöperation with God in the development of the "new creatures," the spiritual sons of God: and like our Lord and the apostles they prefer this highest of all privileges. Not that we dispute for a moment the Apostle's word: "Marriage is honorable in all;" but that we emphasize with him that he that marrieth doeth *well*, but he that marrieth not doeth better. (1 Cor. 7:38; Heb. 13:4) So now we emphasize that he that brings forth natural children of the highest type does well, but he that co-operates with God for the begetting of spiritual sons does better.

Our information respecting the birth and childhood of Moses is very meager. We know that his father's name was Amran, which signifies "Noble people." His mother's name was Jochebed, which signifies "Jehovah is glorious." Though they were Hebrews and as a race in bondage to the Egyptians, these names imply that this family of the tribe of Levi were persons of moral and religious sentiments—noble people in the proper sense of the word. This is implied also in the Apostle's statement, that they acted from faith.—Heb. 11:23.

As we saw in a previous lesson, the Egyptian rulers of the new dynasty were fearful that the rapid increase of the Hebrews would ultimately mean that they would become the dominant race, or else that they would take their departure—as, indeed, they expected to do, according to the traditions which they reverenced, and which instructed them respecting the time of their sojourn in Egypt, and of the promise of God respecting their ultimate deliverance, by the interposition of his power. The Egyptians did not wish to lose the Hebrew people, as their efficiency as laborers had been demonstrated, and as they were profitable to the Egyptians in the way of trade. They neither wished to drive them away nor to kill them off. What they did desire was that they should not increase so rapidly. To hinder this phenomenal increase various expedients were tried, none of them effective; and finally, as a repressive measure, an edict went forth that all the male children of the Hebrews should be put to death, the intention evidently being the curtailment of the race for a time only, permitting children to be born later on.

It was about this time that Moses was born; evidently there had been no such restriction at the time Aaron, his elder brother, was born. Moses was the third in the family: his sister, Miriam, the second, was the little maid mentioned in our lesson. The babe Moses was secreted by his mother for three months, in violation of the king's command, and at the risk of her own life as well as his; and the reason given is that she perceived that he was a goodly child—fine-looking, giving promise of the great man which he afterward became. The Apostle declares that the parents had faith—not faith in the child, nor yet in themselves, nor in the king: but faith in God, that he would bless and preserve the child; and we cannot doubt that this faith was accompanied by prayer to the Lord. We cannot doubt that even before the child was born, under such peculiar circumstances, the godly, faithful parents consecrated it to the Lord, to be trained for him, and instructed to the best of their ability, and to be the Lord's servant to whatever extent he would be pleased to use him. Without some such hopes and prayers the *faith* which the Apostle mentions would be inappropriate. Faith and prayers and consecrations usually go together, hand in hand, anyway,—both as respects ourselves, our children, and all with which we have to do.

It was a very shrewd device which the parents adopted for the child's preservation, and it either shows a divine guidance or an inventive mind, with a good knowledge of human nature, or all of these. Moses' parents read human nature well when they concluded that the princess of Egypt, if she found the babe at the time of the taking of her bath (perhaps a religious rite), would be sure to be touched, and her heart appealed to by any child, and especially by so "goodly" a boy. It was a cunning arrangement, too, to have Miriam, his sister, nearby at the time of the finding of the babe in the bulrush basket, and to have her suggest the getting of a Hebrew woman to nurse the child, and then getting his own mother. Undoubtedly the Lord's hand and wisdom were behind the entire matter; but even so, it teaches us the lesson that God is pleased to use human instrumentalities in the accomplishment of his purposes. The parents did right to exercise their ingenuity for the preservation of their child, at the same time that they exercised faith in the Lord. And so with us, our faith is not to be of the indolent kind which refuses to act, and would thus fail to be in the way to be used of the Lord; but rather ours also is to be a faith manifested by works. It is such faith that the Lord is pleased to bless.

The princess is supposed to have been Neferari, the wife of Rameses II, and the daughter of the preceding monarch;—all Egyptian kings being called Pharaoh. She adopted the waif as her own son, yet was willing that he should be nurtured in a Hebrew home for a time—it is presumed, until he was either seven or twelve years of age; after which she had him brought to the royal palace and instructed in all the wisdom and learning of the Egyptians. How apt the thought of the poet in respect to Moses' case when he says:

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform!"

How appropriate it was that the leader of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, as a type of the great Messiah, should be an educated or learned man; and yet how still more necessary it was that he should first have well fixed in his mind, in infancy and childhood, the basic principles of religion; and how marvelously the Lord arranged for both of these elements of his education. We cannot doubt that the parents, whose faith already had been manifested, would instruct the boy in respect to the Abrahamic promises, in which they trusted, viz., that as the seed of Abraham they were ultimately to be great, and to be used as the Lord's channels for blessing all the families of the earth; and that, as foretold to Abraham, the time when the Lord would bring his people forth from Egyptian bondage with a high hand and an outstretched arm of power was well nigh up. He was no doubt, thoroughly informed respecting his relationship to the Israelites, and no doubt not only faith in the promises, but a patriotic feeling of devotion to his people was liberally inculcated—because these qualities stand out nobly throughout his entire life, as they could not do unless they had been thoroughly implanted and cherished.

Comparatively few parents seem to realize the privileges and responsibilities placed within their hands in connection with their own offspring. The Christian mother who has a growing family has certainly a wide scope for the use of all her talents, if she will but use them, in giving instructions in righteousness and in the reverence of the Lord, to her little ones. And it is a mistake frequently made to suppose that children cannot appreciate religious principles, and that therefore they should not be given even "the milk of the word," or primary lessons along the lines of the divine law. We believe, on the contrary, that while children are born with a certain amount of depravity and predilection to evil, nevertheless, their little minds are in a large measure blank pages, upon which principles either for good or for evil are sure to be deeply engraved. If their minds be not directed in the lines of justice and mercy and love and patience, and if they be not taught that these are the divine requirements, and their reasonable service, we may be sure that they will be taught the reverse of these, as they come in contact with the various depraving influences of life—the world, the flesh, the devil. Those parents who consider their children to be such a little garden-spot, and who faithfully plant in these the seeds of justice and love and patience and meekness and gentleness, and all the fruits of the spirit, to the extent that they may be able, will be sure to find a rich reward in the graces of character that will result, under the Lord's blessing—especially if the children have been consecrated to him from infancy, or better, before birth.

On the contrary, those who do not take the time to implant the seeds which would produce these graces, these mental and moral flowerets, will find, even as with an earthly garden, that it will not stay vacant until maturer years have come, and a more convenient season; but, instead, noxious weeds of evil desposition will grow, flourish, go to seed repeatedly, and bring forth bitter fruitage, to vex not only the individual himself, but also the parent, and society in general. Let each parent, therefore, so far as possible, see to it that any children he may bring forth will be "goodly," well-favored, by helpful pre-natal influences; and let him see to it also that having assumed the responsibilities of a parent he does good work in these little gardens, which are under his care—that the weeds of error are promptly plucked, and that the seeds of good are liberally sown.

Although Moses was born over thirty-six hundred years ago, and therefore comparatively near to the time when the evolution theory claims that man was only "one step above a monkey," we find that not only was he a wonderful child and a wonderful man—even before the Lord specially blessed him in making him the leader of Israel, and putting his power upon him—but we find also high standards of mental and moral attainment amongst his people—the Hebrews, Joseph, for instance. We find, additionally, that in Moses' time there was a distinct and well-advanced civilization amongst the Egyptians. For instance, the city of Zoan, one of the capitals of Egypt, near which Moses was born and reared, is shown by modern research to have been a most wonderful city—as compared with modern times. Of it a celebrated writer says: "The ruins show it to have been a marvelous city, the Athens of Egypt. An Egyptian poet of that day says of Zion: 'She is beautiful, beautiful: Nothing like her is found amongst the monuments of Thebes—the very secret of pleasures of life. Her bowers bloom with gardens. Each garden is perfumed with the smell of honey. Her granaries are full of wheat. Flowers for nosegays are in the houses. Her ships come and go every day. The joys have fixed their seat there.'" And concerning the development of literature and arts in that day our quotations further on will show that they were far advanced.

If as a child Moses was remarkable and attractive, so that Stephen calls him "exceeding fair" or margin "fair to God" (Acts 7:20), signifying refined, elegant; and if it be true, as Josephus says, that those who met him as he was carried along the streets forgot their business, and stood still to gaze at him, we may well suppose that his early training by pious parents, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and his subsequent instruction "in all the learning of the Egyptians," as the adopted son of the monarch — the result must have been a very noble, refined and handsome man. And yet, strange to say, that with all these accomplishments by nature and education, he is described to us as having been "the meekest man in all the earth." Who can doubt that this very quality of meekness was largely inculcated by the poverty of his parents, and their subjection to bondage, and the humble sentiments inspired by their consecration of Moses to the Lord from the time of his begetting? Certain it is that very rarely are those who are the natural children of princes and rulers humble-minded. Yet this meekness was another of the qualities essential to Moses as the leader of God's people. As it was, we find that his forty years' dealing with the Israelites in the wilderness, as their leader and the mediator of their covenant with God, so far overcame the meekness of Moses that he was hindered from entering the promised land, because he took to himself, instead of ascribing to God, some of the credit of bringing water out of the rock, saying, "Ye rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?"—smiting the rock.

Under all circumstances we must think it very remarkable that a man so really great, and occupying so exalted a position for such a length of time, should have overcome the haughty "spirit of princes" in which he was reared, and have maintained his meekness with so slight an exception down to the very close of his career. We may well ask ourselves what would have been the result had God chosen for the leader of Israel a man who was naturally haughty and proud, or any other man than one who was very meek indeed. No other than a meek character could possibly have stood such a strain as Moses so grandly and so faithfully endured. There is a lesson for the Lord's people here. The Mediator of the New Covenant, Jesus, was also meek and lowly of heart, and those whom God is now calling from the world to be joint-heirs with Jesus, members of his body—as the great anti-type of Moses, to lead mankind out of the bondage of sin and Satan—these all must have likeness to their Lord and Head in this quality of meekness, if they would attain to his general character in other respects. We do well to remember continually the Apostle's injunction, that we "Humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt us in due time"—so that we may be meet [fit] for the inheritance, the kingdom.

Concerning Moses and the educational opportunities of his time, secular history gives us some intimations. The library of Rameseum at Thebes—over whose gate was the inscription, "For the healing of the soul" — contained twenty thousand books, and it is significant as indicating the intellectual activity of that time, that this structure was built by Rameses II, by whose wife Moses is supposed to have been adopted. Stephen declares (Acts 7:22) that "Moses was both mighty in words and in deeds," and Stanley's *"Jewish Church"* says respecting him,—"He learned arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, medicine and music. He invented boats, and engines for building, instruments of war and of hydraulics, hieroglyphics, division of lands." It declares further that he taught Orpheus, and was hence called by the Greeks Musaeus, and by the Egyptians Hermes.

We know not how substantial is the basis for these traditions, but we do know that they are not out of accord with the Scriptural records of Moses as a great leader. A lesson for us to learn in this connection is that God has his own way of preparing for all the various features of his own great plan. He knew the praying people who, at the proper time, brought forth their son. He knew how to direct so that the child, the youth, the man, should be an instrument ready for his own purposes; and yet in all of the divine dealings, here as elsewhere, we notice that God does not coerce those whom he uses for his work; but that rather he uses instruments ready, willing, desirous of being used. Let us each, therefore, seek by humility, by zeal, by love for the Lord and for his cause, by faith, in his power, to be in that condition of heart and mind which will make us *ready* to be used, and useful in any department of the divine service to which the Lord may be pleased to call us.

THE PARABOLIC VINEYARD WASTED

ISAIAH 5.—Nov. 24.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"Woe unto them who are mighty to drink wine."*

Apparently our Lord had in mind the parable of the vineyard presented in the first seven verses of this chapter, in the parable which he gave, recorded in Matt. 21:33-44. In both parables the vineyard represents the Jewish polity, and the vines represent the people, especially such as were in influence and power—the leaders.

Both parables show a lack of the proper influence of the truth which had been granted them, upon the hearts of the Jewish people. The Lord's favor and the knowledge of his goodness as it had reached them, had not brought forth pleasant fruit, but that which was acrid and bitter—had not brought forth love, but selfishness, and self-indulgence. This is set forth in verse 7. Having given Israel his law, instructing them through it respecting right and wrong in their dealings with each other, the Lord had reason to expect "judgment," that is, justice; but he beheld oppression. He beheld that those who had the greatest knowledge of righteousness were still exercised by a spirit of selfishness to the extent that they took advantage of their more ignorant brethren. The Lord says that when he looked for righteousness, peace, and prosperity, behold a cry arose to him from the oppressed—from those who under the social order of things failed to get their reasonable and legitimate share of the bounties which the Lord had freely granted.

An intimation respecting the method of this oppression is given in verse 8, in the words, "Woe unto them that join house to house, and lay field to field, till there be no place [for the poor to occupy], that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!" The description represents a condition of things very similar to that which we are told now obtains in Great Britain, and indeed throughout Europe, where large estates are held by private owners, and thus withdrawn from the use and occupancy of the people in general. Landlordism seems also to be included in the thought—adding house to house. The Lord in another place declares respecting the future, "They shall no more build and another inhabit, no more plant and another eat the fruit thereof;" which may be understood to signify that in the future time of the Lord's kingdom, houses will be built for the owners' occupancy—and not to be rented.

It will be observed that we do not consider this lesson to be a "temperance lesson" in the ordinary sense of that term,—but a rebuke of the Lord against intemperance of every form—intemperate selfishness, etc. Moreover, although the parable and general lesson connected with it was addressed originally to the Jews, it appears to us, like many other Scriptures, to have a deep signification and meaning in respect to the Gospel church, spiritual Israel, as well as for natural Israel. Indeed, as we have heretofore seen, natural Israel was in all its affairs, and the messages sent to it, a type of spiritual Israel, and hence all the things written and done toward and respecting the typical nation, should be understood as having a higher and deeper application to the antitypical nominal spiritual Israel—"Babylon"—of today.

At no time probably has there been a greater disposition than at the present to add field to field, and house to house—to amass wealth, and to control the land and machinery, and all sources of wealth and power. The Lord says that woe is coming upon this class, and this announcement is in fullest accord with the various declarations of the Scriptures which point out that the great "day of vengeance" is near at hand; and that it will be a time of severe trouble upon the whole world, but especially upon the rich. The Lord's warning is that surely many houses shall be desolate, and that even great and fine residences shall be without occupants. (Vs. 9) The thought apparently is that the time of trouble of which we read that "they shall cast their gold and silver into the streets, but it shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's anger," will be especially against the great who live in earthly palaces, and who for safety's sake will desert these of be destroyed during the period of anarchy.—Ezek. 7:19.

This spirit of acquisitiveness which lies at the foundation of all the trouble is to be found in every land, but nowhere more than in so-called "Christendom," and Christendom alone is evidently referred to in the prophecy, except as it may also have applied to fleshly Israel in the harvest time of the Jewish age, in which similar "wrath to the uttermost" in anarchy came upon that typical people. The fact is that large plantations and farms are managed by employees instead of each person planting and reaping on his own account: it is intimated that by and by this will lead to serious results. When the present social fabric breaks up, and there is "no hire for man nor hire for beast," and "no peace to him that goeth out, nor to him that cometh in," because every man's hand is against his neighbor,—then the large farms and plantations will be at a serious disadvantage, and the yield will be correspondingly diminished.

Verses 11, 12-22, mention wine and strong drink. We concede that literal wine and intoxicating liquors in general are a dreadful bane to Christendom; we concede that many who occupy influential positions, as well as a mighty host of the common people, are greatly injured by intoxicating liquors. We urge and warn all of the Lord's people against this evil, insidious, and contaminating influence. However, we are not certain that the Lord here refers exclusively to literal intoxicating liquors. It is true, at least, that there is another kind of intoxication that is very prevalent at the present time: it is scripturally termed the wine of Babylon: it produces an intoxication along religious lines, and hinders people from discerning and comprehending the divine Word, character and plan. It is the wine of churchianity, which confuses those who use it, and beclouds their minds in this respect to the true Christianity. It addles their judgment and brings the people into captivity to false doctrines and false teachers, "because they have no knowledge,"—verse 13.

Concerning this symbolic wine and intoxication, the Lord declare that Babylon has "made all the nations [inhabitants of the earth] drunken" with the wine of her incontinency and unfaithfulness to Him. (Rev. 17:2; 18:3) The stimulating power is not the spirit of a sound mind, but the delusion of a false doctrine; as the Prophet declares, they are "drunken," but not with wine.—Isa. 29:9-13.

Instruments of joy and praise they do indeed employ, often spending much money upon grand pipe organs wherewith they would praise the Lord, even in the delirium of their false conception of his character and plan; as it is written, "but they regard not the word of the Lord, neither the operation of his hands." They are not looking to see what the Lord is doing, nor inquiring to know concerning the mighty work which he is about to accomplish in the setting up of his kingdom; and hence to stem the overthrow of Babylon and the confusion and anarchy incidental to the establishment of the kingdom will be as the same Prophet declares, God's "strange act," "strange work,"—Isa. 28:21.

"Because the people have no knowledge," they are consumed with thirst at the present time. The wine of false doctrine has produced erroneous views of various questions, and with the incidental bemuddled condition of the mind there comes at the present time a thirst for more knowledge, and for explanations and for consistency which their teachers cannot satisfy. The people in general have lost their taste and appreciation for the water of life, the *truth;* and false teachers warn them against it, as poison. The wine of false doctrines now being manufactured at all the Theological Seminaries is the wine of evolution and higher criticism, which does not satisfy the thirst but increases the confusion of mind, and makes null every attempt to appreciate and comprehend the divine plan, as set forth in God's Word. Even Babylon's notables are dissatisfied, famished.—See Amos 8:11.

Verses 14-17 show the end of the matter. The grave figuratively opens her mouth to swallow these up; and in the time of trouble, unquestionably, large numbers will perish literally from the earth. But sheol, the grave, will specially enlarge, in that it will take into it more than human beings: it will take into it the great octopus system of Babylon, with its many heads and many arms, financial, political, social, religious, etc. In that day of trouble, all classes will be humbled together, and the Lord and his righteousness will be exalted in the sight of mankind.

Verses 18-23 take us back again to point out the peculiarities of some who are prominent in the evil of this time and who will bring special woes upon themselves. These are not those who are beset by temptations and yield through weaknesses resulting from the fall; but such as greedily take hold of sin and in-equity, through their vanity and self conceit. They deceive themselves into supposing that they are hastening the Lord's work, and that they are acting under the counsel of the Lord in their various sectarian enterprises; but the fact is that they are not in the condition of mind to appreciate the Lord's counsel, being drunken with false doctrine. Hence it is that they call evil good, and good evil, and put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter, and are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight, mighty in respect to their own wine of false doctrine.

What could better compare with this matter of calling evil good, and good evil, than is general when the worst *gospel* is used. The meaning of *gospel* is "good tidings," but that which Babylon calls *gospel* is most awfully bad tidings —the announcement that nearly all the world of mankind (all except a little flock) are to go to eternal torment. And when the real good tidings is announced, we find these same persons drunken with the wine of false doctrine, rabid in their denunciation, calling it "nocturnal hallucinations." Do they not indeed put light for darkness, and darkness for light? Do they not indeed label "poison" the true message of the divine plan, and label "gospel," that which is the most awful and bitter dose that human intellect could be asked to accept with joy? Indeed, as a Presbyterian minister expressed it— "You must not attempt to masticate our doctrines, for if you do you can never swallow them; they are in this respect like a Brandreth pill." And yet this bitter dose, of which reason would forbid the swallowing, is misnamed sweet, heavenly truth.

But do the ministers of Babylon show any disposition to justify the wicked for reward, or to take away the righteousness of the righteous from him? Yes, frequently; for instance, not long ago a brother in the West, who had accepted the true Gospel, the true light, the sweet story of divine love, wisdom, and power, died. The Lutheran minister called upon the family (formerly attendants and members of his church), and without even waiting to be invited to preach the funeral discourse, said that, of course, he would be prohibited from preaching the funeral sermon, as it would be contrary to the rules of the church. The Brother had always been a consistent Lutheran, and after receiving the truth gave good evidence of his profession of being sanctified thereby,—yet in this way, and by derogatory statements, this minister of the gospel of eternal torment attempted to take away his righteousness from him. Indeed many Christian people have found to their surprise that, after leaving the nominal church, the special pillars of the same are ready to say all manner of evil against them falsely—or, at least, to imply evil. The same Lutheran minister a little later on was invited to preach at the funeral of a notoriously unregenerate man, and he accepted the invitation with alacrity, and, of course, in his discourse tried to justify the wicked, the reward probably being the influence upon the family, and in favor of the denomination.

Verses 24-30, describe the great time of trouble now impending, in which, the Lord's great army shall overthrow Babylon and plow deeply with sorrow and tribulation the hearts of mankind, and make the world ready for the new dispensation, the Millennial Kingdom. See "*The Day of Vengeance*."—*Millennial Dawn*, Vol. IV.

ANOTHER SWISS HELPER

Dear Brethren in Christ:—

Am sorry I cannot write in English. Am a Swiss. About twenty-seven years ago I was converted. Constrained by the love of Christ, I worked for six years in the Lord's vineyard, and also followed my profession and had much joy and peace in the Lord and in his work. The Lord led me into the Baptist church where I labored for twenty-seven years with joy. I did not think that anything would ever separate me from it. In 1889 I entered the Theological Seminary in Hamburg. In 1884 I received several calls from Baptist churches, and thought it God's will that I should accept a call to a church in Breslau, where I felt the Lord's blessing upon me. While I was there a large church was built with a seating capacity of 600. In Breslau Catholicism is very strong. Among the 280 that I was permitted to baptize on profession of their faith, one-third were Catholics. In 1893 I received a call to one of the largest Baptist churches in Germany, at Koenigsberg, in Prussia. A new chapel was built and meetings were held in sixteen places in the country. During the three and three-fourths years of my stay, about 500 were converted and baptized. Three other brothers labored there beside myself; two in the country and one in the city. Then I received a call to Zurich, my mother-country, where the work had been progressing slowly. Considering the call as coming from the Lord, I accepted it. The congregation was small, but with great joy I labored there five years, and built a chapel and residence. There, also, I was permitted to baptize 200 on profession of their faith, among them some Catholics.

About four months ago I received "*Millennial Dawn*," Vol. I. I read the book with deep interest and blessing. Sent for the three succeeding volumes and several pamphlets, and have read them through. I am deeply convinced as to the truthfulness of this work. My Biblical and theological convictions have been corrected in a manner and degree I had never before experienced. I felt that honesty and humility were necessary that I might give due honor to these truths, and God has granted me these. I hear that the leader of a faith and prayer-cure institution, one of the most influential men in Switzerland, and who is considered a high authority, has denounced the book (*Millennial Dawn*), and has burned many. Have done much searching for the last twenty-seven years respecting matters referring to the consummation of the age, and endeavored to be watchful of the signs of the times. It is due to this fact, in part, that I so highly prize this book and am determined to study it very carefully with the Bible, and to proclaim the truths so important to our times. I have commenced to do so in my congregation, but have learned what I formerly did not know, that even the Baptist church has traditions and confessions which prevent free searching and preaching of the truth. When I was told by my congregation that there were certain limits and rules which I could not overstep, I told them I would permit no such barriers to be placed around me, and resigned my position as Baptist minister. It seemed plain to me that this was God's will concerning me, though I do not know how he will lead me in the future. I have four children, 15, 12, 10 and 6 years, respectively. October is my time to leave and my successor will take my place. I am now waiting on the Lord to do as he may direct. This is not easy, as I am not a man of means, but I am persuaded the Lord will lead me aright. When my former congregation in Koenigsberg heard that I had resigned, they extended a call to me with the assurance they would build a third chapel if I would come. But I do not feel free to accept. To me it is clear that I must not again be connected with any congregation, but should stand *free*, in order to declare the whole truth, as it is now due and now needed.

Have recently been reading a new book by a Swiss theologian, Reinhardt. The author endeavors to demonstrate from a philosophical standpoint what "*Dawn*" presents from the standpoint of divine revelation. In many respects there is a striking similarity between this book and "*Dawn*." But Reinhardt is a rationalist, and believes the theory of evolution, and consequently is in error. He speaks of Chas. T. Russell in his book, the author of "*Dawn*," but cannot say more than "he believes too firmly in the *inspiration* of the Scriptures."

For a time before reading "*Dawn*," I thought of entering

Dowie's Zion work, and wrote to Dowie, but as yet I have received no reply; but since reading *"Dawn,"* I feel that the Lord has another way for me, and other duties. My desire at present is—I should like to have a year for quiet and study, to search my Bible and spend in prayer, and thoroughly study *"Dawn."* When I am thus prepared of the Lord, I would like to preach the truth, as it is now due, in the cities of Germany and Switzerland. After Paul's conversion he had time for quiet and study; but I have been a minister for seventeen years, and in the entire period have had no opportunity for rest and study, though I preached from four to five times a week. Through the study of *"Dawn,"* there has been a revolution in my Biblical and theological opinions, and I must have time to become established before I can publicly expound these doctrines, though I have a deep conviction of their truthfulness.

As I am entirely without means, I must look to the Lord to provide the means to support my family, and this he will do if he wishes me to have the time for study. I wait for his direction. Of this I am thoroughly convinced, I cannot longer be a Baptist minister.

Permit me to enclose a photo of my wife and myself. I am forty-four and my dear wife thirty-seven. Our only concern is that we may attain the high privileges to which we are called, and that we may be co-laborers during the short time that remains, in gathering the elect.

Should you consider it wise that I should go to you in America for a short time (without my family) I am ready to do so. I would be very thankful to receive an answer as soon as possible, in German writing, as October is approaching, when I must leave my home and field of labor. My desire is that God's will may be done in me and through me. May he also direct you in the advice you may give me.

In Christian love and esteem, yours,

Jan Kradolfer, Minister,—*Switzerland.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

HUMAN FORCES BURSTING ALL BONDS AND BARRIERS

Justice Brewer, of the Supreme Court of the United States, was one of the speakers at the recent Yale bi-centenary celebration, and he made some statements which were extremely startling as coming from one in his high judicial position. The *Picayune* epitomizing his speech says:

"Commenting on the extraordinary results attained in scientific discovery and mechanical invention, and their use in all the business and economies of daily life in a country inexpressibly rich in natural endowments, and inhabited by a vast and rapidly increasing population of the most enterprising and intelligent races of men, he said:

" 'These various causes are operating in our midst to produce wealth, consolidation, centralization. The rapidity and multitude of mercantile transactions are seen in colossal fortunes, in gigantic undertakings, in enormous financial consolidations, and corresponding organizations of labor. Local self-control is giving way before the pressure for centralized power. The town meeting is supplanted by the State Legislature, while the latter in its turn is yielding to the expanding power of Congress. Political parties are largely under the management of bosses, and the whole great forces of industry, business and politics seem passing under the domination of single central control.'

"The eagerness with which the physical forces brought into play by scientific discovery and invention have been adopted and enlisted in every branch of industry and business is not more remarkable than is the tendency towards the concentration and centralization of human forces and agencies. On one side capital is concentrating. On the other labor is combining. Each is mustering all its forces so that each may work with the other with completer system and to better advantage, and, in case of a conflict, each will be able to hurl itself against the other with all the great energy and effectiveness, and the prospect is that, sooner or later, both sides will attain conditions of such formidableness as that the shock, should they come in full collision, will destroy the existing social and political organization of the Republic, unless the masses of the people, who will not be bound to either side shall rally to crush out the combatants and save the country's institutions.

"It has been declared by jurists that there is no evil which can occur in human economy that cannot find its remedy in the courts, but Justice Brewer does not agree with any such doctrine. He said in his Yale address:

" 'You cannot stay this movement towards consolidation and centralization. It is a natural evolution. The commercial spirit is taking advantage of the wonderful facilities given by steam and electricity. Injunction against strikers will not stop it: legislation against trusts will not. Attempting to stay the movement of its chariot wheels by injunction or statute is lunacy, compared with which Dame Partington's effort to stop the Atlantic with a mop was supreme wisdom.'

"Then the last appeal is to the court of public opinion, and it must be a court independent of the contending parties. Not all the people of the United States belong to the privileged class of combined capitalists any more than they are members of labor organizations. The aristocracy of capital is made up of only a few thousands at the most. Organized labor may embrace a few millions of men not yet united under a central power. But although they may be so combined when the great conflict shall come, they will only make up a minority proportion of the entire population. There will be a great body of the people, to the number of tens and scores of millions, who will to a greater or less degree be independent, in sentiment at least, of both concentrated capital on one side and combined labor on the other, and this great majority will sit as a court to judge and determine what is necessary to protect the people's liberties and their free institutions from the aggressions of either or both of the combinations."

* * *

The thinking people of the world all perceive that the great day of trouble is approaching,—very much as we have shown it from the Scriptures in *The Day of Vengeance* and *The Divine Plan of the Ages.* Yet, as above stated, they hope that the masses will at the proper moment save society from complete wreck and ruin in anarchy. It is well for mankind that *hope* occupies so large a place in the natural heart which has nothing else to lean upon.

But if the Scriptures forbid us to exercise such hopes they give "us who believe" a still better hope of blessings to follow. The learned Justice hopes for the farming element, which heretofore has always been the conservative one, to preserve society and to enforce law and equity. But the Scriptures show the reverse of this. They show that it will be the reapers, the farmers, who will specially suffer and cry out at this time, and be specially instrumental in bringing about the anarchy.

Already the "Agrarian Party" (the farmers) of Europe are now causing kings and emperors serious trouble. They cry out that they cannot make a living at present prices and want prohibitive tariffs which would so increase the cost of living for laborers and mechanics as to seriously disturb manufacturing and all foreign commerce. This is the result of the demonetization of silver—farmers of gold standard countries being obliged to compete with farmers of silver standard countries, while manufacturing is all done in gold standard countries and has no such competition with the cheap labor of heathendom.

Phenomenal conditions have given American farmers great prosperity—at the expense of millions in India and Russia, who have suffered from famine. But we are not to expect bountiful harvests here, and famines elsewhere to keep up prices, always. When the reverse movements come, the farmers of this favored land will also begin to cry out as represented in James 5.

A NEW CHEMICAL AGENT

"The first milestone on the journey toward bloodless surgery has been reached. Its name is *Adrenalin,* that being the title of a chemical composition recently discovered by Dr. Jokichi Takamine, a well known and highly educated Japanese, who is connected with a chemical house that has a local office in this city. *Adrenalin* is to medicine what liquid air is to science, the only difference being that the chemical is under complete control, with unlimited possibilities before it.

"By the local application of *Adrenalin,* in solution of one part to 5,000, operations may be performed on the nose, ear and eye without the spilling of a drop of blood. Such operations have also been performed with *Adrenalin* in solution of one part to 10,000.

"Thus has it been demonstrated that the discovery is the most powerful medicine known, and at the same time, it might be said, the most expensive. Physicians buy it at $1 a grain, or $7,000 a pound.

"The isolation of the blood pressure raising constituent of the suprarenal gland is of course the chief virtue of *Adrenalin*, and its uses and developments along this particular line are unlimited. It has also been ascertained, however, that *Adrenalin* is a most powerful cardiac stimulant, and it has been hinted by physicians that it may be possible to resuscitate persons who have died of heart failure.

"Premature childbirth may also be made obsolete, as it is said *Adrenalin* can be made to revivify the heart of the dead child. Work along these lines is now being carried forward by Dr. Takamine in his laboratory, and before another year is gone it may be possible to perform amputations without the loss of blood, which is so disastrous to the patient."—*New York Herald.*

STREAMS IN THE DESERT

"Surely the 'Great American Desert' of our childhood days will soon be a thing of the past. The only conception of a desert that the next generation will be able to obtain must come from pictures and descriptions of something that once existed, but is no more. Indeed, it is quite likely that we shall not have to wait for the next generation to witness the realization of this change.

"A special from San Bernardino announces that an artesian gusher, with a flow of nearly 200 inches of water, has been struck on the Mojave desert, near Victor, at a depth of less than 200 feet, by parties who were drilling for oil. This is not, by any means, the first time that water has been struck in Southern California by persons who were seeking for oil, and in some cases the water has proved to be more valuable than a moderate amount of oil would be.

"Out on the Colorado desert, below sea level, they have obtained a fine supply of artesian water at a moderate depth, and at the other end of the desert, near Yuma, water is flowing through a canal which is big enough to be navigated by a steam launch.

"All this is only a slight foretaste of what is to come within the next few years. That favorite quotation of our friend, the country editor, 'The desert shall blossom as the rose,' is destined to be exemplified to a remarkable degree in Southern California within the next decade. Not only shall the desert blossom as the rose, but also the less beautiful but more profitable cabbage and potato and cauliflowers and sugar beet and watermelon and fruit tree, and many other things which profit a man's stomach and swell his bank account."—*Los Angeles Daily Times.*

The foregoing clippings corroborate the testimony of the Scriptures,—that we are in the dawn of the new epoch, long by God's prophets foretold—the Millennium, the period of divine favor for the blessing of Adam's race through him who redeemed it—Christ. They corroborate the assurance that under that kingdom of Messiah the "curse" shall be lifted from the race and as Sin and Death have reigned for 6,000 years, now soon Grace and Truth shall reign unto righteousness and life.—Rom. 5:17-21.

Meantime, also let us not forget the teaching of the Lord's Word that so far as humanity is concerned, it is so full of selfishness that it cannot enter into these blessings now due peaceably; but must needs pass through "a time of trouble [anarchy] such as was not since there was a nation." We must note the trend of events in this direction therefore, also. It is significant that one Socialist publication claims to have sent out during the forty weeks of this year, over 6,000,000 papers and pamphlets. And below we quote a cable to the Chicago Daily News—also significant.

IN PERIL FROM THEIR OWN TROOPS

"London, Sept. 30.—Dangerous social fanatics in the ranks of continental armies are causing unrest in a number of the principal capitals of Europe, according to a high officer of the British army who has just returned from a professional tour of the continent. He asserts that some monarchs are in peril when in the presence of their own troops and are now taking drastic measures to correct the evil. To the correspondent of The Daily News he said today:

"'The barracks of Europe have become nurseries of anarchism. Realizing the opportunity offered to them in the leisure hours of army life, anarchists have gladly submitted to conscription and subsequently have poured the poison of their doctrine into the ears of their comrades. They have appealed especially to young peasants caught in the net of compulsory military service, and have sent many of the latter out of the army convinced of the tyranny of the ruling classes and eager to identify themselves with the radical element of the population.

"'This has happened on a particularly large scale in Germany, Austria and Italy, and the officials of those countries are greatly disturbed. They have adopted measures for strangling revolution in the barracks. The latter are now frequented by government eavesdroppers and spies who make short work of the preachers of assassination and insurrection.'"

FAITH SEVERELY TESTED*

"By faith, Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac; . . . accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure."—Heb. 11:17, 19.

With changes of dispensation come changes of divine methods of dealing with the faithful. The Lord's command to Abraham to sacrifice his son was totally different from any command he would give to his people now; and yet tests of a similar import, though of different kind, are laid upon the Lord's people today, and for a very similar purpose, viz., the testing of our heart-loyalty toward the Lord:—testing of faith in him,—in his wisdom, in his power, in his goodness.

In Abraham's day the patriarchal form of government prevailed, and under it the father of a family held an autocratic power which seemingly was rarely questioned by the children. The same extreme view of paternal government prevails, at least outwardly, in China today, we are informed. The patriarch, Abraham, was amenable to no earthly law or ruler, but to God only; and when the Lord proved or tested his faith and obedience by calling for the sacrifice of Isaac upon Mount Moriah, Abraham, full of faith and obedience, promptly responded, and there was no law or power to restrain the obedience. Even Isaac, who by this time was twenty-five years of age, seems to have offered not the slightest resistance to the divinely arranged program as set before him by his father; for in the vigor of youth he certainly need not have been bound to the altar contrary to his own will.

A severer test upon Abraham than this one could not be imagined. What could be a more difficult thing for any father to do than to slay his own child, even in response to the divine command? But in Abraham's case the sacrifice was a doubly keen one, because, not only had he the natural parental love for his offspring, but this was the son of promise, for whose birth he had waited according to divine promise, and longed and prayed, for twenty-five years—the son whose birth in his old age was admittedly a miracle of divine power—the son in whom, according to the divine word, centered all the gracious promises which had filled Abraham's heart for now fifty years; and which, during all this period, had constrained him to be a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth, so that he might in due time inherit these gracious promises which belonged to the future. How strange it must have seemed to him—how utterly inexplicable, that the Lord should ask him to surrender Isaac as a sacrifice!

Our respect for Abraham's faith rises higher and higher, as we behold the various manifestations of his confidence in God, and his obedience to the divine command. We say to ourselves, even as new creatures and partakers of the divine nature, O that we might have in fullest measure this abounding faith, this willing obedience, this trust, resting securely in God, this assurance that he is able to accomplish all that he has promised, even though the accomplishment of it should make necessary a resurrection from the dead! For the Apostle assures us that Abraham philosophized upon this matter—respecting the fact that Isaac was his legitimate heir, and had been so acknowledged of the Lord, saying, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." He could see no other way that God's word could be true; yet so strong was his faith that he trusted that the Lord was able to raise his son from the dead in order to fulfil the promise. Heb. 11:19.

This is exactly the kind of faith that the Lord desires to find in the spiritual seed of Abraham, the Gospel Church—a faith that will trust him even where it cannot trace him; a faith which recognizes his perfect wisdom, perfect love and perfect power. It is not a faith, however, that is a spontaneous growth, under present fallen conditions. It requires years for its development. Abraham had not this degree of faith when first he entered the land of Canaan as a pilgrim. It was the lack of this perfect trust in God which made him fearful to acknowledge Sarah to be his wife, when later he went into the borders of Egypt; it was a faith that had grown through his continued intimacy with his Almighty "Friend." His previous trials and testings had already contributed to the development of this his finished faith; the long waiting and frequent disappointments in respect to Isaac had been beneficial; the attempt to assist the Lord in the fulfilment of the promise, in the begetting of Ishmael, and the subsequent rejection of Ishmael as not being of the Lord's arrangement, had no doubt helped to establish the patriarch in his confidence that God's purposes are immutable, and his power unlimited.

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* This was written as the S. S. Lesson for Aug. 25 but was accidentally omitted. Many requests lead us to present it now.

And so it is with the spiritual seed of Abraham, the Christ, the church:—our faith-development also is a work of time and patient endurance of trials and testings, which, rightly received, work out for us an increase of knowledge, an increase of faith, and an increase of fellowship with God,—until, by the Lord's grace, we later on reach such a development of faith in him as sometimes surprises ourselves, and assures us that we have made some progress; because at the beginning of our way we could not have endured the same trials successfully. Thus we see that in many respects even our faith is a gift of God—that while we exercised some faith in the beginning of our experiences, yet the development of it to such a condition and degree as will be acceptable to God is of God's grace, through his providential leadings, dealings, instructions. To him, therefore, we must render the praise, not only for the glorious results, but also for the faith and the works of this present time, which fit and prepare us for the coming glory and blessings.

Mount Moriah is one of the hilltops embraced in the city of Jerusalem, which of course was not in any degree built or inhabited in Abraham's time. The Temple was built upon this hilltop, and the original rock upon which it is supposed Abraham offered his son—later represented by the ram—is now to be seen. True, it is no longer called the Temple, but a Mohammedan mosque—the Mosque of Omar. Nevertheless, the Mohammedans have preserved this natural rock from any desecration, and visitors are permitted to look upon it over a railing;—the writer so viewed it with keen interest in 1892. In Solomon's Temple it constituted the base of the altar of sacrifice, and a drain (apparently a natural one) leads from this place of the killing of the sacrifice, underground toward the valley of Jehosaphat, or the "valley of dry bones," which typically represents Adamic death, as the Valley of Hinnom symbolizes the second death. We see in this the divine foreknowledge and fore-arrangement in respect to every feature of the plan of salvation. God not only foreknew that he would use the land of Palestine in connection with the development of typical Israel, but he premeditated also the construction of the Temple, centuries afterward, upon the site which he selected for it. And that site, and the Temple, and the city, Jerusalem, and the Valley of Jehosaphat and the Valley of Hinnom, all were intended to be, and are, so many lessons in respect to the divine plan, past, present and to come—to those who have the eyes of their understanding opened to see these matters from the right standpoint—from the standpoint of Jehovah, who promised forgiveness and blessing through Abraham's seed, and who has since been gradually working out his great and glorious propositions. Although our Lord Jesus, the Head, and the church which is his body, were not slain upon this typical rock in Mount Moriah, nor in any other one spot in the world, nevertheless, the lesson is a clear one to all who understand that the blood of bulls and of goats, which can never take away sin, offered upon this spot—typified the better sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Only those who recognize the fact that Abraham was a type of God (Rom. 4:17, margin), as Isaac was a type of Christ, can have any clear and satisfactory comprehension and appreciation of the incidents of this lesson. As Abraham was willing to offer his only son, in whom centered the promises, so Jehovah gave his Only Begotten Son, in whom centered the promises, that he should die on our behalf—a sacrifice to meet the demands of Justice, to the intent that thereby every promise of God respecting the blessing of all the families of the earth might be made possible, and in due time be accomplished. Although Abraham's hand was stayed, that he should not obey the Lord's command, nevertheless, the entire incident illustrates what other Scriptures affirm, viz., that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission" of the world's sins;—that unless the heir of the promises should die for man's redemption the promises could never be fulfilled. And this lesson is fully carried out in the picture before us; for although Abraham was not permitted to offer Isaac, a representative of Isaac was offered, the ram which God had provided.

So, throughout the Jewish age, God permitted the natural children of Abraham to rejoice in his promise of blessing, requiring of them also that they continuously show forth the fact that the blessings could not come without a great sin-offering;—requiring them also to sacrifice bulls and goats, as sin offerings year by year continually, though these could never take away sin. They pointed to the great sin-bearer, who should also be the great deliverer. And now we, of this Gospel age, viewing the matter from the standpoint of its accomplishment, can see, as the Word of God declares, that the same God who in times past provided for the typical sacrifices has now provided the real one,—"by whose stripes we are healed." We can see also, as the Apostle explained, that as Isaac was so are we—the antitypical Isaac, members of the body of Christ—offered upon the Lord's altar. We see that Jesus, our Lord and Head, "offered up himself," and that we, covered by the merit of his sacrifice, are permitted to "present our bodies living sacrifices" upon the same altar, and to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."—Col. 1:24.

What a joy, what a blessing, to see the real meaning and value of the antitype; and to realize that the death of Christ the Head, and the sacrifice of the church, his body, so far from annulling or destroying the original divine plan, are only steps in its accomplishment; that in the divine order the sacrifice of the human nature is essential to a part in the first resurrection, with its glory, honor and immortality. It rejoices us to realize that so far from the divine plan being frustrated by the death of the antitypical Isaac it is being consummated thereby—that the death of the Christ is the broad foundation which God is laying, by which he can "be just and yet the justifier" of all them that believe in Jesus; so that when this glorious Messiah and his house of sons shall be exalted to the power intimated in the promise, he will be fully competent and fully authorized to confer upon the world the great and wonderful blessings which God forestated to father Abraham in an obscure and typical manner.

In the light of the spirit's revelation we rejoice to see that the blessings which are coming through this "seed of Abraham" (Gal. 3:16, 29) will not only be, first of all, the divine favor toward the church, evidenced in the glory, honor and immortality bestowed upon every member thereof, but additionally the blessing also upon the natural seed of Abraham, Israel according to the flesh; and furthermore, the blessing upon all the families of the earth, as the Lord has promised;—the blessing of release from the control and deceptions of Satan, and from the dominion of sin and its weaknesses: so that all who will may hear the voice of that great Prophet, Priest and King, and come forth step by step, not only out of the prison-house of death, but also out of "the valley of the shadow of death,"—clear up, up, up, to the mountain-tops of perfect life and perfect harmony with the divine Creator, lost for all through father Adam by disobedience, but redeemed for all—for as many as will accept it —by the precious blood of Christ.

Occasionally some poor creatures of unbalanced mind, untaught and ignorant as respects the divine character and plan, misapprehending the Lord's dealings with Abraham and his posterity as types, imagine that as God called upon Abraham to sacrifice his son, so he calls upon them to make some human sacrifice. Fortunately these poor deluded creatures are not numerous, and they call for our sympathy rather than for our denunciation. The friends of God, the children of God, will make no such mistake respecting the divine will, because, as it is written in the Scriptures, "they shall be all taught of God." Those who are taught of God know that human life is to be held very sacred. They know also not to lean to their own understandings, nor to dreams nor to imaginings. They see further that even in Abraham's case God did not wish the human sacrifice, but merely tested Abraham's faith. Nor have we such promises made to our children; we have, therefore no such faith to be tested by the death of our children; hence it would be impossible for God to test us thus. Moreover, when we see that the entire procedure with Abraham was typical, and when we understand its lessons, the entire matter is clear and plain to us.

While the seed of Abraham, the church, has no such testing as his, it has, nevertheless, many severe faith-trials and testings, and as these are rightly received, and in proportion as faith abounds and triumphs in respect to all of our affairs of life, we are more and more blessed and taught of the Lord, and more and more acceptable to him, and more and more meet for the inheritance with the saints in light.

"CERTAINLY I WILL BE WITH THEE"

Exod. 3:1-12.—Dec. 1.

Moses, at forty years of age, having been schooled in all the learning of the Egyptians, and recognized as mighty in word and in deed, as noted in a previous lesson, determined to cast in his lot henceforth with the people of God. He renounced his relationship to the king's family, "refusing to be any longer called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, and with them to have an inheritance in the promises made to their fathers. While with the Egyptians he was a sharer of the riches which were accruing to that people through the oppression and bondage of the Israelites; and Moses could no longer be a participator in the fruits of this wrongdoing, nor enjoy these pleasures of sin, injustice. We have this attestation to his moral rectitude, his love of justice. It indicates that he was naturally high-minded, noble, just. How many of the Lord's people, living under the instructions of the Gospel, and the enlightening influences of the holy spirit at the present time, need to take a lesson from Moses' course. How many would be willing to enjoy the fruits of sin and injustice—to continually receive and enjoy wealth and luxuries known to be unjustly wrung from poor unfortunates? How many would be inclined to console themselves with the thought that they were not directly responsible for the injustices and oppressions whose profits they nevertheless would enjoy? How noble was Moses' course, and how much approved of the Lord! It is proper that all who know and love righteousness and justice should take a firm stand upon these principles.—Heb. 11:24-26.

It is written that Moses' course in this matter was the result of his "esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." The reproaches of Messiah were heaped against the Israelites; for undoubtedly the Egyptians had learned that the Israelites believed themselves to be the heirs of the great promises from the Almighty made to their father Abraham, and repeated to Isaac and Jacob,—that through this nation should come the great Messiah, the great Deliverer, who should bless and rule the world. No doubt the oppressed people were frequently taunted upon these extravagant hopes, by their oppressors. But Moses, believing these promises, preferred to associate himself with the despised people, and left the courts of Egypt. As the Apostle explains, this was because "he had respect unto the recompense of the reward"—he hoped by allying himself with his own people to preserve his share in these Abrahamic promises and in the blessings which must ultimately come through them by a better resurrection.—Heb. 11:35, 39, 40.

Although, naturally, Moses was meek, he nevertheless was not ignorant of his education and abilities; and these being known to the Israelites he had every reason to suppose that they, expecting deliverance from Egypt about this time (in harmony with God's Word to Abraham about four hundred years before) would rejoice in having him for a counsellor, a representative, a qualified law-giver, amongst them. In his zeal for his brethren, and in his abhorrence of the injustice practised upon them, he smote one of the Egyptian taskmasters, and delivered the oppressed Hebrew. He presumed that by such a course he would awaken the energies and spirits of his people and that they would accept him as their leader and that the deliverance from Egypt would forthwith begin. But his disappointment was great when the next day he discovered that his kinsmen had no such loyal feeling toward him as he had toward them; for, while endeavoring to correct a dispute between two Israelites, the one who did the other wrong resented the endeavors of the peacemaker, and showed that he and a large class whom he represented failed to appreciate the conduct of Moses, and failed to accept him as a law-giver. The erring Israelite demanded, "Who made thee a judge or a law-giver over us?" Where is your authority? We deny that you have any. Would you slay me, as you did the Egyptian yesterday? Moses was completely disheartened, and fled to the wilderness of Paran. He had fondly hoped that his sacrifice of the throne and glory of Egypt for his people's sake would be appreciated by them, at least, but coming to his own his own received him not. Apparently he had made a great sacrifice, and to no purpose. Undoubtedly the natural meekness of his disposition was intensified by this rebuff.

Thoroughly discouraged, cut off from the cultured class of Egypt, cut off also from his kinsmen, whom he had hoped to assist, Moses hermit-like, settled down to a life in the wilderness. His natural nobility and training made him chivalrous in the defence of women, and soon he found himself defending the seven daughters of Jethro, who, as shepherdesses, were tending his flocks. This led to his marrying one of these, and himself becoming a shepherd, caring for his father-in-law's flocks. Forty years was the period of this isolation, this great change of life from one of culture, refinement and honor amongst men, to the solitudes of that wilderness. Moses, so far as we have information, up to this time had no direct manifestation of God's favor. He merely had a knowledge of the hopes which belonged to his people through the promises made to Abraham. He doubtless regarded as a mistake his action at forty years of age, in attempting to become the leader of his people; yet from the inspired record we must suppose that his faith in the divine promises never faltered, and that he preferred to be on God's side, and an outcast from Egyptian society, rather than the reverse. Nevertheless, we can see that God's supervision was over all of his affairs, and that with the tests of his loyalty came valuable experiences, preparing him for the Lord's great work, in the Lord's time. It gave him another kind of schooling, and a valuable one, though he was ignorant of it at the time. We cannot doubt that his wandering as a shepherd over that wilderness for forty years made him thoroughly familiar with every road, every hill, every stream, in it, and that this was subsequently of great advantage to him, when, under the Lord's direction, he became the leader of Israel through that wilderness toward Canaan. Neither need we doubt that Moses' own character received valuable lessons of patience and humility and obedience to the divine will during those forty years. Even his marriage here to Jethro's daughter, who bore him two, sons, would seem to have been overruled by the Lord for the good of his people; for the woman being an African, a black, the sons would of course be mulattoes, and would correspondingly have less respect amongst the Israelites than if they had been Moses' children by an Israelitish woman, for as such they might have had the reverence of the people in Moses' stead at the time of his death, and thus the tendency might have been to establish a rulership in his family line, which evidently was not the divine purpose.

How often the Lord's people—spiritual Israelites—find that they have experiences somewhat along the line of Moses! How sometimes our efforts and energies and plans for good, yea, our self-sacrifices, seem to be rejected, their value nothing, and ourselves turned away from activities and opportunities which we had coveted as opportunities for the Lord's service. How disheartening we have found this, until later on we discovered that the Lord's hand was able to bring blessing out of our disappointments, and how we could and have learned lessons under trying circumstances, which we could never have learned otherwise. And how these lessons have been ordered of the Lord so as to fit and to prepare us for future usefulness in his service and to his people. Let us, then, have the more courage and the more faith and the more trust in God—trusting him where we cannot trace him, knowing that all things shall work together for good to them that love him—the called ones according to his purpose.

It was at this time, when Moses was eighty years old, that the Lord sent him to deliver Israel. Perhaps it was not accidental that Moses' career was thus divided into two equal periods—40 years of Egyptian training, and rejected; then 40 years' absence followed by his successful deliverance of God's people. Perhaps in this Moses was a type. So also the period from the time Israel started as a nation (at the death of Jacob, the last of the patriarchs) until the antitype of Moses "came unto his own and his own received him not" (1845 years) is *the same* length as the period of his absence, at the end of which is his second advent, shortly to be followed by the successful deliverance of all of God's people from the oppressions of Satan, sin and death.

What a change the forty years wrought in Moses! At its beginning he was ready and anxious to lead the Israelites; full of modest confidence in himself, as a leader, a commander, a law-giver, for that people—no doubt realizing by faith that God had prepared him and educated him that he might have the proper qualifications to be their leader. But now, when the Lord's time has come, his courage is gone, his self-confidence is upset, and he protests to the Lord that he is totally unqualified. Now the Lord needs to encourage him, and Moses receives more deeply than he could have done forty years before the thought that Israel's deliverance was not to be by man or through man, but by the Lord himself,—and that the human agent would be merely the Lord's representative. What a valuable lesson Moses was learning, and how necessary is such a lesson to all of the Lord's people, especially to any and to all whom he would use in any special sense in connection with his work. We must learn that it is not our work, but God's work; not our power or ability or wisdom, or greatness or learning, but the divine power working in and through us, which is mighty to the pulling down of strongholds, and to the lifting up of weak and to the bringing in of the great salvation which he has promised. The more thoroughly we learn this lesson the better it will be for ourselves, and for all who, in the Lord's providence, we are sent to assist in his way—to deliver from the bondage of sin and death.

Our Golden Text, "Certainly I will be with thee," is an inspiration to the Lord's people everywhere and at all times, when endeavoring properly to do any part of the Lord's work, heeding his call through the Word. If God be for us, and if God be with us, who can prevail against us eventually? There may be with us, as there were with Moses and his service, various difficulties, trials, vexations and disappointments,—for we have the treasure of the new nature in earthen vessels, and the weaknesses and imperfections and short-sightedness of these are sure at times to cause us difficulties and discouragements. On such occasions our duty is to turn the eyes of our understanding to him whom we serve, whose ambassadors and representatives we are, and to recall his promise, "Surely I will be with thee." This means eventual victory, though, perhaps, through devious ways that we know not, and expect not, which nevertheless will ultimately prove to have been advantageous to us and to our Master's glory.

"This shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee." No doubt Moses thought now of his failure to interest his people when he went to them still covered with the honors of the schools and the army, and in the prime of life; and perhaps he now contrasted his present condition as a shepherd, forgotten by many who knew him in Egypt, without renown, without favor before the court, without influence or prestige; and no doubt he said within himself, If I could make no impression before, how could I hope now to accomplish as much? But, "This shall be the token unto thee," to prove "that I have sent thee." He was to know that when God sent it meant that the right time had come, and that all of God's good purposes would be accomplished. He was to know that without the Lord he could do nothing; that with the Lord he could do all things. And so all of the people of God, who would be useful and used in his service, must learn this lesson: "Without me ye can do nothing." Then God gave Moses the absolute assurance that he and his people should come forth out out Egypt, and should worship in the very mountain in which now he beheld the burning bush, and talked with the angel of the Lord.

By various signs God established the faith of his servant. The burning bush itself was one of these demonstrations of divine power. Another demonstration was the casting of his rod upon the ground, and its becoming a serpent, a symbol of evil, and the divine power exercised again by which the serpent was turned again into a staff, representing God's power to turn evil things into good things through the operation of faith. Again, his hand was thrust into his bosom, and taken out was found to be leprous, and being thrust in again and taken out was found to be restored to health. In sending out his people in the present time, his ambassadors, the body of Christ, to service (services that are much inferior in many respects, yet superior in some regards), the Lord does not give us these visible demonstrations of his power, but we may be sure that none are sent unless first they are given some testimonies on a higher spiritual plane. They must behold the Lord as the great light; they must realize that his justice is as a consuming fire as respects everything sinful, everything evil, but that through Christ he has mercy upon our imperfections, and grants us to see his light and to enjoy it without being consumed thereby.

Only after such lessons have been learned in the school of experience under our great Teacher and Pattern, Jesus, are we ready for the Lord's service in various ways, as he may be pleased to indicate them and to send us and use us. Let us learn thoroughly the lesson that our undertakings, even for the Lord and in the interest of his people, can only prosper in the Lord's time, and when we are sent of him; but that nevertheless every effort we may put forth, even in our ignorance, if done in meekness, humility, and with a respect for the recompense of reward, will surely be owned of the Lord, and blessed of him to our good and to our development for future service, even as in Moses' case.

THE TEN PLAGUES OF EGYPT

EXOD. 11:1-10.—DEC. 8.

"The angel of his presence saved them."—Isa. 63:9.

He who sees, in the narrative of the ten plagues upon Egypt, and Israel's deliverance thereby, nothing beyond what is contained in the simple story recognizes only the shell, and not the kernel of the lesson. In the type it was typical Israel alone that was delivered by Moses and the first-born; in the antitype it will be "the groaning creation" that will be delivered—all such who will accept deliverance, under the leadership of the antitypical Moses, Christ, and his royal priesthood,—the elect church of this Gospel age. In the type it was Pharaoh and his coadjutors that were first chastened by the plagues and subsequently destroyed in the Red Sea. Their antitype is Satan and all his coadjutors,—all who profit by evil; and in the beginning this will include many who unwittingly are under his blinding influence; but ultimately it will include only such as are wilful and deliberate servants of sin and lovers of unrighteousness—injustice, etc.

A previous lesson showed us Moses, receiving instruction and encouragement from the Lord respecting his future work as the deliverer. We saw him at the burning bush, and noted his reverence for the Lord and yet his need of being thoroughly convinced that God, with his infinite power would go with him, if he would again go to his countrymen, and essay to be their deliverer from bondage. We noted that the Lord gave him, as a sign or evidence of his commission, the miracle of his rod or walking stick turning into a serpent, and being changed back to a stick; and another sign in respect to leprosy coming upon his hand, and being instantly healed by putting it again into his bosom. When Moses had been himself convinced he enquired of the Lord by what means he should convince the Israelites of his authority as their leader, and that the Lord would now deliver them. He was commissioned to introduce himself to the Israelites by these same signs by which he himself had been convinced of the divine authority and backing for his undertaking; and if either or both of these evidences were insufficient Moses was commissioned to take water from the Nile river, in sight of his countrymen, and to pour it upon the dry land, where it would become blood, the Lord assuring him that by means of some or all of these signs the people would be convinced and accept his leadership.

These three signs, which were so convincing to the Israelites, doubtless signified certain truths which, in the present time, will be convincing to the Lord's true people at the proper time; and demonstrate to them that there is to be a great deliverance of all who trust in the Lord, from the power of Satan and the bondage of sin and death. Time and space forbid a thorough examination of the antitypical significance of these signs here; but in our next issue we hope to show that we are now living in the time when the antitypes of these signs are due to antitypical Israel, as proofs of the presence of the Deliverer and the imminence of the deliverance. We expect to show that the antitypes of these signs are now being given, and of what they consist.

Moses' next mission, with Aaron, was to go before Pharaoh and make a demand that the Israelites might be permitted to go a three-days' journey into the wilderness to worship God and do sacrifice to him. Nothing was said respecting their non-intention of returning, nor was it necessary to do so. They were not in a just sense bondmen; they had not forfeited their liberties, either through war or debt; they had the same right to depart that they had to come into Egypt; and, if their request for a temporary absence were granted, they could later determine whether or not they would return to Goshen. The request in this form made the trial of Pharaoh the less severe; nevertheless, his refusal to grant the holiday proved conclusively that he would have refused to grant them full liberty. Instead, Pharaoh sent forth instructions to the task-masters to increase the burdens upon the Hebrews, declaring that if they were worked hard enough they would have no time to think, and speculate about holidays, etc. It was at this time that the Israelites were required to turn out their full quota of brick per day, without having a straw furnished them, as had previously been the custom—straw being then used as a binder for bricks, which were sun-dried, instead of being burned hard, as at the present time. This stage of the Israelitish bondage is fully corroborated by certain recent excavations in Egypt, which show some structures built of brick, with straw binder; some with brick with binders of reeds and rushes, and some, finally, with practically no binders at all, and therefore that much the more difficult to handle in the making.

The effect of this move was at first to discourage the

Hebrews and to lead them to complain to Moses, through their elders, that instead of being a deliverer and a helper he was bringing increased miseries. And so, likely, it will be with many of the groaning creation, in the near future. Their first efforts and aspirations toward the deliverance which the Lord has promised them will be resented by "the powers that be," and for a time their efforts at attainment of coveted blessings will seem to work disadvantageously. Nevertheless, the effect in the end will be to the more deeply impress upon all the evils of the present reign of sin and selfishness, and to make all the more appreciative of the Millennial blessings and liberties of righteousness, when they shall be attained; and the more determined that they will follow the leadings of the Lord, and be obedient to him, that they may attain that liberty.

PHARAOH'S HEART HARDENED

Under the Lord's instructions Moses presented himself before Pharaoh, and made formal demand that the people be let go. Nevertheless, the Lord said to him, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt." "But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies and my people, the Children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, by great judgments; and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord."

This is perhaps as appropriate a place as any to consider the sense in which the Lord "hardened" Pharaoh's heart. And we may here also consider the Apostle's expression on the subject, saying: "The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, 'Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.' Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (Rom. 9:17, 18) The Lord had raised up to the throne of Egypt a man of iron will and perverse spirit, who would not readily yield, and upon whom, therefore, repeated and severe judgments would be necessary, which would demonstrate divine power on behalf of Israel. Secondly, these would incidentally constitute a retribution against the whole people of Egypt, as participators in the unjust oppression exercised toward Israel. In a word, divine power would be better shown, and retributive justice better rendered, and a lesson for all time better written, by the raising up to the throne of Egypt of this man, than by raising up to the throne any of the others, who might have been heirs, had they lived, or had he not lived.

It should be noticed that neither here nor elsewhere does God interfere with the freedom of the will of any individual, whether amongst those who profess obedience to him, or others. As respects the hardening of Pharaoh's heart: as we look carefully into the narrative we find that it was accomplished through God's *mercy* only, and hence that no charge could be laid against divine justice on this account. It was because of Pharaoh's repenting that the Lord stayed one and another of the plagues brought upon him, and the nation which he represented. But this goodness and mercy of God, which should have led him to repentance, led him in an opposite direction, to greater hardness of heart. And so it is with the world in general today: when the judgments of the Lord fall severely upon the world there is a tendency to contrition, humility and repentance; but when the Lord's blessings abound there is the greater likelihood amongst those who are rebellious of heart to become hardened and unappreciative. So it was with Pharaoh, and so it will be with "the powers that be" in the end of this age; but so it must not be with those who are truly the children of God. To all these God's mercies and blessings favor upon favor, should and do lead to greater appreciation, thankfulness and loving obedience, because they are his.

DURATION OF THE PLAGUES

It has been surmised that these ten plagues upon Egypt began about July 1st, and lasted until the following April,—in all about nine months. This surmise is based upon the character of the different plagues, and what is known of the climate and usual conditions of Egypt favorable to the plague. The first three, the waters changed to blood, the frogs, and the lice (insects), appear to have been common to the Israelites as well as to the Egyptians, the land of Goshen being spared from the remaining seven plagues—flies or winged pests; murrain, or cattle disease; bains, or smallpox; hail and fire; locusts; darkness; and finally the death of the first-born. During this series of plagues Pharaoh relented a little occasionally to the extent that he agreed that the males of the Hebrews should go forth, as requested, to sacrifice in the wilderness, the females and children being held as hostages for their return. But this brought out the answer that when they would go it must be all of them, including their cattle and herds, and to this Pharaoh would not hear, until Egypt was smitten with the tenth plague, and all the first-born of Egypt (humanity and animals) died; then he urged them to go. The chastisement was sufficient. So it will be in the end of the time of trouble that is approaching, and which is figuratively represented by these plagues, especially "the seven last plagues."—Rev. 15:

When the last plague has been poured out, as a vial of divine wrath, "the powers that be" will realize that it is useless to fight against God. And as Pharaoh and his people received a severe retributive punishment for every evil they had inflicted upon the Israelites, and as their first-born became retributive representatives of the Israelitish babes they had caused to be drowned in the Nile, so their flocks and herds, and the crops that were destroyed by the locusts and insects, etc., and all the troubles upon them, were retributive punishments, for the unjust exactions made of the Israelites. So we may suppose that the great troubles and losses which will come upon "the powers that be" of the present time, in the approaching trouble, will, in some sense or degree, be a retributive requirement, an offset for a not sufficiently benevolent and just treatment of many under their control in the present time, when the blessings and inventions of our day should be accruing more generally to the benefit of the masses.

"BORROWING" OF THE EGYPTIANS

Objection has been found by some to the statement that the Lord, through Moses, instructed the Israelites to "borrow" of their Egyptian neighbors jewels of silver and gold, etc., and that they did so, and thus "spoiled the Egyptians"—took away a great spoil or trophy of valuables, when they went. Two answers may be made to this objection. The first is that our Common Version translation is very inaccurate, and thus gives ground for the thought of a deception; the word in the original signifies asked, requested, or begged for, and should not be rendered "borrowed." The Revised Version renders this properly, "asked for." The Hebrew word is the same as when Solomon "asked" wisdom, and did not "ask" long life; neither "asked" he riches; neither "asked" he the life of his enemies. (1 Kings 3:11) As it would be improper to render the word "borrow" in Solomon's case, it is equally inappropriate in the case of the Israelites. Similarly the word rendered "lent" should be "gave." The fact is that the Egyptians were thoroughly sore of heart under the repeated castigations given them by the Lord, during the nine months of the plagues. They were glad to learn that their representative and king had finally ordered the people to leave the country. They felt themselves like hastening them out, lest some further visitation should come upon them; or lest Pharaoh should again change his mind. Hence, when the Israelites importuned them for jewels and fine garments, etc., they gave them freely, hoping to be rid of them the quicker. The other answer to the argument is that in all justice the Egyptians owed the Hebrews the value of these jewels, and more too, for the onerous services they had compelled them to render; and hence the Israelites were not asking an alms for which they had given no equivalent, but were really asking for their back pay.

GOLDEN TEXT MISAPPLIED

Our Golden Text seems to be wholly misapplied. It seems to have no reference to Israel in Egyptian bondage; neither does it fully and completely apply to their antitype—those who will be delivered from the power of Satan, sin and death during the Millennial age. It applies merely to the overcoming church, the "church of the First-born," which was represented only by Moses and the first-born of Israel, spared during the night of the Passover. The Lord is specially with this class, the "little flock," the "elect," "the body of Christ," who shortly shall lead the people out of bondage into the liberty of the sons of God. As many as obey the voice and follow the leading of this great Prophet, Priest and King, of which Jesus is the Head, and his elect church the members in particular of the body, will be fully delivered from the power of Satan, represented by Pharaoh.

A general lesson, applicable to all persons and at all times, is that justice should be done; that none should be oppressed; that the Lord cherishes the cause of the oppressed, especially if they be his people; and that he will deliver them and will permit the wrath of man to work out retributive justice and punishment upon all oppressors.

THE WIDE-MARGIN LINEAR BIBLE

The arrangement of the *Tower* and *Dawn* references, for the margins of these Bibles, has proven to be much more of a task than was at first anticipated. The work is progressing, though slowly, and none must expect the Bibles before February, 1902—though we will do our very best to have them a month earlier.

In one way the delay has been to the advantage of some of our readers: had we met with no obstacles the edition would have been far too small. We first thought of 1,000 copies—then concluded to risk 2,000; but the orders have rolled in on us until now they exceed 3,000. We felt sure the Bible would be what every *Watch Tower student* would need; but were not sure to what extent all would appreciate our efforts and trust our judgment. The evidences are gratifying to us, as we are sure the books will be appreciated by you, and profitable to you in Bible study, when you have received them and learned to use them.

We had fixed October 1 as the limit of the time during which we would receive advance orders at the prices already mentioned—$2.00 for "French Seal" (sheep) binding, and $3.00 for the "Persian Morocco" (tougher leather) binding; however, we have concluded to allow all who will to place their orders at the same prices up to November 15, next. We will, meantime, order some more than we expect orders for; but as there will be some financial *risk* in so doing, the tardy must pay for this, and the prices will then be $1.00 additional on each kind.—Still, however, they will be the cheapest Bibles in the world,—worth double. On the other hand, the coming orders may again be more than we expect, and the tardy may get none,—for the orders must be filled in rotation as received.

We regret that we cannot encourage our British readers to hope for these Bibles. The "Oxford Press Co.," of England, has notified us that they will not allow the book on British soil, as they hold exclusive *copyright privileges* for Great Britain and Ireland on the "Revised Version," which constitutes a feature of the Linear edition. We have written them explaining this edition, and offering a royalty, and will get them to our British friends, if possible. They may send in their orders to our British Branch (prices, 9s. and 13s.); we will include these in our orders anyway.

Money may be remitted later—any time before January 1st, 1902. Books not paid for by then will be granted to others, if the supply be short.

AN EDITOR LECTURES CHURCHIANITY

Remarkable as it may appear, the editors of the secular press seem to grasp the religious situation much better than do the average ministers of the Gospel or editors of religious journals. Perhaps this is because they are in a better position to see truthfully and point out tersely what they do see; they are bound neither by creedal obligations nor by "bonds of bread and butter" to abstain from seeing and narrating honestly, truthfully.

In evidence, note the following, clipped from the editorial columns of the Cleveland Press.

"LOVE YE ONE ANOTHER"

"That there is a great need of revival today is evident to all. The church has allowed politics, business and speculative thought to get beyond her influence as a spiritual impulse and ethical standard. Modern reforms which have as their end the betterment of men's lot have sprung very largely from a diffused Christianity, and too often the bearing of the church toward them is cold and unfeeling, if not actually antagonistic.

"The churches are all blessed with a proportion of really Christian men and women, whose giving and prayers and unselfish service keep the world from falling into ruin. These are the church. But these are not satisfied. They feel a deep need of revival. It is only the dead and frivolous and indifferent that are satisfied. Modern scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, cleansing the outside of the platter, whited sepulchers, self-deceived, measuring themselves by themselves, in daily deadly danger of crucifying their Lord afresh and putting him to an open shame—these are the satisfied ones.

"We need a revival of religion because of our lack of love. This is the center and core of Christianity. You love them that love you, your families, your friends, but what thank have ye? Do not the heathen the same? When you make a feast you invite persons agreeable to yourself, for your enjoyment and theirs. This is not a sin, but it is no better than the heathen, for they do the same. The Christian feast is for the poor and the homeless and friendless. The Christian love is for one's enemies. The Christian service is for the disagreeable and weak and vicious and unclean. The Christian duty is to all the world. But Christian men live under rules and standards that are the incarnation of selfishness. There is no love in business, no love in war, no love in modern pleasure.

"Frivolous and selfish wives, deadening the religious life of husbands; worldly and godless husbands, making it difficult for their wives to live as Christians; parents a stumbling block to growing children and a byword to them that are without; professing Christians mad with lust of gold and place and power, silent and unfeeling in the face of social wrong, without compassion for the multitude, ambitious for social preferment, given over to vanity, envious, skilled in the hypocrisies and expedients of selfishness, denying daily in word and deed the power of godliness. Surely these need revival.

"How few Christians there are who can lead an inquiring soul to a knowledge of Jesus! They are without excuse. To say that they cannot do this is to hide behind a lie. There is not a housewife but can teach her maid to cook and clean and sew; not a mother but can teach her children the elements of etiquette; not an artisan but can talk intelligently about the trade he has mastered; not a scholar but can give some account of what he knows; not a political partisan who is not eager to explain his views; not a lawyer but stands ready to argue any case, pro or con; not a doctor who cannot give some reason for the cure he prescribes; not a business man but can train others for his business. But many of these say they cannot talk to another upon the subject of religion.

"For many a Christian employer to speak to his workmen of the love of Jesus would be to cause bitter mirth and deepen the conviction among them that he is a hypocrite. Those who do not confess Jesus with their lips because they consider their example sufficient, too often furnish an example of everything but Christianity. But it is the insistent, searching word of Jesus that every man is responsible for his neighbor, no matter how he may feel about the responsibility or how cleverly he may shirk it.

"The spiritual energies of the modern church are paralyzed and neutralized by a great and plain contradiction between what church members say and do.

"Christian gentlemen organizing great financial undertakings and incidentally corrupting governments, bribing the public, overriding the laws of the land; such believers would find it hard indeed to lead another to the Savior. Their proper method is to hire an evangelist, for it is very evident in this case that religion is religion and business is business.

"It would seem that the next great revival will be a revival within the church itself. It will consist in an improvement in quality, rather than increase in quantity of church members. It will turn away from machinery and artificiality and organization, and will depend upon personality and character. It will deal directly as between man and man. It will be a thing of life; of every-day life to be lived as the hours go, simply and honestly.

"A witness is useful only in so far as he knows. He is not permitted to testify upon what he has heard, or upon what he imagines, or guesses, or hopes. What he has seen and knows, this is his only testimony of any power. To what great realities does the average modern Christian testify? A man eager, almost frantic, in his striving for wealth; the frivolous, shallow member of some Christian church, intriguing and degrading herself for the sake of social preferment among worldings; to what do these testify? Church 'service,' misnamed, wherein indolent believers luxuriate in enjoyment of observing with critical eye the intellectual gymnastics of their minister; to what do these testify? Cold and formal prayer meetings, sepulchral and oppressive, to what do these testify?

"THE CHURCH EXPECTANT"

"The brightest glory of the new century's dawn springs from a hope, deep and widespread, of coming religious revival. In the last few years a great change in the matter of worldiness has swept over Christian people everywhere, chilling into deadly torpor their spiritual energies. Worldliness has come to characterize those who profess to be citizens of heaven.

"Earnest Christian parents are everywhere perplexed and saddened because church membership is of little aid in keeping the children unspotted from the world. Cash, like charity, covers a multitude of sins, and failure to make money is about the only hell believed in and feared.

"The great contradiction between what Christians say and do threatens to destroy the churches. It is now commonly, if not universally, held that financial success is proof positive that a church is prosperous.

"It was inevitable that the masses should find in the sermon on the Mount just that moral ideal and standard which best expressed their unspoken aspirations and desires. Turning to the church, they expected to meet a powerful and sympathetic ally, for the church professed to base its life upon these very teachings of Jesus. But alas! stupefied with worldliness and prostrate under the sturdy blows of an unspiritual rationalism, the church had no answer for the masses. Mutual antagonism, suspicion, misunderstanding, and, on the part of the workingmen, very often hatred, was the result. The church preached and professed to believe the moral ideas which formed the only hope for the masses and did not practice what it preached. The church stood for religion, the masses for morals; and both were wrong inasmuch as a half truth is not the truth. Now, these alienated forces are coming together. Religion has got as far as it can without an adequate morality; and social ethics has got as far as it can without religion.

"A first feature of the coming revival will be its emphasis upon the teachings of Jesus. In the transaction of business, in the giving and taking of the exchanges, in the close touch and stress of politics, in the lighter and happier amenities of social intercourse, Christian men and women will endeavor to set forth Jesus. The new revival will powerfully affect the daily lives of Christians. It will make a distinction in the way a Christian man works and enjoys himself and the way an unconverted man does these things. It will be marked by a return to the morality of the golden rule."

We fear that in the above description of "The Church Expectant" the writer has described what he hopes for rather than what he sees evidences of as approaching. There is already such a "church of the living God, *whose names are written in heaven*" (and some of these are probably to be found in all the denominations of Christendom, and some of them outside of all); but they are, as a rule, poor in this world's goods and not very highly esteemed among men, and often are spoken evil of, falsely, for their fidelity's sake.

Whoever expects nominal churchianity to reform and become a household of saints will be grievously disappointed. On the contrary the Scriptures clearly show us that all denominations are, and will increasingly be, merely moral clubs "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof," —"drawing nigh unto God with their lips while their hearts are far from him."

But, let it come;—it is a part of the "harvest" work of separating the "wheat" from the "tares." As the worldly spirit of formalism more and more gains control of all sects, it will wean and separate more and more the Lord's *true* people, who alone have ever been the *true* church in our Lord's estimation. These must realize their lean and starved condition, and that Babylon has no substantial food for their nourishment and upbuilding,—only the husks and chaff of formalistic piety. They must realize that the doctrinal tables spread by Babylon are unreasonable and nauseating—musty and putrid "traditions of men" (Isa. 28:8), before they will look beyond Babylon's bondage of sectarianism and creedal fences, and leap the barriers to freedom and the feast of fat things spread for them now by our present Shepherd.

ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FRIENDS

Dear Brother Russell:—

Maybe you will remember that, coming home on the train from the Richmond Convention, I mentioned to you my friend who lives in Vermont. I think I spoke of feeling somewhat anxious, because I had not heard from her for some little time. Two days after that I received a letter, a long one, from her, from which I wish to quote just a bit. She says: "For myself—I can truly say, Margaret, that I now see clearly what our high calling is. I realize that once having seen it, and made a full and complete consecration of ourselves, we have surrendered all hope of life on the human plane—that if we fail then to be 'faithful unto the end,' nothing is left for us but eternal death. I have 'counted the cost'—I have laid my little all upon the altar. It is too late for me to draw back now. You will not think I have been hasty. It is seven months now since I began to study these things for myself. Slowly, but surely, I have come into the light. The Truth has held me and I could not escape. I know it is God's own truth. And oh, Margaret, how could I do anything else but yield to my King fullest allegiance!"

You can understand what joy it gave me to hear this—in fact I cried for joy (and I am not easily moved to tears) to know that she has made the consecration, and has begun to realize joy and peace. She says further along in the letter: "With prayer and humility for weeks I have been counting the cost; and it has been a solemn and a glad surrender. I realize how utterly I am nothing; I know I am weak—but I know that I have his almighty strength to lean upon. It has brought such a blessed peace and rest and joy. I need not tell you, for you know it. And yet I must tell it—only I have not words to express it. I cannot see why he should have chosen me, and loved me, and taught me, but I know he has. I do not know where or when or how my trials will come. I dare not say I am ready for them, only as he gives me strength. I am not worrying about it. There is no room for worry in this strange, glad peace that fills me." She had read Vols. 1, 2, 3 and 5, and when she wrote had just finished chapter eleven of Vol. 4. I can see she is not clear on some points yet, she does not yet realize that all who are truly the Lord's are called to "come out"—but I believe it will not be long before she will see this.

Pardon the length of this letter, but I wanted you to know this, because I am sure you will rejoice with us.

We have just enjoyed our Pilgrim Draper's stay with us, and feel it has been a season of refreshing.

With much Christian love, I am your sister in the Lord,

Margaret Smith,—*Washington, D. C.*

Dear Brother Russell:—

I do not often have opportunity to express to you my appreciation of your great benefits to me, for my time is taken up very much and I am studying the Bible with those wonderful helps, the *Dawns*.

Since my coming into the truth, one year ago last month, my views, plans, ambitions, hopes, condition of heart, knowledge in serving Christ, attitude toward mankind, and attitude toward many other things, have changed. What blessed truths the Lord has provided for his humble servants at this time!

I think one of the brethren wrote you that there were thirteen believers immersed here at Washington, Sunday, August 25th. There were three sisters and ten brothers, and I am happy to tell you that I was one of the ten that symbolized their consecration to the Lord.

My dear brother, I know your time is taken up in something greater, grander than reading letters; but I wish to say a word in connection with the spreading of the truth. Since starting out in the one hope and faith, one year ago, I see what a wonderful progress the truth is making in separating the wheat and tares, the Lord's true people from the world. Truly the way is narrow and few will find it, but that few are in such an attitude of heart that they look for a "thus saith the Lord," for every step, so that they can follow the leading of the truth which we find in the Scriptures. I can see and testify that this light is doing the work it was sent to accomplish; and as the great time-lock that holds the time prophecies is now open it enables the true virgin class to obtain a much better understanding of God's word.

Trusting that you may continue to be the "the steward of Christ," upholding all truth, I am your brother in Christ,

Marshall G. Ellis,—*Heights, D. C.*

Dear Brother Russell:—

To let the brethren know what may be accomplished by *a little* with the Lord's blessing, and to encourage the brethren who read the Tower to send out to their friends and relatives "Dawns," "Towers" and tracts, I send you the following short sketch of how the Lord gave us the light and Gospel of peace, and how it has grown in so short a time.

Three years ago this winter a brother in Wisconsin sent a "Dawn Vol. I." to a brother in Spokane, Wash. At that time, so far as I have been able to find out there were but two "Dawn" and "Tower" readers in the city, and they were not acquainted. That one "Dawn" was the means of starting the work which has brought together a class of eighteen brothers and sisters, all of whom have been engaged in the "Volunteer" work, so far as circumstances would permit. All are now firm believers in the Gospel of Peace (Eph. 6:15); and together they have distributed about eight thousand sample tracts, booklets and "Watch Towers," and there are many others who are brothers who do not take part in the "volunteer" work. So my dear brethren, be not discouraged if you see no results from your efforts (1 Sam. 18:7). Continue in the good work for it is indeed handing forth "meat in due season" to the household of faith.

Your brother in the Lord,

Chas. E. Bell,—*Washington.*

A USURPATION OF AUTHORITY

Congress is the *law-making* branch of the United States Government: the President and his Secretaries are the *executive branch*—whose duty it is to enforce the laws as Congress makes them. Congress passed the present postal laws nearly thirty years ago, and all Postmaster Generals since, until now, have enforced them faithfully, even though several of them have appealed to Congress to change the laws, so as to prevent so general a circulation of cheap periodicals. Congress in every case has refused to change the laws which have done so much to make the American public "wide awake."

Now, however, we have a Postmaster General who attempts to usurp the law-making functions of Congress and to ride rough-shod over the will of the people as repeatedly expressed through their representatives in Congress. The duty of the people is to resent such unlawful disregard of their rights; and the protests should properly go to the President of these United States, who undoubtedly is quite unaware of this piece of *injustice* and *lawlessness* being practiced under his administration.

Postmaster General C. E. Smith, and his third Assistant, E. C. Madden, who have engineered this nefarious violation of the law, and who are glorying in their shame, show clearly that they are not men to be trusted, when they plan for *ruling* the people and decide what liberties the people ought to be allowed and what disallowed.

What is the remedy? It is to make such conduct odious to all lovers of liberty—to all who love justice. And the best way to do this is to promptly inform President Roosevelt (addressing him at Washington, D. C.), telling him that the credit of his administration is involved by the conduct of these *his* representatives, and calling for their dismissal and for the appointment of men who are not of their lawless (anarchous) cast of mind. Send postal cards or letters, or if convenient get up general petitions and obtain as many signatures (of old and young) as you can. All are interested, and all have a right to protest against the infraction of the laws favorable to "the poor of this world," who are the chief users of the paper-bound pamphlets whose circulation is being interfered with. The rich buy cloth-bound books, which are not affected by these acts of these pseudo-law-makers.

We do not claim that the Postmaster General is destitute of good impulses in this matter: his claim is that he wishes to save the *people's money*. But our reply is that the people do not wish him to economise at the expense of violation of the *people's laws*. They do not need a paternal government. They are able to change the laws, through their representatives when and how they please.

If the *laws* of the land were being enforced we should not have one word of remonstrance to make, however much their enforcement might injure us. But when, under divine providence, the laws are on our side it would be wrong for us to submit without protest and thus to encourage still further violations of law in disregard of the rights and wishes of the law-makers—*the people*. Office holders should be held to account as the public's *servants;*—otherwise they will be justified in concluding that the people are serfs and desire to be ruled by Czars.

SOME SUGGESTIONS

Many need no suggestions from us, but are quite competent to express themselves forcefully and cogently. Others, however, may be helped by the following general suggestions as to brief forms, which each may change and modify to suit his own tastes.

Hon. Theo. Roosevelt, Washington, D. C.:
Respected Sir:—

Doubtless you are unaware of the gross injustice being done the poor by your subordinates—the Postmaster General and his Third Assistant. They have undertaken to make *"rulings"* respecting *pamphlets* (2nd class mail), which are gross violations of the laws of Congress of nearly 30 years standing. We call upon you to cleanse your Cabinet of such law-breakers. Give us examples of obeyers of the laws in their stead, and we will esteem you, for your justice, accordingly.

(Signature.)

To the President of the United States,
Washington, D. C.

Your Excellency is respectfully petitioned to overrule recent Postoffice legislation against second-class mail matter.

(Signature.)

To the President of the United States,
Washington, D. C.
Your Excellency:

We call upon you to redress the grievance of the poor, and at the same time uphold the Postal Laws of Congress, by causing the *unlawful* act of the Third Assistant Postmaster General to be set aside and its perpetrators ousted. We refer to the recent illegal "rulings" respecting pamphlets, refusing them second class mail privileges such as Congress designed and expressed; and such as they have enjoyed for the past 30 years. The acts of your subordinates must be regarded as the acts of your administration. We hope to have this wrong speedily righted.

(Signed.)

To the President of the United States,
Washington, D. C.
Hon. Sir:—

We, the common people, hold you responsible for the violation of our Postal Laws at the hands of your Postmaster General and his Third Assistant. Congress enacted the law for second class mail in the interest of education and intelligence amongst the poor and the middle classes. It is robbery and fraud for these men now to frustrate that law which the people, by their representatives in Congress, have now three times refused to alter. We urge you to dismiss these law-breakers and to put in their stead men who will obey the laws as the *people*, through their representatives, enact them. Thus you will win the esteem of lovers of law and equity.

(Signature.)

VOL. XXII ALLEGHENY, PA., DECEMBER 1, 1901 No. 23

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE CZAR OF RUSSIA AND THE WORLD'S PEACE

The Frankfurter Zeitung, one of the most reliable newspapers of Europe, is the authority for the following report of an interview between the Czar and a German Admiral, while the Czar as the guest of Emperor William witnessed the maneuvers of the German fleet in the Baltic Sea,—the Admiral being in command of the fleet. It is important as showing the opposing arguments on the preservation of the world's peace, which all men agree is desirable—essential.

We agree with the Czar's line of argument, but hold that in the nature of things it is impossible of realization. The arming and drilling and building of ships will continue until the people of Europe are thoroughly awakened, when they will refuse to be fought and taxed, and a revolution in favor of Socialism will ensue—resulting, however, in Anarchy, as the Scriptures indicate, preparing the way for Christ's Millennial kingdom.

The conversation, as reported by the *Zeitung* follows:

Admiral—Your Majesty is pleased to confer too great an honor upon an old sea dog like me. I am delighted to think that your Majesty received a favorable impression of our army and navy, for, your Majesty may rest assured, we strain every nerve to keep the army and navy abreast of the times, which is the ideal thing for every good government to do.

The Czar—There I differ with you, Admiral. According to my own views the ideal thing to do would be to reduce standing armies and navies instead of keeping on increasing their strength. This so-called preparedness for war—arming on a great, and ever greater, scale is overburdening the peoples of Europe. All governments should strive to lessen their expenses for the army and navy. As long as they do the opposite, they are simply upholding and perpetuating an intolerable situation.

The Admiral—A humane and extremely generous thought, your Majesty, but—

The Czar—(interrupting)—not a thought only, Admiral, I am devoting my life to the realization of the peace idea.

The Admiral—Indeed, your Majesty's big-hearted endeavors permit of no misinterpretation, but the other powers, your Majesty, the other powers. Your Majesty won't believe for a moment that the other powers will find it to their interest to reduce their armies and navies!

The Czar—I am convinced that a condition such as I have outlined will serve the true interest and conform to the just aspirations of all the powers.

The Admiral—May it please your Majesty, don't you think that a perfect army and navy, an army and navy ready to move against the enemy at a moment's notice, so to speak—doesn't your Majesty think that such weapons as those constitute the best guarantee of peace?

WAR PREPAREDNESS MUST STOP

The Czar—In order to establish true and permanent peace it is absolutely necessary that the nations' war preparedness, as constituted by their armies and navies, be limited. The nations durst not go on forever increasing their war strength and heaping up war material. There should be no further progress, so-called, in the art of killing men and animals, destroying ships, interfering with commerce and laying waste provinces. All that has to stop. The nations want a rest; they have been clamoring for the cessation of war scares, produced by the announcement that A has better guns than B, or that X is building more and better ships than Y can afford to do—they have demanded a letup in war preparedness for twenty years! On that point the civilized nations are fully agreed, and international policy, my dear Admiral, will eventually compel the permanent peace. Policy, I say, and not armies and navies.

Admiral—I beg to assure your Majesty that my government, like that of St. Petersburg, strives for peace most earnestly. To preserve peace is its sincerest wish, believe me, your Majesty. But to preserve peace our army and navy must be in the best possible shape; we must increase and augment them steadily to keep pace with the growth of population and the armament of other peoples. Your Majesty knows the old saying: Si vis pacem para bellum. God forbid that we increase the army and navy with the idea of carrying war into our neighbors' land. It's all done in the interest of peace. For peace's sake we are willing to make any sacrifice.

PEACE NOT WITHIN REACH

The Czar—Yet, I heard this story before. You compel your people to bleed itself to death to furnish ways and means for keeping up a tremendous force on land and sea, and for adding to it constantly in a manner heretofore, happily, unknown. Neither Napoleon I. nor Frederick the Great, neither Alexander nor Peter, neither Louis XIV., nor our own Catherine ever dreamt of such armies and navies in war time as are now established while Europe enjoys the blessings of peace. But all your arming and the whole immense apparatus afoot and afloat, eating millions day by day, don't amount to a row of pins as an actual guarantee of peace. The nations of Europe are today as far as ever from declaring the permanency of peace. Despite your armies and navies, the blessings of a world's peace are not yet within reach.

Admiral — True enough, your Majesty, armed peace demands great sacrifice; we have to pay heavily for the maintenance of peace by a grand army and navy, but your Majesty, the people are glad to contribute to the welfare of Europe even at considerable expense.

PUBLIC WELFARE THREATENED

The Czar—Maybe, Admiral, but the thing can't go on! The sacrifices demanded of the taxpayer are constantly growing, financial troubles, owing to the expense of the army and navy, are increasing day by day. I tell you, this thing spells disaster. The public welfare is threatened at its roots.

The Admiral—Your Majesty is pleased to leave many things, stamping armed preparedness as a blessing to the people, out of your calculations. Big armies and grand navies compel the nations to work and strive; they banish idleness and call for honest competition. Nowadays every people in Europe is trying to produce the best weapons, the finest ships.

The Czar—But it's not humanity's business to produce means of destruction. We were put upon this earth to build up, not to do the other thing. All the money spent for the army and navy above a certain necessary amount is money diverted from its real purpose, money invested in unproductive labor.

Admiral—Your Majesty was pleased to admire our fine quick-firing guns; you have seen those mysteries of the sea, boats that travel under water, the iron-clads yonder, our incomparable flotilla of torpedo-boats—all these wonders of twentieth century technique, are they not evidence of marvelous progress? Doesn't your Majesty recognize that our people give their best thought, their brightest endeavors to the fatherland? I repeat it, in my humble opinion our army and navy is the best guarantee of peace, while the money invested therein pays abundant interest by the maintenance of peace. The people's money could not be more profitably invested than in securing peace as we do.

BEST TODAY, USELESS TOMORROW

The Czar—(shaking his head)—Indeed, and what about those hundreds of millions you are spending for means of destruction, today labeled the "best and latest," while tomorrow you must admit that they are valueless because something new, something to offset them, was invented? A fine investment, Admiral.

Admiral—I will not deny that we are frequently doomed to disappointment of the sort your Majesty referred to. But if your Majesty will permit me, I dare say the competition of inventors benefits our home industry and consequently the people that live by industry and commerce.

The Czar—Your argument is illogical, Admiral. Powder and guns, torpedoes and submarine vessels, ships, not destined for commerce—all such things are false values; the persons engaged in their manufacture contribute neither to the world's betterment nor to their own happiness. Ironclads, grapeshot, swords, and lances are not agents of progress by any means; their wholesale manufacture presupposes a deficit in the making of articles that stand for culture and economical advancement. Besides, it is easy to prove that the system of armed preparedness is largely responsible for the financial depressions that crop up from time to time in all countries turned into camps.

The Admiral—But, your Majesty, what has preserved peace during the last twenty and more years, if it was not our grand army? If we hadn't been so well prepared as to number of soldiers and ships, as to the latest pattern of guns and other war material, hostilities might have broken out on several occasions.

The Czar—Hypothesis, my dear Admiral! There isn't an atom of proof for what you say. I am convinced, on the other hand, that your grand collection of war material is a permanent menace to peace.

The Admiral—On that point I beg to differ with your Majesty, and the people, I am sure, think as I do. They love the army and value it for the protection it renders the nation. And for these services they are willing to pay.

The Czar—It is unfortunate that you and armed war preparedness enthusiasts generally will not see things in their proper light. As a matter of fact, standing armies and big navies are obstructing national development everywhere, and the people, staggering under the weight of overtaxation for army purposes, hate and loathe the institution, while fearing it at the same time. I tell you, Admiral, if things go on as they have been going, the catastrophe which you hope to avert will occur sooner than you think. The disaster will be awful—the thought of it might make an honest man shudder.

The Admiral—I beg your Majesty's pardon. I am only an old sea dog trying to do my duty. Now duty, as I take it, compels the state to do everything in its power to keep the army abreast of the times, increasing and equipping it in the best manner possible, so that in the hour of danger—

MAY INVOLVE THE WORLD

The Czar—No, no, no. It's the state's duty to avert war by other means than by laying up war material, that must necessarily lead to war. Don't you know that the war of the future, of which we stand in such dread, may involve the world world?

The Admiral—Is your Majesty thoroughly in earnest?

The Czar—Most thoroughly. I regard it as my sacred duty to secure permanent peace for the world by persuading the nations to disarm. At the same time I am not blind to the fact that this grand purpose can only be achieved by the coöperation of all civilized peoples.

This ended the conversation, the Czar rising and giving the signal for the dismissal of the fleet.

THE TROUBLES OF SCIENTISTS

Those who reject the divine revelation, the Bible, are continually in trouble—contradicting themselves and each other. The following from the Chicago Inter-Ocean will trouble evolutionists. Yet the learned Professor by the change noted is, however, probably no nearer the truth than before. He confuses his reason and handicaps it by assuming a false premise, rejecting the inspired one.

The article mentioned follows:—

MONKEYS WERE MEN, NOT MEN MONKEYS

That Professor Ernst Haeckel, the distinguished German naturalist, and the world's greatest living advocate of the biological theory of evolution, has reversed his views of half a century and taken a stand with Professor Rudolf Virchow in opposition to Darwinism is the startling announcement made in Paris.

It is stated that during his expedition to Java, begun last year, Professor Haeckel has found striking evidence in support of the theory, advanced for the first time only a few months ago by Virchow, that monkeys are descended from man, and not man from monkeys. That, in fact, monkeys are nothing less than degenerate humans.

"If Professor Haeckel has made any such discovery," said

Dr. Edward Grant Conklin, professor of zoology at the University of Pennsylvania, "or if he has recanted his former multitudinous writings and lecturings sufficiently to make any such statement it means that one of the most remarkable revolutions in biological science has taken place.

"I can not credit the announcement. It seems too extraordinary to believe that Haeckel, of all men, should take this stand. I do not know if he has returned from Java, but he went there to study and make further researches into the pithecanthropus erectus, discovered by Dr. Dubois, with a view to further substantiate the theories he laid down in his 'Phylogeny,' tracing the descent of man.

"Haeckel may have discovered fresh remains of the pithecanthropus; if so, their nature has not been announced, and I can not speculate upon them, but any fresh finds along that line can not fail to be of the utmost interest to scientists."

To understand thoroughly the revolutionary change accredited to Professor Haeckel, it is only necessary to review briefly the history of his part in the exploitation of Darwin's theory and the causes that led to his recent exploring visit to Java.

Ernst Haeckel, now professor of zoology at Jena University, was the first distinguished scientist to fully accept Darwin's theory when the "Origin of Species" was published. The scientific world was trembling on the brink of the revolution he caused later by the publication of "The Descent of Man," when Haeckel anticipated Darwin in his most far-reaching conclusions, and in a measure prepared the world for the startling doctrines hinted at in the "Origin of Species" and fully promulgated in "The Descent of Man."

Since then Haeckel has been the most advanced among the evolutionists. He has long asserted that the history of man is complete in all its essential details, and that all that now remains to be done is to fill in here and there such concrete evidence as zoological and paleontological research shall reveal.

In his "Systematic Phylogeny," a monumental work in three volumes, he made a theoretic systematic arrangement of the vegetable and animal world living and extinct on the basis of the law of evolution. The work has been called a vast pedigree tree, with man at the top and the lowest non-nucleated cell at the bottom. In this pedigree there were no empty or unaccounted spaces. Haeckel constructed hpyothetical animals or organisms, and to him, in theory, there were no missing links.

Twenty-five years before the discovery of Dubois' *pithecanthropus* Haeckel had forseen in his phylogeny such a creature, and he had christened it "*pithecanthropus allus*," or the apelike man before language. He gave to it a place midway in the order of life between the highest ape and the lowest human.

In every library, in every language devoted to zoological works, there are books by the shelf-full bearing the name of Haeckel. They stand beside and support the "Origin of the Species" and "Descent of Man" and "Man's Place in Nature" (Huxley). Haeckel has been the apostle of Darwinism, the most trenchant fighter in the years when the theory was battling for a right to existence in the scientific world. Virchow, the world-famous pathologist, found Haeckel in his fight against Darwinism, and now that the champion should go to the other extreme is incomprehensible to those who have followed his career.

Professor Ernest Haeckel is now sixty-seven years old, and is a native of Potsdam. For thirty-five years he made his home in the quiet, sleepy little town of Jena, except for occasional expeditions and trips to scientific congresses. He has been a prolific writer, and is a most accomplished artist. All the drawings and illustrations for his works have been made by himself, and their marvelous accuracy has made his books of two-fold value. The extravagance to which he has carried some of his theories and the imagination he has infused into his driest and most scientific dissertations have in a measure cut him off from absolute confidence on the part of his followers, but no naturalist has earned fame by harder work or deeper study.—Chicago *Inter-Ocean.*

THE UNIVERSAL MERIDIAN

The meridian of Greenwich, England, is everywhere accepted as the starting line from which to reckon longitude and time all over the earth, and all our maps and astronomical calculations are made accordingly. Suggestions have been made from time to time, however, that a better starting-line might be found. Some of the Italian scientists, for example, have seriously objected to Greenwich, on account of the clouds and bad weather that frequently interfere with astronomical observations there. They recommend that the civilized world adopt Jerusalem as the standard meridian, because the skies are clearer there, and the possibility of making Palenstine neutral territory would eliminate political objections.

"BELOVED SON TIMOTHY'S RETURN"

We have pleasure in announcing the safe return of dear Brother E. C. Henninges (and his faithful helpmate) *via* the steamer "Etruria," on November 16. During his absence, of nearly two years, his energy on behalf of the harvest work in Great Britain has been greatly blessed by the Master, as reports from the British Branch from time to time have abundantly demonstrated. The work there is on a far better footing than it has ever been in the past; and under the care of our new representative there, Brother Jesse Hemery, it will, we doubt not, continue to prosper and gather much ripe "wheat" into the Lord's "garner."

As for Brother and Sister Henninges, we can readily find room for them in the Allegheny office. Indeed the general work is spreading grandly (and we expect it to expand much more during the next six years) and the addition of these efficient helpers to our present force is quite opportune. We trust it will give the editor an opportunity to proceed with the preparation of the VI and VII Volumes of *Millennial Dawn*, from which he has been greatly hindered by the expansion of the various departments of the work during the past two years.

The dear friends in Great Britain will miss our dear brother and his untiring energy on their behalf; but we trust they will find in dear Brother Hemery a faithful and good substitute. We commend him to them all. We have every confidence in respect to his character and ability—else we would not have esteemed him the Lord's choice for the position he now occupies. We urge that the British friends support him by their prayers and coöperation accordingly.

THE JUSTICE OF OUR CONTENTION

We trust that hundreds of our subscribers in all parts of these United States have written letters or postal cards (or gotten up petitions) for the protection of the *public's* rights under the laws as they are, and as they have existed for thirty years. Each one is responsible in this matter. Let each do his duty, and then be content with the results whatever they may be. We urge all who appreciate the present law, and who have not already done so, to send a letter or card at once. See page 367 of last issue. We give below our Appeal, which has been unjustly refused.

Allegheny, Pa., U. S. A., October 11, 1901.

James A. Grier, Esq., Postmaster, Allegheny, Pa.

Dear Sir:—

Your favor of the 4th is at hand, enclosing a copy of the Hon. E. C. Madden's instructions to your office, citing us to show cause, as the publishers "why the *Millennial Dawn* series should not be excluded from second-class rates of postage, on the ground that it has the characteristics of a book."

To this we reply: That the term "book" is a very broad one. In legal usage a "paper book" is a pamphlet which may vary in size from five to five hundred pages. In the usage of the United States Patent Office the term "book" is applied to any pamphlet or printed matter of one page or upwards. In the usage of the United States Post Office, ever since the establishment of the second-class, the term "book" has been applied only to printed matter, substantially bound—in cloth or leather.

A reference to Webster's Unabridged Dictionary and the Standard Dictionary shows the original distinction between the terms "pamphlet" and "book" to have been that a pamphlet consisted of a number of sheets of paper stitched together, not substantially bound, nor too cumbersome to be held in the hand; while the term "book" applied to literature in substantial binding, and particularly to such as was too heavy for use in the hand.

In modern usage the rulings of the United States Post

Office during the past thirty years, that any printed document in substantial binding, whether of few or of many pages, constitutes a book, while the same pages unbound constitute a pamphlet, have become practically a law. Nor can we conceive of a better method of distinction between books and pamphlets than this. Under this law, as it has been interpreted, we think wisely, justly, the binding, and not the number of pages, decided the matter. To change this arrangement, and to deny that the binding distinguishes what is a book from what is a pamphlet, and to arbitrarily decree that a certain number of pages should constitute a book, while a less number would constitute a pamphlet, would involve the Department in an inconsistency, should it attempt to decide as heretofore that pamphlets could not be such if put up in substantial binding, though acceptable as to number of pages.

Respecting the issues of our journal, known as the "*Millennial Dawn*" series of special issues. These have been issued under the present laws of the United States since 1886. They are of different-sized pages from our regular issues, and were put into this form for the greater convenience of our readers. They each represented several issues of our semi-monthly, Post Office rulings to the effect that one issue could not bear date as representing several having been promulgated since any of these pamphlets issued.

We hold that these pamphlets are entirely within our rights under the law; that nothing in the law in any sense of the word restricts us, either as respects the number of pages or the size of the page. These back numbers of our journal are constantly in demand amongst our subscribers and their friends, and any restriction of our rights and privileges as heretofore construed and as defined under the law will make serious hardship and righteous indignation amongst these over twenty-five thousand intelligent adults whose case we represent in this paper.

The fact that these special issues of our journal have a colored cover, while our regular issues have not, should not be construed as a violation of the law, because there is no law governing the subject, except the restriction that the cover should not be a substantial one. As a matter of fact, the leading journals of this and every land are in the habit of issuing, especially in the holiday season, special numbers, which usually have colored covers, as well as other features distinguishing them from the regular issues.

Moreover, the Post Office Department has for years recognized as second-class matter what is known as the "Official Postal Guide," issued monthly under various colored covers, and ranging in pages from 32 to 1132. It will not do to say that this is a Government publication, for that would not be true; the most that can be said for it is that it is a publication very convenient to the Post Office Department, one which saves the Government from getting out a publication of its own. But even if it were a Government publication, what jurist would undertake to say that the Government is superior to its own laws, and that the law governing the meanest citizen does not govern also the highest one, and every official and every act of the Government? If the annual issues of the "Postal Guide" are not books, but pamphlets, then surely the *Millennial Dawn* series of special issues of our journal, less than half the size of the annual "Postal Guide," are also pamphlets and not books.

Are we told that the Post Office Department could frank the "Postal Guide," and thus send it through the mails free? We reply that it can not; because there is no law of the United States permitting them so to do. Before this could be done it would be necessary that Congress should pass a law to that effect. Likewise, of course, Congress could pass a law permitting all religious matter to go through the mails free, but we do not anticipate that Congress will ever pass either of these laws. The publishers of the "Postal Guide" can as well afford to pay postage as can other publishers throughout the United States.

Further, we submit that no law-making power claims to enact retroactive laws, that will go back of the time of their making, and take hold upon legal transactions of the past. If, therefore, the United States Post Office Department should now or at any time conclude that it has the right and the power to make new laws and regulations these, in all justice, must take hold as for the future, and can not in any sense of the word affect our vested rights as represented in electroplates and large editions of our special issue published under the full sanction of the law and of the Post Office Department. At very most, the new law or regulation could forbid us from henceforth publishing such special editions of our journal, or otherwise regulating as respects the number of pages, whether they shall be cut or uncut, and whether they must be uniform color as to cover.

In the above plea we have made no claims for preference of consideration on the ground of our publications being strictly religious, because, although we believe that this plea would have weight in the minds of all moral and well-intentioned people, we prefer to stand strictly upon the basis of our rights under the law.

We understand that under the new law the Post Office Department intends henceforth to restrict lodge and society publications to literature or news, prohibiting the publication of advertisements. We wish to call the attention of the Department to the fact that our journal and its special issues would all come under this head also. Our subscribers are recognized as members of our Society—the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, chartered by State of Pennsylvania, and our publications contain no advertisements whatever, but are strictly confined to Biblical exegesis, cultivation of good morals, and in general the publication of the Gospel—"good news," "good tidings"—the message which is new every morning and fresh every evening, and which more than any other news in the world is helpful to, not only the Lord's people, but in general to civilization—"Good tidings [news] of great joy which shall be unto all people."

Trusting for a just and generous consideration of our plea foregoing, we remain, Respectfully yours,

Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society.

THE VOICES OF THE THREE SIGNS

[Reprinted in issue of September 15, 1907, which please see.]

"CHRIST OUR PASSOVER WAS SACRIFICED FOR US"

EXOD. 12:1-17.—DEC. 15.

Pharaoh's heart seemed to grow harder and harder under divine mercies, as one plague after another was stayed at his request, through Moses. The goodness of God, instead of leading him to repentance, would seem to have made him only the more determined, as God had foreseen and foretold. God, however, informed Moses that the tenth and final plague would be sufficient to break down the opposition of this hard man, and compel his acquiescence, with the requirement that Israel should go free. Before the infliction of this plague Moses enquired whether or not Pharaoh were willing to let Israel go, and upon receiving the negative response he warned Pharaoh that in consequence a dire calamity would befall the Egyptians. Apparently he immediately departed for the land of Goshen, there to put the people in readiness for the exodus. Their Egyptian neighbors gave them liberally jewels of gold and of silver and various articles of value, evidently anxious to have them go, and regretful that their ruler was so stubborn. They realized also, no doubt, that in some sense God was with the Israelites, and against the Egyptians, a matter which it seemed difficult for Pharaoh, their king, to discern.

How much time they may have consumed in preparation for the journey we know not, but we may well suppose that this was a time of suspense upon Pharaoh and all who knew of the last threat presented to him by Moses and Aaron. We are certain that the preparations required several days, if not weeks, because amongst other instructions each family was to select for itself a representative male lamb of the first year, unblemished, as the foundation for the religious ceremony, known as the Passover, ever since observed by that nation. The lamb was to be selected, accepted, separated from others, and cared for specially from the tenth day of that month, Abib (later known as Nisan), and on the fourteenth day of the month it was to be killed between evenings (between six o'clock the one evening and six o'clock the next evening—the usual Jewish day). Its flesh was to be roasted for eating the following evening, and its blood was to be preserved for sprinkling upon the lintels and door-posts,—the door frame, above and at either side. It was in the night following the fourteenth day that the roast lamb was to be eaten, with bitter herbs, the eaters being gathered in family groups, and all in expectation for the journey, sandals on their feet, and staff in hand, etc., ready to depart out of Egypt early in the morning of the fifteenth.

The story, as recorded in Exodus, is an interesting one, and has ever been one precious to the Hebrews, the law concerning it serving as one of the most prominent landmarks in the history of that nation. But to the Christian the meaning of this incident is of still greater importance. To him, as the anti-typical Israelite, the whole transaction speaks of the anti-typical deliverance at the hands of the anti-typical Moses at the close of the anti-typical night, and at the opening of the anti-typical Passover day. Our Golden Text, "Christ, our Passover, is slain for us" (1 Cor. 5:7), identifies the Lord Jesus as the anti-typical Lamb, and identifies the sacrifices which he gave with the deliverance which we are now hoping for, as near, even at the door. This fact is recognized by Christians of all denominations, and our Lord's Supper is recognized as the commemoration of the anti-typical of the Passover supper, especially by the Catholic churches and the older denominations of Protestants. As the Hebrews celebrate the Passover annually, so these churches celebrate annually "Good Friday," by an emblematic supper known as the Eucharist or Lord's Supper, commemorative of the death of "the Lamb of God" and the divine mercy consequently extended to "the church of the first-born."

Let us go backward, and look at some of the minutiæ, and the meaning of these to us, the spiritual anti-typical Israelites. The taking up of the lamb on the tenth day of the month found its correspondency at the first advent of our Lord Jesus, when he presented himself to Israel at the close of his ministry, as their King, riding upon the ass, exactly on the 10th of Nisan. It was then that that nation should have accepted him, should have received him; but instead "they hid, as it were, their faces from him," and saw not in him the beauty for which they were seeking, as a nation. It was on the fourteenth day of Nisan that our Lord partook of the Passover with his disciples, early in the evening. Later on in the same night he was betrayed. The next morning of the same day he was condemned and crucified. Later in the same day he was buried. All this was on the fourteenth day between evenings, between six p. m., where the day began, and the next six p. m., where it ended, and it was on the next day, the 15th, in the evening, that the Passover feast of the Jews was celebrated. We celebrate that feast anti-typically, continuously feasting and rejoicing in the grace of God toward us. But the Lord's Supper belongs to the 14th of Nisan and commemorates the killing of the Lamb of God. That night in which the Passover feast was eaten represents this Gospel age—a dark time, in which sin and evil still triumph, and darkness is abroad, and in which the Lord's people feed upon the merit of Christ, our Passover Lamb, slain for us, and realize that his "flesh is meat indeed."

Along with the lamb the Jew partook of unleavened bread, pure, unadulterated, figuratively separate from sin; it symbolized the precious promises which come to us from the heavenly Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. "This is the bread that came down from heaven, whereof if a man eat he shall never die." (John 6:50) And, as the Hebrews ate their bread and lamb, so the anti-typical spiritual Israelite partakes of Christ's merits, and graces freely, but with them receives also the bitterness of persecution, trials, difficulties, misrepresentation and suffering symbolized by the "bitter herbs." As the Hebrews ate shod and ready for their journey in the morning, so the true Israelites of this Gospel age partake of these spiritual favors, feeling the while that we are still in Egypt, and longing for the promised land; and they indicate by the conduct of life that they are pilgrims and strangers in this country, the world, and that they are seeking the heavenly country. But the deliverance did not come in the night in which the Passover was eaten, but in the morning which followed it. And so the deliverance of the spiritual Israelite does not come during the night of sin and trouble in which the god of this world reigns. It comes in the Millennial morning, for which we wait and hope and pray, "Thy kingdom come." "God shall help her, early in the morning."—Psa. 46:5.

It is the mistake of some to suppose that the Passover refers, either directly or indirectly, to the passing of the children of Israel across the Red Sea. Nothing of the kind. The name was given with reference to the passing over or sparing of the first-born of Israel during that night in which the lamb was being eaten, and during which the blood was on the door-post without. The death-messenger was abroad throughout the land of Egypt, and the first-born of all Egypt were smitten, and the first-born of Israel were saved only upon condition that the blood should be sprinkled upon the door-posts and lintels of the houses in which they were. Any Israelite who did not respect the divine command, and place the blood-marks upon the front of his door, as directed of the Lord through Moses, would suffer, just in the same manner and just as surely as the Egyptians—the blood was the mark of distinction between those who were the Lord's people and those who were not his people.

What does this signify now, to the spiritual Israelites? We answer that the sprinkling of the blood symbolizes an acknowledgment of faith in the redemptive merit of our Lord Jesus' sacrifice, as our Passover Lamb. Whoever recognizes the Lord's word in respect to this matter realizes that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, and he who thus realizes the importance of the death of our Savior is expected to *confess* it, as symbolized by the sprinkling of the blood upon the outside of the dwelling. And its being upon the door signifies that all who under its efficacious merit. It is remarkable that while this doctrine of the redemption through the blood of Christ has been held with more or less clearness for centuries, it is now, in the close of this age, being called in question by some who are still naming the name of Christ, and by some who profess to be advanced teachers, and higher critics. All such are, from the Lord's standpoint, Egyptians, not Israelites. All whom he will recognize as his people, Israelites indeed, will be such as will recognize him, his Word, and the work which he has accomplished for them through the shedding of the precious blood of our Passover Lamb, Christ Jesus.

The doctrine of *substitution* is made most emphatic in this type. As the blood represents life while in the veins, so it represents death when shed; and so, as the sentence of death was against our race, it was needful that Christ should die for our sins. Hence also the Lord has made it encumbent throughout this age that each one whom he would recognize must be one who would trust in and confess the atonement, the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. The blood was to be for a token, for a witness, for a sign, as evidence of the faith of those who were in the house on which it was sprinkled. It was not God's token, but man's token. God would do the sparing, but every Israelite who would be spared must see to it that his part of the program was carried out.

Let it not be overlooked that not all of the Israelites were in danger of death, but only the *first-born;* for this is a striking and prominent feature of the type. It teaches that while the deliverance that is to be accomplished in the morning will be delivered for all who love the Lord and love righteousness, the first-born as well as all the rest, yet a special trial or testing comes during the night—before the Millennial morning—and this special testing or trial will affect only the *first-born ones*. Who are these first-born ones? We answer, They typified "the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven," the "little flock," begotten to a newness of nature, and to joint-heirship with our Lord Jesus in the coming kingdom. Others will be delivered from the power of Satan and the oppression of sin, as represented in the deliverance of all Israel from Pharaoh and his power and bondage, but the only ones who will be in danger during this night, the only ones who will be *passed over* or spared, during this Gospel age, will be the little flock, the church of the first-born. This is distinctly the language of the type, nor can it be otherwise accounted for. It will be remembered that after the Passover, in the new order of things, the first-born ones spared in this Passover became representatively the Levites, amongst whom, in turn, were the priests, a little flock; and even so the Apostle declares of the church of the first-born, "Ye are a royal priesthood."—1 Pet. 2:5, 9.

As already remarked, this Passover lamb found its antitype in Christ, our Passover Lamb, who was slain for us, and of whom we partake. Our Lord instituted for us, the spiritual Israel, a commemorative service to take the place of the type observed by fleshly Israel. It was instituted on the same night in which he was betrayed, the same night in which he ate the Passover supper, as a Jew, and after the eating of the Passover supper. He took bread and wine to represent himself, as the true, anti-typical Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world and he enjoined upon all who were truly his followers that they henceforth, instead of any longer, as the Jews celebrating the typical Passover, should henceforth celebrate the anti-typical Passover. "As often as ye do *this* [celebrate the Passover] do it in remembrance of me [and not any longer in remembrance of the typical deliverance]." And from year to year this celebration has been handed down to the present time, and is still commemorated.

Some of God's people, however, having become confused upon the subject, and having lost sight of the fact that it is a commemoration of the anti-type of the Jewish Passover, feel quite at liberty to set for its observance times and seasons of their own, without any authority from the Lord. They are excusable to a considerable extent, because, during the eighteen centuries since the institution of the ordinance the great adversary introduced many doctrines and false practices amongst the followers of Jesus—amongst others, the doctrine of the Mass, which purports to be a repetition of Christ's sacrifice, performed by the priests, re-creating Christ in the flesh, they claim, and sacrificing him afresh in the Mass, for the sins of those for whom it is performed. Protestants, coming out from Papacy, have rejected the doctrine of the Mass, but because the Mass had come to be frequently performed they imagined that the Lord's Supper, as they celebrate it, is also without any limitation as to time and season. Moreover, even those old churches which still observe the Passover date for the Lord's Supper have adopted a new method of reckoning it, contrary to the method in use by the Jews—one in which the memorial day always falls upon the Friday which is nearest to the true date, so that the Sunday following, Easter, will symbolize our Lord's resurrection on the first day of the week.

The next proper anniversary of the celebration of the Passover, according to the Jewish reckoning of time, as used by our Lord and the apostles, and by some of the Lord's people since and today, will be after sundown, April 20th, 1902.

CROSSING THE RED SEA

EXOD. 14:13-27.—DEC. 22.

"I will sing unto the Lord for he hath triumphed gloriously."—Exod. 15:1.

Skeptics have railed greatly against the truthfulness of the Bible record of Israel's deliverance—crossing the Red Sea, etc. They object that so rapid an exodus of from one to two million people, with their flocks and herds, would be an impossibility; and they object, secondly, to the testimony that God miraculously delivered them by making a path for them through the sea. As to the first objection: We can readily see that if the Egyptians had been opposed to their going the difficulties would have been much greater. We are to remember, on the contrary, that after suffering the chastisement of the plagues they were willing, nay, anxious, for their departure, Pharaoh himself sending a message to Moses, even in the night in which the first-born were slain, saying, "Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go and serve the Lord, as ye have said; also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone, and bless me also."

We are to remember that the Israelites were in a measure organized; their tribal and family relationship having been maintained. The narrative shows that they went forth in military order,—either five abreast or in five companies. (Exod. 13:18, margin) Evidently all were under the command of the heads of the tribes, "the elders of the people." Several days elapsed before their journey brought them to the Red Sea. The great wall of Egypt, called Shur (somewhat similar to the great wall of China), is supposed to have hindered their making a more direct route. Besides, this wall was in the midst of a sandy desert, where there would be no sustenance, either for themselves or for their cattle; while the route taken, passing through the borders of Egypt to the head of the Red Sea, was evidently the most favorable one as respects pasturage, etc.

Various comparatively shallow places in the Red Sea, near its head, are suggested as possible ones by which the crossing may have been effected, and the description given would indicate that the passage was made on such a sandbar, which perhaps ordinarily would have from five to twelve feet of water upon it, according to the condition of the tides. The presumption is that the strong east wind spoken of, operating with the tides, laid bare this sandbar, and thus gave the Israelites a passage.

But while Pharaoh, under the sting of the last plague, was anxious for the departure of the Hebrews, nevertheless, as his grief assuaged and he considered the loss his empire was sustaining in the departure of over a million subjects, intelligent and ingenious and docile, and when he considered further that they were an unarmed host, and impeded in traveling by their flocks and herds, he evidently felt that he had been too generous in permitting them to go, and concluded that in the few days' march they had already experienced something of the difficulties and trials of the journey, and that by this time they were not only discouraged, but hemmed in by the northern tongue of the Red Sea, and the Egyptian wall, while on either side were mountains. He concluded that they could be easily retaken, and would feel that they had had enough of their "outing" and perhaps would return to their labor more docile than ever. Consequently the Egyptian troops of the capital were started in pursuit.

The Israelites, who for years had learned to dread their Egyptian masters, heard of the pursuit, and cried unto Moses despairingly, Moses in turn crying unto the Lord on behalf of the people. The Lord's response to Moses' prayer is a striking one, from which spiritual Israelites may also take a lesson. It was, "Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." (Exod. 14:15) There is a time to *pray* and also a time to *act* and thus to co-operate with God who is answering our prayers. When the Lord's time for answering our prayers has come we know it, it is for us to manifest our faith in him by going forward. Too many spiritual Israelites, after hearing the Lord's message, instead of going forward in obedience are disposed to tarry and pray to the Lord that he give them some special message not common to others. Such through weakness of faith are in danger of losing their standing. "Without faith it is impossible to please God;" and obedience is merely a demonstration of faith.

Apparently the Israelites got a glimpse of the Egyptians in the distance, before sundown. This is implied in Moses' statement, "The Egyptians whom ye have seen this day ye shall see again no more forever." The account declares that the pillar of fire, by which the Israelites were miraculously led, removed to their rearward, so as to be between them and the Egyptians,—a pillar of cloud and darkness to the latter, and a pillar of fire or light to the former. Apparently there was a great storm that night, the east wind blowing furiously; outside narratives, such as that of Josephus, declaring that it rained, thundered and lightened appallingly. But whether this was merely upon the Egyptians, from the pillar of cloud, or whether it was also upon the Israelites, would be merely surmise. What we do know is that during that night the windstorm blew across that upper neck of the Red Sea in such a manner as to leave the sandbar bare for a considerable breadth, so as to permit the rapid passage of so large a body of people. The Israelites knew, through Moses and their elders, what miracle had been performed, and hastened to escape from their pursuers. The latter probably were totally unaware of the miracle, and perhaps unaware that they were crossing the ordinary bed of the sea, and therefore, without trepidation, hastened onward in pursuit, impeded, however, by various accidents to their chariots, which sank into the comparatively soft sand of the sea bottom. They, no doubt, concluded that where the Israelites had gone they could go. Nevertheless, ere they had crossed they became so discouraged with the opposition, of what they probably at first considered accidents, but afterward recognized as divine providences on Israel's behalf, that they resolved on a return—to give up the pursuit, saying that the God of the Hebrews fought for them. By this time it was nearly daybreak, and Israel having crossed over Moses stretched forth his rod over the sea, and winds and tide, etc., being favorable, the waters came again upon the Egyptians, that they were drowned. It is said that wonderful storms, somewhat analogous to this one, frequently occur in this vicinity, and that Napoleon and a troop of soldiers were very nearly overtaken at about the same place that Pharaoh's chariots were lost, by a sudden cessation of storm and rising of the tides.

A critical writer suggests that Pharaoh's charioteers were probably intent upon heading off the Israelites, and thus turning them backward, and that the sea waters were a wall on either hand, in the sense of being a flank protection, hindering the troops from getting ahead of the Israelites, turning their flank. He says, "The wall would not, by any Oriental, be supposed to be an actual wall rising up beside them, any more than 'the wooden walls of Great Britain' are board fences about the island: or 'the hedge about the law,' which the rabbis built by their precepts, was a growth of vegetation."

There are numerous lessons connected with this narrative, profitable to the spiritual Israelites. As already suggested, the experience of the Israelites and the Egyptians at this time represented the experience of the world in the close of this Gospel age, and in the dawn of the new dispensation—the period of deliverance of God's people, too, from bondage to sin and death, which will be accomplished at the dawn of the Millennial age. We may reasonably understand that the last or tenth plague upon Egypt symbolizes the bitter experience of the world at the close of the present age, and that these experiences will be favorable to the Lord's people, and unfavorable to others, down to a certain point where the contest will be abandoned, and those in authority in the world will agree to the full liberty of all who love righteousness and who desire to walk in the Lord's way. Quite possibly "the powers that be" may concede for a time the demands of the weak and the helpless, and subsequently repent, and attempt their re-capture under the slavery of selfishness, and so through a Red Sea of trouble the Lord will then administer a final chastisement upon all those who oppose his deliverance of the poor and the needy and they that have no helper, and who cry for righteousness, and follow the leadings of his representative, Messiah.

Surely, when the new dispensation has been opened up, and the silver trumpets of the Jubilee shall sound release and restitution through all the world, there will be a great rejoicing amongst all who love righteousness, and, in the language of our Golden Text, they may say, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously." And already the spiritual Israelite can *by faith* thus rejoice and realize his release from sin and death.

Another thought we may draw from this narrative is the unlimited power of God, who has promised us that if we are his, and will follow the leadings of our Master, the antitype of Moses, all things shall work together for good to us. We are to learn that nothing is too wonderful for our God to accomplish, and in proportion as faith increases our joys will increase, and we will have the full assurance of faith, the full assurance of victory, for "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." We are to learn that while the wicked may triumph for a time the Lord is against them. He is on the side of the poor and oppressed, who are seeking to know his will and to do it, and though he bear long with them, as represented in the parable, yet, finally he will avenge them of their adversary: their enemies shall then become the enemies of the Lord, and the enemies of the Lord shall bite the dust—be destroyed.—Luke 18:7; Micah. 7:17.

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APPROVAL, WHETHER SUCCESSFUL OR NOT

We know not to what extent the Lord may be pleased to use and bless our united efforts to *keep open* the door of opportunity afforded by present favorable postal laws. But in any event we feel sure that he will appreciate our humble efforts in this direction. Any who have not yet written to the President, as suggested in our issue of Nov. 15th, we advise to do so at once. Let us do our part and then rest content. The law is there, all right, and even the humblest foreigner has a right to appeal to it, and for its benefits; and to protect against its violation. But there we will let it stop. If protest is unavailing we will reckon that it is the Lord's will that we endure the wrong *cheerfully*.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

"LIBERTY ENLIGHTENING THE WORLD"

We have no sympathy with Count Tolstoy's unscriptural religious views for which he was ex-communicated by the Greek Catholic church; yet we note with surprise that his published reply to his ex-communication has been forbidden sale by the Public Prosecutor of Leipsic, Germany. A cable dispatch to the New York *Sun* says:

"The reason given for the seizure is that the work is calculated to bring the church into contempt, and the prosecutor's action is based on a paragraph of the German penal code, which imposes a maximum penalty of three years' imprisonment on anybody publicly insulting one of the Christian churches or other religious communities enjoying in Germany the privileges of a corporation. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the incident is that Count Tolstoy's indignant reply to his ex-communicators is allowed to circulate in Russia, the Holy Synod refraining from prosecution, while the officials of the country which indorsed Luther's protest against the Roman church seek to extinguish the words of the Russian reformer."

There are any number of people, in all countries, of similarly narrow soul we have every reason to believe. Fallen human nature though not inclined to claim for itself perfection, loves to wield power and to destroy its enemies or those against whom it is prejudiced; although uncertain as to what is truth it is ready to decide what is error upon very slight evidence.

Who can doubt that God's providence held back America until the due time, when its discovery opened a door of freedom for the oppressed and priest-and king-ridden Europe. "Liberty enlightening the world" has been a fact for now more than a century. No well-informed person will doubt that much of the liberty enjoyed by the peoples of Europe today are the result of the *influence* which has gone back to the "fatherland" from the liberty-loving people who commingling here have learned to think more justly and more broadly than they or their fathers could think under their old environments.

Custom becomes law: the illustration of American liberty with prosperity compels a liberty in Europe which otherwise would not exist today. But it looks as though the pendulum has swung its full length liberty-ward, even in America, and as though it had started in a return movement. We believe that the next few years will witness a serious curtailment of liberty on the part of those in power, and that the general spirit of liberty and alertness to its defense is so deficient among the masses, here as well as in Europe, that its wings will be clipped rapidly, in the name of law, order, expediency—until the people finally awakening to the situation, in fear of a return to complete serfdom will revolt in anarchy.

How comforting the thought that the bright lining to this cloud is the Millennial kingdom which will promptly be established on the ruins of "the present evil world"—on the ashes of present civil, religious, political institutions. We who thus hope for the salvation of the world which God has promised can possess our souls in peace as respects these matters, waiting and hoping for a share in the new order of things—the new heavens and new earth—wherein will dwell righteousness.—2 Pet. 3:13.

FEDERATION OF METHODISTS, AND OTHERS

Rev. Dr. George Elliott, pastor of the Central Methodist Episcopal church, who has just returned from attendance upon the Methodist Ecumenical conference in London, England, says that the recent assembly was especially marked by its constant response to spiritual religion and by the utter absence of dogmatism. Perhaps the most important matter that came before the assembly, which consisted of some 500 Methodists from all over the world, was that of church unity. As a result of the ecumenical conference, held in Baltimore ten years ago, all the Australian Methodists are now united in a single body. At the late conference in London all the smaller English bodies signified their willingness to unite with the Wesleyan church, which is the strongest branch of the denomination in the British Isles. Dr. Elliott thinks the outlook good for a consolidation, or at least for a federation, of the different branches.

The advance in this direction, however, was not so noticeable among the delegates from the United States, although some progress was made. The delegates from the Methodist Episcopal church south, which left the main body at the opening of the civil war, had little to say on the subject.

Half a day was spent in considering the matter of a federation similar to the church federations in this country, which should include the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, the Baptists and the Methodists. There already exists a free church catechism which all these denominations use in common, and to a great degree they are already joining in plans for mutual work.—*Detroit Free Press.*

THE POPE'S VIEWS

Die Information, the clerical organ in Vienna, says: "The pope addressed the Catholic Bishops Sunday and declared that the late President McKinley was a victim of the excessive freedom granted to the people of the United States. He urged that it was the duty of society to oppose the spread of socialism, freemasonry, Judaism and anarchism."

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY'S

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 1, 1901.

"Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good!" is the expression of our hearts as we sum up the activities of the fiscal year in the harvest work—from December, 1900, to December, 1901. We have not in all respects attained to our ideals set for the year just closed, but perhaps this was partly because of our high appreciation of the work and the workers, and of a laudable ambition to have each year exceed its predecessor in efforts and in results. And indeed, as the itemized reports will show, the work in all its branches has made good progress, and in some directions has exceeded that of any previous year. We have nothing but thanks to offer to our gracious Master for the privileges enjoyed at his hands in connection with his service, the service of the truth and of the brethren—and for his blessing so richly bestowed upon our humble efforts.

ZION'S WATCH TOWER

One of the most encouraging features of the work is the substantial increase in the number of *Watch Tower* readers—our list now numbering about 14,000. We had hoped that by this time it would have reached 16,000; we evidently were too sanguine. The *Watch Tower* list may properly be regarded as a sort of barometer respecting the progress of the truth, because the terms on which it is supplied surely permit all of the interested to be on its list—there are none so poor that they cannot have it if they will but comply with the standing offer which appears on the second page of each issue. We not only offer it free to the Lord's poor, but we offer credit to those who hope to be able to pay later; and we offer, further, that if they cannot pay later a postal card request, at any time, will secure a cancellation of the account. These being the terms we are considerably surprised to find, from time to time, many people who have considerable interest in the truth, and who have read and appreciated one or all the *Dawn* volumes, but whose names are not on the list. An offer in our last issue we hope will correct this matter; and our proposition that each one now on the list shall act as a solicitor will, we believe, bring good results. We hope, with your coöperation, to be able to announce in our next annual report that the list has increased to sixteen thousand or above. Indeed, if each one could feel respecting this matter as we do—the importance of the regular semi-monthly visits of the *Tower* to those of the interested who are more or less disposed to be overcharged with the cares of this life—and if all would consider the matter as a service to the Lord, and to the brethren, and would at once proceed to do what they can in this direction, we have no doubt that our list would speedily run up to 20,000. We do not want the *Tower* to go to any one who would not appreciate and read it, but we are more than willing—we are anxious—to have all the interested on our list, regardless of their ability to pay for it—the extra expense will be cheerfully met out of the contributions to the Tract Fund. Let each make this a matter of prayer, and then do what he can in this direction, as a service unto the Lord and unto the brethren.

THE COLPORTEUR WORK

We continue to esteem the colporteur branch of the service one of the most important—in many respects it is the foundation of the work, so far as the public is concerned. It should be borne in mind that this is not a book-agent business, but a ministry of the truth of the true Gospel; and the sixty-nine colporteurs now engaged in the service are in it, not for wealth nor for health, but for their love of the Lord and for their desire to lay down their lives on behalf of the brethren—to assist in extricating the Lord's people from the bondage of error and darkness, and to assist them into the marvelous light now shining for the people of God who are walking in the narrow way, the path of the just. Such being the motives of the service it will rightly be seen that the large number of books circulated by these dear friends does not by any means measure their service for the truth; for they deliver very many brief discourses in various homes where they fail to arouse sufficient interest to dispose of a book—an interest, nevertheless, which the days or weeks or years to come may bring to fruitage, as it has done to our knowledge in many instances.

The total number of copies of *Millennial Dawn* circulated during the last year is slightly less than the number for the previous year, but the decrease is in the foreign translations. The English edition shows an increase of about 9,000 copies. A condensed statement follows:

Dawns Circulated — English	93,214	
" " — German	2,464	
" " — Swedish	2,373	
" " — French	681	
" " — Dano-Norwegian	216	
		98,948
Booklets circulated — English	37,155	
Foreign	19,247	
		57,402
Grand Total		156,350

This is a branch of the service in which there is always room for more—and the better the colporteur's education and general address the better both for himself and for the work. This ministry closely resembles that which the Lord instituted at the first advent, and, as then, it is usual for the friends to go in pairs. The message proclaimed is identical—the long-prayed-for kingdom of heaven at hand. And now, as then, authority and power go with these servants of the Lord, to assist those to whom they minister, who are exercising faith, by opening the blind eyes, unstopping the deaf ears, and casting out evil spirits. Only now it is the eyes of the understanding and the ears of the heart that are opened, and it is the spirit of selfishness and sin that is rebuked and cast out, in proportion as the spirit of the Lord is received. It is but proper that we should expect thus to see a higher work performed now than that done at the first advent, because this is the harvest of spiritual Israel, while that was the harvest of fleshly Israel.

We have no doubt that there are very many more of the dear friends of the truth who have consecrated their hearts and time and talent and influence to the Lord, who are carefully considering the great opportunities presented in this colporteur service, and making ready their arangements to take part therein. We are glad to hear from such from time to time, and will coöperate with them in every way possible—for their entrance into and prosecution of this work.

THE "VOLUNTEER" WORK

This branch of the service circulated, during the past year, about a million of the free tracts, "Food for Thinking Christians." This was good, excellent, grand—about the same number as the previous year; nevertheless, it was disappointing to us, because we had expected that the interest in this volunteer work would have increased at least a half; not that the former workers could do more than they had already done, but that we expected others to gradually become more zealous, and thus to increase the effectiveness of this service. This has been true in some places, where practically the entire congregations engaged; but in many places there has apparently been a little slackening of the hands, a little cooling of the ardor. Let us pray the Lord's blessing upon ourselves and upon each other in connection with the glorious opportunities of the harvest work and full appreciation of the privileges of a share therein; and that the Lord will send forth more laborers into his vineyard, to their spiritual profit and to the furtherance of his cause.

The volunteer distribution represented a total of over eighteen and a half million pages. Surely all who took part in any measure have cause for gratitude to God for the privilege enjoyed and improved. Altho there is no earthly reward connected with this service there surely is a spiritual reward experienced in the present time, as well as an exceeding great and precious one laid up for these faithful soldiers of the cross. We are well aware that it is not possible for all to engage in this service, and we are offering no criticism of those who do not engage. We merely desire to encourage those who have already had opportunity, and have availed themselves of it, and have taken up their cross in this service. We are sure that they are stronger spiritually for the efforts put forth.

THE "PILGRIM" SERVICE—ORAL PREACHING

We recognize no such divisions in the church as are commonly, in the nominal churches, denominated "clergy" and "laity." We hold that the Scriptures teach that the entire church is a priesthood: "Ye are a royal priesthood . . . . that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into the marvelous light." (1 Pet. 2:9) We hold, therefore, that the colporteurs, who take the *Dawns* and booklets and tracts from house to house, and the volunteers, who make distributions of free literature every Sunday, and the brethren and sisters who have no such opportunities, but who find other ways of serving the Lord, the truth and the brethren, either more publicly or more privately, are all priests, ministers, preachers, as any may be pleased to term the Lord's servants. All have the same message to give forth, and all are *ordained* of God—anointed with the holy Spirit, for this very purpose; as an authority to preach the good tidings. It is the privilege of each to serve according to his talents and opportunities, and all are acceptable to the Lord as *ministers of the new covenant* who faithfully seek to serve, not self, but the Lord and the brethren. It is not, therefore, to be understood that those who go forth under the auspices of our Society, to give their time specially to oral preaching (public and private) are any more authorized or ordained for the ministry in holy things than any others of the same "royal priesthood." We do not expect these brethren whom we designate as "Pilgrims," to be received as any more commissioned and authorized than any other of the Lord's brethren. You may understand, however, that when such come to you, they are so far as we have been enabled to know them, sound in the faith, apt to teach, possessed of good character, and fully consecrated to the service of the Lord, the truth and the brethren. Our judgment in this matter is not infallible, however, and even if it were, the Scriptural injunction is that the Lord's people are to test whatever they receive as truth by the sure standard, the divine Word, whoever presents it.

Sixteen[*] of these pilgrim brethren have done considerable service throughout the year, their routes of travel being noted in the *Watch Tower* since June 1 issue. Their service is not for filthy lucre's sake—none of them are paid salaries, though all are comfortably provided for in every necessity out of the Societys' funds, and in some instances provision is also made for their families. This, in a general way, was the method which prevailed at the first advent. Had the practice of serving merely for expenses continued, we have every reason to believe that the nominal church would not be in its present condition—that its public servants would be freer to study the truth, and freer also to declare what they would learn.

The amount of Pilgrim service during the past year is in excess of that of any previous year, as will be seen by the following statement:—

Number of persons giving more or less of their time in this Pilgrim service during the year	16
Number of miles traveled in the service	63,149
Number of churches visited	634
Public meetings held	1,141
Private or parlor meetings held	745
Cost of this branch of the work	$3,255.28

We notice with pleasure that the number of private or parlor meetings held is proportionately more than last year, and the number of public meetings proportionately less. The public meetings are valuable, very favorable to deepening impressions which you have already made upon your friends and neighbors, by private conversation or through reading matter; but the private meetings we esteem to be the more valuable for the development of the household of faith already fairly clear in doctrinal matters. They are valuable as giving opportunities for bringing up points and questions which may have arisen in connection with their private or class studies. We are trusting that, under the Lord's providence, a great blessing will be upon this "Pilgrim" branch of the service for the coming year. All requests for "Pilgrim" service should be renewed now. See second page of our last issue.

CONVENTIONS OF THE YEAR

This may be considered a part of the pilgrim service deserving a special report. We held but one general convention, at Cleveland, O., a report of which has already been laid before you. We are of the opinion that these annual conventions furnish excellent opportunities for the Lord's people to assemble together. Such assemblies were provided for during the Jewish dispensation—we remember how our Lord and the apostles attended the feasts of Passover, etc., at Jerusalem. One special blessing which seems to result now, as then, is that representatives of the Lord's people in various quarters attend and carry home with them some measure of the love and zeal with which they become imbued, and thus in many directions the flame of sacred love is more brightly enkindled.

One-day conventions, addressed by the Editor, seem to continue popular with the friends, and, so far as we are able to judge, they are stimulating and helpful. The main service is always for the public, upon some theme calculated to arrest and fix the attention of new as well as old hearers. They serve also to advertise the meetings of the church at each place, and to draw together the interested. Twenty-four of these conventions were held during the year, covering over twelve thousand miles—generally in places accessible by one night's travel, thus consuming as little of the Editor's time as possible from other departments of the service.

GENERAL TRACT DISTRIBUTION

Hundreds of thousands of tracts are distributed free outside the regular "Volunteer" work noted above. Some have opportunities for using tracts amongst their friends or neighbors, and some enclose them with their correspondence. We are glad to coöperate with all in any such service, and from time to time hear of some upon whom impressions have been made by books or tracts thus circulated in various ways the Lord seems to be reaching all who have the hearing ear, and in various ways also each, as he receives the truth, seeks to dispense it to others, according to his talents and opportunities. Each faithful one is blessed. Notice the total number of tracts circulated in the various ways, as stated in another column.

THE CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT

We esteem this one of the most helpful channels of service. Many write us, and upon a large variety of subjects—theological and practical; and their letters are welcomed and answered to the best of our ability. The Editor has three valuable assistants in this department of the service; nevertheless, he gives his personal attention to all important and doctrinal questions. While foolish questions are, of course, not desired, nevertheless we esteem that no question is trivial which may seem to any of you to have a bearing upon the character of your daily lives or your future prospects. Therefore be free to write to us, and to permit us to assist you in any manner possible, freely, as unto the Lord.

Letters and cards received during the year	40,417
Letters and cards sent out during the year	28,601

CONDENSED STATEMENT

Copies of Millennial Dawn circulated at cost	98,948
Copies of booklets circulated at cost	56,402

CIRCULATED AT EXPENSE OF TRACT FUND

Copies of Zion's Watch Tower	455,741
Copies of Old Theology tracts	2,591,500
These figures, expressed in the usual form represent in tract pages	83,675,000

THE FINANCIAL SIDE—TREASURER'S REPORT
TRACT FUND EXPENDITURES

Cost of above matter circulated free, including freight, gas, help, etc	$14,904.56
Pilgrim expenses, etc	3,255.28
Last year's deficit	3,025,91
Total	$21,185.75

TRACT FUND RECEIPTS

From Good Hopes donations	$19,770.09
From other sources	6,226.70
Total	$25,996.79

The financial showing, dear brethren, is remarkable, when it is remembered that no appeals are made for money and no collections taken up by the pilgrims at any of their meetings, and no private solicitations made by them, or through the columns of the *Watch Tower*. Every donation, we therefore safely say is in the best and heartiest possible sense a voluntary one. We do not mention these things as though the amount were large. It would be considered ridiculously small, by other Bible and Tract Societies, principally heard from through appeals for money, and whose active collecting agents are usually given one-half of their collections as salary. The entire amount out of which we publish millions of tracts and pay the expenses of sixteen travelling preachers, etc., etc., would generally not be considered enough for the salaries of the principal officers.

Some may wonder, indeed, that we make mention of so small an amount at all, in view of the fact that we frequently see in the newspapers mention of single collections for religious and missionary work which amount to from three to six times the amount of our entire year's receipts from the Lord's people in all parts of the world. Our reply is that so far as we know the large proportion of those interested in present truth are poor in this world's goods, rich only in faith toward God and in zeal for his cause. As the Lord esteemed the two mites of the widow as "far more" than all the gifts of the rich, so we (and we believe the Lord also) esteem very highly the contributions sent us by the Lord's faithful; and we publish these annual statements that the dear friends may know how we strive to make every dollar do full duty—expending it according to our best judgment of what would be the divine will.

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[*] Five serve week-days in the *Tower* office, preaching on Sundays.

We want to mention incidentally that altho we do not put money first in any case, nor recommend that the money talent is the superior one, nevertheless we wish to encourage those who are seeking to use their financial talents by saying that in our judgment the Lord will be pleased to bless those who serve his cause financially, as well as those who serve otherwise—by oral or other preaching. Nevertheless, we encourage everyone of the Lord's people not to be content with the use of any one talent, but to seek to bring into active exercise as many talents as he finds himself possessed of.

May the Lord's blessing rest richly with us during the year beginning, giving more and more wisdom, that we may do those things pleasing in his sight; that we may be useful in his service; not as those who merely beat the air, but as those who accomplish something to the praise of our Lord and to the profit of his people.

We trust, dear friends, that you continually pray for the Editor and his colaborers in this service, that the Lord will use more and more your and our united efforts for his cause; and that he will bless and refresh us all while we do what we can to pour our blessings also upon others in his name.

The following report of the British Branch will be of interest. It closes the year with November 1st, when Brother Henninges turned over his charge there to his successor, Brother Hemery. A comparison with the report which appeared in our issue last year shows that our dear Brother's faithfulness in the service there was abundantly blessed by our Lord. True, the financial statement shows a deficit of considerable amount, but this was fully anticipated, and fully authorized by us, with a view to putting the work there upon a better footing. We congratulate Brother Henninges upon his success, and trust that in the Lord's providence his return to the home office will mean a shouldering by him of much of its responsibilities and a corresponding relief and greater liberty for the President of this Society (the Editor) for other departments of the work.

The items below are included in the foregoing general statement. The report follows:

REPORT OF MANAGER OF BRITISH BRANCH

Dear Brother Russell: LONDON, November 1, 1901.

I have the pleasure to hand you the report of the Tract Fund receipts and expenditures for the British Branch of the Society, November 16, 1900—October 31, 1901:

EXPENDITURES	£	s	d
Deficit from previous account	425.	1.	4
Paper and printing	201.	11.	3
Carriage and other expenses	46.	15.	9
Pilgrim work	42.	16.	5
Total	716.	4.	9
Receipts from Great Britain	178.	19.	10
Deficit	537.	4.	11

REPORT OF LITERATURE CIRCULATED

Copies of Millennial Dawn	15,740
Copies of Booklets	2,918
Total	18,658
Tracts sent out free	498,675
Sample Watch Towers free	49,500
Total copies sent free	548,175
These represent Tract Pages	14,774,400
Letters and cards received	3,047
Letters and cards sent	4,071
Total	7,118

In sending this report, we must acknowledge the Lord's gracious answers to prayer, and the operation of his Spirit in his dear people in this country, as shown in the substantial increase over the previous year of *Dawns* and Tracts put into circulation. The Lord has also sent more laborers into the harvest, in every department, sending forth such as can spend *all* their time and energy in the blessed service of colporteuring from house to house, and stirring up the zeal of those who cannot have this privilege in full measure, but can spend *some* time in this way. May their numbers and efficiency be further increased to the glory of God! The field is really *white* to harvest, and the time is short.

The "Volunteers" also deserve special mention for their faithfulness in conditions favorable and unfavorable. It will be observed that the number of tract *pages* freely circulated in Great Britain in the last twelve months is less than the total in our previous report, though the number of *copies* is more than twice as great. This is due to the smaller number of pages in "Food for Thinking Christians," as compared with the Volunteer *Towers* previously distributed. This great mass of free literature could not have been circulated here but for the generous coöperation of the Allegheny office; and it might be remarked that our financial report takes no account of the expenses of printing the tracts received from America, and sent out from here. These represent 298,675 of the above mentioned copies of tracts sent out free.

Our successor, Brother Hemery, takes charge of the office from this date. We are sure that the friends of the truth in the territory served by this Branch will find in him a zealous and efficient colaborer in every matter that would advance the interests of the work entrusted to him. As the brother is quite well known to most of the *Tower* readers in this country, more need not be said by us. We commend him to the grace of God, and to the prayers and active co-operation of all who love the truth. The church at Forest Gate has unanimously requested him to take up the pastoral duties vacated by us.

In retiring from this portion of the field we (speaking for Mrs. Henninges as well as myself) return thanks to God for the privileges we have had in connection with the work. Some "light afflictions" have befallen us, but we can give thanks for them also, since they have ministered to the increase of our joy in the Lord and his service. It has been a great pleasure to labor with and for the friends of the truth here, whom we have learned to love dearly in the Lord; and we desire at this time to assure them again of our grateful appreciation of the efforts they have put forth to make our sojourn among them pleasant and profitable. Though many miles may separate us, our intense interest in the welfare of the harvest work and workers in this land will not slack. May the Lord's favor be even more manifest to them in future than in the past!

With love to you and all the co-laborers, and trusting to see you soon, I remain,

Yours faithfully, in Christ,

E. C. HENNINGES.

"KEPT FOR THE MASTER'S USE"

Keep my life, that it may be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

Keep my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Keep my hands, that they may move
At the impulse of thy love.

Keep my feet, that they may be
Swift and "beautiful" for Thee.

Keep my voice, that I may sing
Always, only, for my King.

Keep my lips, that they may be
Filled with messages from thee.

Keep my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold.

Keep my intellect, and use
Every power as thou shalt chose.

Keep my will, oh, keep it Thine!
For it is no longer mine.

Keep my heart; it is thine own;
It is now thy royal throne.

Keep my love; my Lord, I pour
At thy feet its treasure-store.

Keep myself, that I may be
Ever, *only*, ALL for thee.—*Frances Havergal.*

TARRYING UNTIL ENDUED WITH POWER FROM ON HIGH

Acts 1:1-11.—Jan. 5.

"While he blessed them he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."—Luke 24:51.

Bible Studies of the International series begin the new year with studies in the book of Acts, and after six months will return us again to Old Testament studies from Moses to Samuel.

Luke, the physician, who wrote the Gospel of Luke, was the author of the book of Acts. In the latter he takes up the narrative substantially where he left it in the Gospel—the ascension of Christ. He recapitulates, however, to the extent of giving us a narrative of the conversation immediately preceding our Lord's ascension. The account is evidently addressed to a friend, of the then common name, Theophilus, who was supposed to have been a person of considerable dignity and influence, inasmuch as he is elsewhere styled "most excellent," a title which implied a considerable social or political rank. Luke was not one of the apostles, and his records are not therefore of apostolic authority. Such authority or plenary inspiration was not necessary, however, in the recording of plain, simple facts such as the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts present. It requires no inspiration to record a fact, thought it does require some ability, and it is reasonable to assume that since the Lord used Luke's abilities in connection with the work of recording the facts of that time he was *guided* of the holy Spirit in the *ascertainment of the facts*, which his education and natural talents eminently qualified him to state succinctly. Luke was guided of the holy Spirit, in the same sense that all of the Lord's consecrated people are guided by his Spirit, which is to a different degree from that *plenary* inspiration granted to the twelve apostles—Paul taking the place of Judas.

The first verse refers back to the Gospel of Luke, as a treatise of the doings and teachings of Jesus from the time he began his ministry to its close; and some have assumed that the word "began" might reasonably be understood to imply that our Lord continued his ministry after his ascension, speaking and acting, through his apostles, and those believing on him through their word. This is true enough whether it was what Luke meant or not; for the Scriptures invariably teach that the church of Christ in the flesh is his representative: as the Apostle Paul says, we "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his body's sake, which is the church." (Col. 1:24) And as we have to do with the suffering of the anointed one, so we have to do with the witnessing or ministry by which the members of the body are to be called out from the world, separated, instructed, and thus prepared for a share in the glorious kingdom and the great work of judging the world, which it will inaugurate. It is in this sense that our Lord declared. "Ye shall be my witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Primarily, the apostles were the witnesses who testified to us respecting our Lord's words, his death, his resurrection and ascension, and his promises of a return to accept his faithful to a share in his kingdom, when he shall take unto himself his great power and reign. In a secondary sense all who receive the apostolic testimony and declare the same to others are likewise Christ's representatives and witnesses.

It was in order that the apostles might fill this position of witnesses, and might be enabled to give us, and all, a clear testimony on the important subject of Christ's death and resurrection and ascension which constitute the foundations for hope, that our Lord was present with them after his resurrection, and, as Luke declares, demonstrated the fact of his resurrection by "infallible proofs"—explaining to them meanwhile things pertaining to the coming kingdom, for which he had already taught them to hope and to pray, "Thy kingdom come," and a share in the throne which he had already declared would be for the faithful. This explanation respecting the kingdom was necessary, because, as Jews, they had properly looked for an earthly kingdom, and now needed to be informed that before the earthly kingdom could be established a heavenly kingdom must first be inaugurated; and that they were eligible to a place in the heavenly kingdom, through which in due time, the blessing would come to an earthly kingdom, and ultimately extend to all the families of the earth. This information was not due to them so long as the old or Jewish dispensation remained—up to the time of our Lord's death. It would only be "meat in due season" after the Jewish nation, through its representatives, the priests and doctors of the law, had rejected Christ and crucified him. But now that the new dispensation was fully inaugurated, it was "meat in due season" to the faithful to know that God, having rejected fleshly Israel from being his peculiar people, for a time, to gather a spiritual Israel, to be the holy nation, the peculiar people, the royal priesthood, to show forth his praise, and to constitute his chief agents for the blessing of the world in due time. This work of calling the spiritual Israelites, and of inducting such as would heed the call into the new relationship, was the work being committed to the apostles—the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, which our Lord unfolded to the disciples in such measure as they were able to appreciate them—leaving to the future the work of guiding them into all truth, into the deep things of God, under the ministration of the holy Spirit, which he had previously promised would show them things to come.—John 16:13.

Our Lord wished the apostles to distinctly understand that they were not then in the condition to undertake the new work, and that the proper time for action had not yet come—that they would not be prepared until they should receive the holy Spirit, a power and unction from the Father, which would specially qualify, enable and guide them in the important service of their commission. Moreover, it would be to them, and to all believers through them, a divine evidence or attestation; first, respecting our Lord's work, that it was approved of the Father, and constituted a basis of reconciliation by which sinners might return to harmony with their Creator; and evidence, further, to those consecrating themselves to the divine service, and receiving the holy Spirit, that they were accepted of the Father in the Beloved, and owned as children and heirs of his promises, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be that they would suffer with him that they might also be glorified together, in the kingdom, when the due time should come.—Rom. 8:16-17.

It was appropriate at this time, and in view of the Lord's instructions respecting the kingdom and the preparatory work for it, which the apostles were commissioned to do, that they should wonder and inquire respecting the time of its establishment; and not knowing that he was about to leave them, they inquired respecting the ancient promises of Israel's restoration, whether or not these were now due to be fulfilled—whether or not Israel was to be released from the domination of the Romans, and to become the great nation of the world, and to be used to God in the blessing of other nations.

It is worthy of careful note that our Lord did not rebuke the apostles, nor tell them that the thoughts represented in their question were foolish, and would never have a realization. On the contrary, his answer clearly implies that their expectations at least approximated the truth; but that as respected the time of their fulfilment he was not at liberty to gratify their curiosity. The things they referred to, which God had promised, would be fulfilled in due course, but the times and the seasons were not for them to know, the Father retaining them in his own power, not being pleased as yet to reveal this feature of his plan. Our Lord, however, clearly indicates that before the restoration of Israel to divine favor must come in the mission of his apostles, to which he was now appointing them. He would not inform them whether their mission would be quickly accomplished or not, but as a matter of fact, we see that it has already extended over more than eighteen centuries. The restoration of Israel to divine favor cannot take place until Christ, and his apostles, and all his faithful, shall first have accomplished the work of witnessing to the world, and of selecting the full complete number of the "elect"—spiritual Israel. This is the work of chief concern: the times and seasons for the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel after the flesh, and to the world, are to be left in God's power, with the assurance that when the due time shall come the brethren shall not be in darkness on this subject, but be guided by the holy Spirit into this and all other truths, as they become meat in due season for the household of faith.

The witnessing properly began at Jerusalem, the center of Judaism, which God himself had chosen, as represented in the Temple. It properly began with those who had knowledge of Jesus and his crucifixion,—amongst whom were the most devout Jews from all quarters of the earth. It was appropriate that the truth respecting our Lord's resurrection and ascension and glorification with the Father, and respecting the gathering of spiritual Israel, and our Lord's second coming to receive them and to exalt them with himself in the Messianic kingdom, should be declared to those who had been witnesses and instigators of his ignominious death.

This, like the other features of the Gospel, is totally unlike anything else known in history. Never before, either in fact or in conjecture, did people ascribe divine honors to one who had been put to death as a criminal. Worldly sentiments would be to the contrary of this, as being unwise, and wholly unlikely to appeal to the sentiments of the people. And further, worldly wisdom, even if it had adopted as a leader one who had been publicly executed as a criminal, would never have thought of beginning the testimony close to the scenes of the ignominy, but would have gone afar off to proclaim that an innocent one had been betrayed and unjustly sacrificed. God so arranged the matter that the truth should stand forth for acceptance or rejection by the Jews in the most unfavorable light, so that only those who were Israelites indeed, and ready to sacrifice every earthly advantage as Jews, and to make themselves of no reputation, and thus take up their cross and follow the Lamb,—these alone would be appealed to, or incline to follow the cause of Jesus—defamed as a Nazarene and as a malefactor, and as specially cursed, as it is written, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree." Thus would the Lord hedge his cause about, and keep out of it, through unpopularity, as well as by subsequent persecutions, all who were not Israelites indeed:—thus the church was kept, not only free from doctrinal errors, but also comparatively free from tares, until the apostles fell asleep, and the enemy came in and sowed tares amongst the wheat.—Matt. 13:25.

The witnessing has progressed, until at the present time at least a cursory knowledge of the facts upon which the Lord's message is based obtains throughout the habitable world. This fact of itself, if there were no other evidences, would seem to imply that the witnessing time had about expired, and hence that the object of the Gospel age had about been accomplished in the selection of the full elect number of the faithful witnesses, and that their work of blessing the world would soon be due. The expression, "Unto the uttermost parts of the earth," is not to be understood as implying every quarter of the globe, but rather a term of that day corresponding in meaning to our present expression "everywhere."

Apparently much misapprehension prevails today respecting the character of the testimony or witnessing to be done. Many of those who preach and of those who hear have lost sight of the real message, the real witnessing, and especially rejoice in and promulgate other gospels—evolution, science, philosophy, human uplift, political regeneration, churchianity, socialism, etc. They may think that they are witnessing in harmony with the Lord's direction, but we cannot assent to this. The Lord's desciples were to bear witness to him, and not to themselves nor to human institutions; they were to bear witness to his testimony respecting the kingdom, and not to bear witness to various human theories, snares and sophistries. It is well that all who are inquiring for the "old paths," in which the apostles followed the Lamb, should note this point, and should see to it that their daily witnessing, in word and in deed, testified of Jesus; of the fact that he is a living Savior, whose power, through his word and spirit, works in his followers to will and to do his good pleasure, and to show forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light; out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son, which kingdom they are to hope for and to wait and prepare for, to the intent that they may be meet for this, "the inheritance of the saints in light."

The instruction that they should tarry, and not begin this work of witnessing until endued with power from on high in a few days, implied their unfitness for the work as natural men; and we see abundant evidence of this in many respects. The narrative is that they were men of humble birth and limited education—"unlearned men"—and this was apparent in some respects, even after they received the holy Spirit, for their friends, as well as their enemies, bore witness to it, while acknowledging also their ability under the new conditions. The Apostle Paul, who took the place of Judas, as one of the twelve, being a talented and learned man, did not, we may suppose, show forth the peculiar powers of the holy Spirit so remarkably as the other eleven, who were unlearned. He had the holy Spirit in equal measure, or, indeed, we may say, that because of his natural abilities and talents he was enabled to enjoy and use in the service a still larger measure of the holy Spirit than the others; but this power of God, working in him, would not be so manifest to the observer as in the case of the unlearned, because the divine wisdom and power would to some extent be accredited to his natural ability and talents. Herein, then, we see another manifestation of the divine wisdom in so selecting the twelve foundation stones of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:14), as to demonstrate to all that the truth, as presented, was not of their concoction and elaboration. And yet it was needful to have amongst the apostles a man of learning, qualified to be an able minister of the truth, and to present it under the direction and guidance of the holy Spirit in such a manner as to be a further testimony that the truths declared were of divine origin, and worthy of all acceptation.

While claiming that the twelve apostles were unique, separate, distinct, in the divine plan, from all the other members of the church, we believe, nevertheless, that the divine plan of operation in respect to the general work is outlined in this, our Lord's declaration, "Tarry—until ye be endued with power from on high"—before participating in any sense of the word in public witnessing. Our thought is, that while all men may properly be called to repentance, reformation of life, temperance and every good work, and may be called to faith in Christ, as the Great Redeemer, nevertheless, none are called to be *God's witnesses*, mouth-pieces, representatives, ambassadors, etc., except those who have gone still further, and recognizing themselves as bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, have made full consecration of their every power and talent to the Lord and to his service. These consecrated ones should then wait until they experience something of the divine power working in themselves to will, and, as far as possible, to do the Lord's good pleasure, before beginning to bear witness to others.

And the Lord's sheep should be careful to select as leaders, etc., only such as give evidence of having come under the influence of the holy anointing of the Spirit of God. And this, no matter how much of natural ability the would-be leader may possess; indeed, the more his natural ability the more danger from his leading. Only those anointed of the Spirit are to be recognized amongst the Lord's people as in any sense of the word representatives and mouth-pieces of the head. As it was the Spirit of the Lord God upon our Lord Jesus that anointed or qualified him to preach the Gospel, so it must be the same anointing received of him that will qualify any for this service of preaching or witnessing, in a manner that will be acceptable to the Lord and profitable to his flock. (Isa. 61:1) All who are not in the attitude of full consecration to the Lord, full submission to the divine will, are in opposition, to some extent; and to the extent that they are in opposition they are wrong or wicked. "And unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, to take my words into thy mouth, seeing that thou hatest instruction (refusing to submit themselves to the Lord's arrangement) and castest my words behind thee [neglectfully]?"—Psa. 50:17.

The narrative is brief, and we cannot even conjecture how amply the Lord discussed these matters with the disciples, but when he had explained them amply—or at least to the extent that they (the holy Spirit not yet having come upon them) were able then to receive instruction—he was taken from them up into a cloud, gradually receding until lost to their sight.

This matter of our Lord's ascension was evidently arranged, as were all the other features of his manifestations to the disciples after his resurrection, with a view to the establishment of their faith as natural men; and with the view to the establishment of the faith of all other natural men who might be seeking a basis of faith in this witnessing. As we have already seen, our Lord at this time was quickened in spirit, and not in the flesh. (1 Pet. 3:18) Yet he was appearing in the flesh, even as angels have ofttimes in the past appeared as men. These appearances in different bodies were not deceptions, but demonstrations of a fact—the fact that he was no longer dead, but alive. They were demonstrations in the best manner possible, because as natural men they could not see a spirit being without injury to their sight, and without a corresponding trepidation, which would have quite disqualified them for cool reflection and for instruction such as our Lord wished to impart.

The two men in white apparel who suddenly appeared in their midst were unquestionably angels manifested in human form. It was no more a deception of the disciples for the angels to appear as men than it was when the Lord appeared as a man. Again the object desired was better served by this manner of appearing, than if they had been miraculously enabled to see two shining beings, bright above the brightness of the sun at noonday, upon whom they could not have looked, and before whom they would have fallen, as dead men. But beholding them as men, yet knowing from their glistening garments, etc., that they were really spirit beings manifested in the flesh, the disciples were able to control their feelings, so as to receive their message,—"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which was received up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven."

This was a suitable conclusion to the wonderful series of events of those forty days It furnished a miraculous heavenly attestation that their senses had not been deceived—that their Master, 'changed," had really been with them, appearing in various forms during these forty days, and that he had now gone from them. It consoled them, too, in reminding them that he had not left them forever, but had already promised them that he would come again and receive them unto himself. This evidently was the hope of their hearts through coming dreary days and dark hours of tribulation, persecution, defamation and suffering. They not only endured, as seeing him who is invisible, but as servants who hope for and wait for the return of their Lord, and the nuptial feast and kingdom blessings then to be instituted.

We find this longing for and hoping for and waiting for the coming King in the writings of all the apostles. It is John who exclaims, "Come, Lord Jesus!" It is James who says, "Be patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." It is Peter who encourages the brethren, by pointing out that shortly, when the chief Shepherd will appear, they shall receive a crown of glory, which fadeth not away. It is Jude, who speaks of the Lord's coming, with myriads of his holy ones. It is Paul who urges faithfulness, and assures the brethren that not only himself, but all who love his appearing, shall then receive a crown of righteousness.—Rev. 22:20; Jas. 5:7; 1 Pet. 5:4; Jude 14; 2 Tim. 4:8.

And if this hope so encouraged, strengthened and upheld the early Christian church, should its influence be less today, upon us who remember that now is our *salvation nearer* than when we first believed? Nay, verily; Indeed, when the light of present truth, shining on the pathway, shows us that he who was to come has come, and has not tarried—that the promises of God through the prophets, written aforetime for our admonition, are fulfilled; that we are living in the harvest-time of this age; that the chief Reaper is present; that the gathering of the 'wheat," into the barn, and the bundling of the "tares," for the coming fiery troubles, is in progress; and when, the eyes of our understanding being opened, we see these things in evidence about us, what manner of persons ought we to be in holy joy and faithfulness, and courage and zeal:—to be, to do, to endure, whatsoever things our present Lord and Master, in his infinite wisdom and love, may mark out for us! As he declared, "The cup which the Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?" So may we, with implicit confidence, say that whatever cup of experience our present Lord and Head may pour for us, his disciples, we will cheerfully partake thereof, and thus fill up the afflictions which are behind: and shortly, with all the faithful, enter into the glories of the Millennial kingdom, which God hath in reservation for them that love him.

We have already commented upon the expression, "In like manner as ye have seen him go,"* pointing out that the manner was not a noisy one—not with either worldly or celestial commotion;—that the world was in ignorance of our Lord's going, so that only his faithful few recognized the fact, and that in like manner he will come again, unknown to the world, without commotion;—that his presence will be known only to the faithful ones, whose eyes of understanding are being opened;—until, having gathered his elect, his presence will be manifested to the world gradually in the symbolical flaming fire of the great time of trouble—in the overthrow of present institutions, preparatory to the establishment of the kingdom of light and love.

The disciples apparently abode together in Jerusalem, where they were all comparative strangers, their home being in Galilee. Our Lord's mother, and others of the faithful sisters, were of the company, who in harmony with the Lord's promise, waited at Jerusalem for power from on high. Doubtless those days of waiting were not only essential to the going of our Lord into the Father's presence and the presentation before him of the merits of the ransom sacrifice, and the application of these for the benefit of mankind, but the time was necessary also for the development of the apostles—in faith and trust, through the influence of the promises the Lord had left them. It required some time for them to consider and to reason over the wonderful things they had heard from the Master's lips, and thus to get their hearts into the condition where they would be best prepared for the blessings they were expecting.

Hope is a valuable factor in Christian development still, altho the object of the hope may vary from time to time. For instance, we are no longer hoping for the Pentecostal blessing, believing that it came at the time appointed, and that it has been with the church, as a church, ever since; and that we, in becoming united to the Lord, come under this blessed influence of the holy Spirit. But while that hope has reached fruition other hopes have taken its place in our case. We are waiting also; not waiting, as the groaning creation is waiting, "for the manifestation of the sons of God," either; but we are waiting for our adoption, to-wit, the deliverance of our body—the body of Christ, which we trust will shortly be completed, and ourselves be amongst those who will be "changed" to be of it. (Rom. 8:23) What an anchor to our souls is this hope! How it makes all other interests and affairs of life comparatively insignificant! Wealth and fame, and all the things which the human heart can desire and appreciate, grand and good as some of them are, pale before this grand *epiphania* (bright-shining) in which we, as members of the body of Christ, hope soon to share.

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* Millennial Dawn, Vol. II, p. 153.

SPEAKING WITH OTHER TONGUES

ACTS 2:1-11.—JAN. 12.

"The promise is unto you and to your children."—Acts 2:39.

Waiting for the power from on high, the eleven apostles and with them apparently a considerable number of believers —possibly 120—(Acts 1:15) were rewarded with the blessing of Pentecost. They were "with one accord in one place;" they may have been expecting the blessing during the preceding nine days of their assembling, but Pentecost being a specially holy day it may have appeared to them as probable that it would bring the consummation of their hopes, and with one accord or agreement the full number were all present at the time. There is a thought here respecting the propriety of the Lord's people being at one, or in accord, in respect to the things they are seeking for and waiting for. It is to this end that the Lord has exhorted us, through the Apostle, that we forget not the assembling of ourselves together, and so much the more as we see the day drawing near—not the day of Pentecost, but a still greater and still grander day: Pentecost brought merely the first fruits of the Spirit, while the day we wait for is the day of the consummation of all our hopes and of all God's promises in respect to the church, as the bride and joint-heir of his Son.

We cannot all come together in the literal sense, as did the apostles and the early church on Pentecost, but we can come together into one place in another sense; we can come into the holy place, into the sanctuary or consecrated condition of heart and of life, and thus into oneness and fellowship with the Lord, and with all who are in the same holy condition, and partakers of the same blessing of the inner light of the golden candle-stick, and the inner food of the table of shew-bread, and the inner communion with the Lord, represented in the golden altar and its incense. Our natural dispositions are various, and their crooks and twists different; but our new natures are one, begotten of the same Father, through the same spirit. We are to seek accord as new creatures, and are to restrain, mortify and cast out the weaknesses of the flesh and the contentiousness of disposition which may be ours, accordingly—that as new creatures we may be one with the Lord and with all who are his body or church, under the one Head or Lord, infused or energized by one spirit of obedience to the one Father, and under the control of the one law of love.

It is not said that the holy Spirit was imparted in connection with a rushing wind, but merely that there was "a sound *as* of a rushing wind." Neither is it said that flames or tongues of fire rested upon them, but that tongues or flames having the appearance of fire, as in the case of the burning bush, rested upon them. The holy Spirit is an invisible power, and its impartation need not of necessity have any outward demonstration. But God's purpose was the contrary of this. He desired to accompany the holy Spirit with certain manifestations which would be convincing to the apostles themselves as respected their acceptance with him, and their identification as his ministers, ambassadors of the new dispensation; he wished also to make manifest the nucleus of the Gospel church to others, to devout Jews then in Jerusalem, attending this feast; and we think it quite probable that it was God's intention also by these gifts to manifest who were the apostles and to indicate their special office in the church.

It is not stated specifically upon whom the tongues rested; "upon each of them" might mean upon each of the eleven apostles, or it might mean upon each of the one hundred and twenty present. Whoever the tongues sat upon were filled with the holy Spirit, and they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance; and this preaching with other tongues seems to have been done only by the eleven apostles, for the multitude, hearing them, exclaimed, "Are not all these which speak Galileans?" As for the eleven apostles, they were all Galileans, but as for the remainder of the one hundred and twenty, it is probable that the majority of them were Judeans, residents of Jerusalem. We incline, therefore, to suppose that while the whole room in which they were present was filled with the holy Spirit, and the entire company present made partakers of the holy Spirit, and immersed into it, and blessed thereby, yet, nevertheless, these outward manifestations of tongues and speaking miraculously were at first only given to the eleven, for the purpose of designating them as God's chosen instruments in connection with the new dispensation. We know that it was so subsequently; so that whoever *received gifts* of the holy Spirit received them through the laying on of the hands of the apostles.

WHAT THE TONGUES SYMBOLIZED

From the construction of the Greek text it is evident that these were not split tongues, on the heads of the favored ones, but rather that they were tongues of flame cloven or split off from a central or luminous body, tongues which emanated from one common center, and went to the heads of those for whom intended. It was not fire, however, but light. The tongues represented nothing akin to destruction, which fire would symbolize. They represented, on the contrary, enlightenment, knowledge, intelligence, and implied that a holy intelligence or light from the Lord had come upon the recipients, marking them as the Lord's mouth-pieces; indicating that from henceforth their tongues should show forth his praise, to the blessing and enlightenment of the world. And so indeed it has been; those poor fishermen, illiterate, unlearned as respects earthly education, under the power of the Lord's Spirit became mighty indeed in the pulling down of strongholds of error, and the scattering of darkness by the illumination of the minds of those prepared for the word of God's grace.

Some have made the mistake of supposing that these tongues of flame were fulfillments of the prediction of John the Baptist, who said of Christ, "He shall baptize you with the holy spirit and with fire." (Luke 3:16) This was the fulfillment of only the first part; it was merely the baptism of the holy Spirit; it was not the baptism of fire;—the baptism of fire and destruction was for a total different class. The faithful of the Jews were to receive the baptism of the holy spirit, and the unfaithful majority of them were to receive the baptism of fiery trouble, and they did receive it a little further along. After the holy Spirit, coming upon the infant church at Pentecost, had searched, sifted and winnowed out of the Jewish dispensation all of the true "wheat," gathering it into the garner of the Gospel (spirit) dispensation, then the fire came upon the "chaff." (Luke 3:17) The Apostle speaks of this, calling it wrath, saying "Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."—1 Thess. 2:16.

COURAGE IMPARTED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

The tongues of light which came upon the faithful at Pentecost did not continue with them,—even as the dove, which was seen descending upon Jesus, did not continue to be seen. Both the dove and the flame of light were merely outward representations, not to deceive, but for the purpose of teaching a great lesson, for the purpose of convincing that the promised blessing and power had come. The Lord's people who since come under the influence of the holy Spirit have neither signs of flames nor doves, nor sounds of rushing wind; nor do they speak miraculously. They, nevertheless, come into and are made partakers of the holy Spirit, which no longer uses these outward manifestations because they are no longer necessary; the church having been established, and the fact of the holy Spirit's impartation having been demonstrated, we now are to accept the same by faith, and to permit it to dwell in us richly, and to cultivate in our hearts and lives the *fruits* of the Spirit, instead of expecting them or other things as miraculous *gifts*.

The tongues of light are a forceful illustration of the fact that God purposed to use human tongues as his agencies in promulgating his message and calling out his elect from the world. An energy of soul evidently went with the outward demonstration, giving a courage to the apostles of which previously, as humble and unlearned men, they were naturally deficient. Note, for instance, how it led Peter, who, fifty-three days before had denied the Lord, saying, "I know not the man," for fear of the Jews, to now courageously stand up in the midst of those very Jews and to proclaim him as his Master, as the Son of God risen from the dead and ascended up on high; as the great Mediator and High Priest of the new order. It gave him the courage to charge home to the hearts of his hearers their responsibility for the crime. So also the other disciples, who previously had fled from their arrested Master, were now courageous to tell forth his praise. Not only had they become convinced, by the proofs received, respecting his resurrection and his ascension, but now these proofs were added to by the fulfillment of his promises, evidencing the fact that he had ascended to the Father, and that he had been favorably received, and that these gifts of the Spirit were evidences of the return of divine favor toward them,—of their acceptance in the Beloved One, and of their right authority to go forth in his name and to declare remission of sins to all the penitent who would come unto the Father through him.

At this particular season of the year the city of Jerusalem was crowded with visitors from various parts of the world. We are to remember that millions of the ten-tribe kingdom, called Israel, were taken captive, and later millions more of the two-tribe kingdom, called Judah, was also taken captive, to Babylon; and that these millions were scattered as immigrants in the various districts of Assyria and Babylonia, where they settled down, making these strange lands their home, so that when the opportunity for returning from captivity came in the days of Cyrus, and by his edict, only a very small proportion of the two tribes, and a still smaller proportion of the ten tribes, returned to Palestine—the great majority preferring to remain in the countries where they at one time had been captives, but where, during their long exile, they had become at home and formed attachments. From that time on all distinction as between Israel and Judah was at an end; and all were recognized as at first, as Israelites, and all came under the general name of Jews. Thus it was that our Lord and the apostles addressed the people as Israelites and Jews, using the terms interchangeably, and that they spoke of the dispersed ones indiscriminately, as Jews and as Israelites also.

DIVINE MESSAGES ALWAYS REASONABLE

It was at seasons like the Passover and Pentecost that numbers of devout Jews, not only from all parts of Judea and Galilee, went to Jerusalem, but also the "dispersed" Jews of devout spirit from the surrounding countries came thither, to worship the Lord and to obey the command requiring all his faithful to assemble themselves before him at Jerusalem. Thus it was that at the time of these visits the city would sometimes have a crowded population of from two to three millions of people, chiefly adults. The city was crowded at the time of this Pentecostal blessing, and a great concourse of people was drawn together by the miraculous manifestation of divine power amongst the disciples. Some of these, hearing the apostles speaking in various languages which they could not understand, passed on, declaring that they had no interest in the matter, and that probably the speakers were intoxicated, and did not know what they were saying themselves; but others recognized their own tongues and dialects, some apostles speaking in one tongue, some in another; and when they perceived that all of the speakers were Galileans they were astounded, especially in view of the fact that they were unlearned men. The miracle helped to impress the situation upon their minds, and we may be sure that the words spoken were also powerful. We cannot suppose that the Lord would make a special manifestation of power without an equal manifestation of wisdom. Indeed, wherever we find these to be accompanied by nothing that is reasonable and logical and comprehensible, we are justified in doubting that the matter is of the Lord at all. It is reasonable to suppose that when the holy Spirit gives utterance it will utter that which is good and reasonable and sound of logic, and not folly. And so we read that the hearers said," We do hear them speak in our tongues the mighty *works of God*."

The words of their discourse are not given us in detail here, but we can readily discern that the mighty works of God which filled their own hearts and minds were those wonderful things which they had just been learning from the Lord, viz., that God's time had come for conferring the blessing long before promised through Abraham;—that Jesus was the Messiah, whom the Father had sent, and whose death was necessary in order to the carrying out of the plan, as our Lord had declared to them, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26) It was theirs further to declare another wonderful work of God,—that in addition to Messiah, the Head, God was about to gather out of the people a little flock to be joint-heirs with

Messiah, in the kingdom, preparatory to its establishment for the blessing of the world. We may be sure that it was the true Gospel that they preached, and not the terrible mixture of confusion about hell torments, which since "the dark ages" has falsely claimed the right to be called the Gospel of Christ. They preached the Gospel of salvation, and not a message of damnation; and their message was in the power and demonstration of the Spirit.

The miraculous gift of tongues is no longer with us, yet the same Spirit, received by us, dwelling in us richly and abounding more and more, gives us utterance, also, in respect to the *wonderful words of God*. This is still true of the royal priesthood, the consecrated. As the Apostle expressed it in his day, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye (for yourselves); for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:19, 20) The enlightenment of our understanding has shown us Jesus as the Redeemer of the world, and our share in his redemptive work; and also our acceptance with the Father, through him, to be his joint-heirs in the kingdom, and to be fellow-servants with him in the present time, in bearing the reproaches of the true Gospel in this time, when the great adversary is deceiving the world in respect to these matters, putting light for darkness and darkness for light.

More and more we, too, speak with *other tongues*. Those whose tongues had blasphemed the holy name now give thanks and praise; those who had ignorantly misrepresented the divine character and plan now vie with each other in showing forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. The influence of the holy Spirit transforms our sentiments and expressions respecting the brethren also, and respecting the world, so that instead of hatred and anger and malice we have love and gentleness and patience; and instead of our tongues showing forth envy and bitterness and pride, worldly ambition, etc., they show forth the new mind in gentleness and wisdom, in helpfulness and love—toward all men, and especially toward the household of faith. These, our new tongues, and the new living epistles which they represent to our families, our neighbors and the world, are beautifully expressed by the Prophet to be our "song"— our praise, our acknowledgment to God for his grace and truth; as it is written, "He hath put a new song into my mouth, even the loving kindness of our God."

INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Many, many times have I been going to write to you, both last year and this year, but did not like to trouble you with any of our depressing affairs. I did once mention something to you of our troubles, but always hoped that we would have good news to tell you, and thus delayed writing till now.

But although we cannot rejoice in worldly prosperity, we do rejoice in Christ Jesus and in the fact that he died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that through Christ we are strengthened and enabled to rejoice in all that passes over us, knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose, and may we be amongst that number.

Being made perfect through suffering is a wonderful providence of the Lord. I saw very clearly and quickly God's "plan of the ages," and rejoiced in it and at once came out from human organizations, and rejoiced to be counted worthy to suffer anything in connection therewith, but to go through these last two years were altogether unlooked for, and from our view point would seem in no way satisfactory either toward God or man, and although our way has thus been hedged in, and our whole course changed, and that not by our own doing or choosing but rather the opposite, nevertheless I see that unless there were a need for it, in some way, it would not have been permitted. I now see it is no light matter to essay to take up the Ark of God, or to put one's hand thereto. That those who will ascend into the hill of God must have clean hands and a pure heart. That one must be very sensible of God's preserving care and fully realize the meaning of the Lord's prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One." That those who are actively engaged in the Lord's harvest work need great encouragement and strengthening of their hands in God. When thinking on these things I determined that I would no longer refrain from writing you, for fear that my long silence might cause you anxiety of mind, rather than peace of mind, as I intended. And now, dear brother, I desire to express to you my great appreciation of all the helps and blessings which the Lord has sent us through your hands. Every *Tower* would seem to be more blessed than another. That article in last *Tower*, "Finally, be all of one mind," showing forth the proper use of combativeness on one's self was simply grand. I thanked and praised God after reading it. Pray for us that we may receive "mercy of the Lord," and he led in such a way as that we will be to God's glory in being made useful in his great cause, and dwell in his house forever. May the Lord preserve you from all evil and keep you as the apple of his eye and that you may be more than Conqueror for his own name's sake.

With our united Christian love to yourself, your household, and all your fellow helpers in the great harvest field, I am your brother in hope.

C. H. HOUSTON,—*Scotland.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I want to write and tell you how I am rejoicing in the truth today: the blessed truth as it is in Jesus. Words cannot tell of the peace that fills my heart, since I have come to understand the full meaning of the glad tidings, of which the angels sang at our Lord's first advent.

At twenty-one years of age, I was converted, and joined the M. E. Church; but I was always so troubled about the eternal torment of those who did not seek and serve the Lord, many of whom I knew to be really better in life than the majority of church members. For years I struggled to believe it just and right, against my own heart's protest, because orthodoxy said so, and finally I had to put it out of my mind, or lose my faith in the love and mercy of God. About three years ago, I went to visit friends in the country, and while there a booklet entitled "The Old Theology" was given me, which set me to thinking and proving its truth by God's Word.

The light began to dawn on my heart and soon the tract, "What the Scriptures say about Hell," was given me by dear Brother L., together with "Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices," and *Watch Towers* from time to time. I saw more and more of the wonderful love and mercy of God in the gift of Jesus, a Savior to bless not only the few, but all, all. And in answer to my constant prayer that I might understand the real truth, the light has filled my soul; and, praise the Lord, the truth makes me free indeed!

I had been a teacher in Sunday-school for years, but soon I was made to understand forcibly that no such doctrine could be tolerated there. They urged me to remain and believe as I wished, but keep it to myself; but I could not teach a class, which I knew was false doctrine, so sent in my resignation. Then came the most bitter denunciations from the pulpit of such (as the pastor called it) damnable heresy. I withdrew from the membership of the church, and since that time I have had an unutterable peace. How glad I am to be free from the cruel bondage of creeds, and forms, which now are meaningless to me.

I have been a reader of the *Watch Tower* for the last year, through the kindness of a dear brother who subscribed for me. It has been such a help and comfort to me, and after I read it I have sent it by mail, and have given it personally to those whom I felt would be helped into the light by it. I have also been giving out the tracts and booklets from the Bible House, as I want to scatter the seed which has cleared false ideals of "Sectarianism" from my own heart.

And now may God's blessing rest more and more upon you, as His instrument, to send this blessed truth to longing hearts.

Thankfully yours,

M. A. SMITH,—*New York.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

In a recent *Tower* you say, "Thenceforth it is the business of the 'new creature' in Christ to use up in the divine service, as wisely, economically, and yet rapidly as possible, all the earthly things" etc. This puzzled me on the first and second readings, for I thought, Why, our Lord ate and slept, and rested sometimes, and so does Brother Russell. I could use up the 'old creature' much more rapidly than I am doing, but I surely ought not to do anything suicidal. A third reading brought it straight for me,—such haste would not be for the *best* interests of the Lord's work,—even my little portion. It would not be sacrificing "wisely, economically." Then the text came to mind: "Order my steps in thy Word!" And I believe he will. ALICE L. DARLINGTON.—*Pa.*

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